



# Guidelines and Agreements (Not Rules)

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# Circle Guidelines

1. Speak from the heart - your truth and your experience.
2. Listen from the heart - let go of stories that make it hard for you to hear.
3. Trust that you know what to say - there is no need to rehearse.
4. Say just enough - without feeling rushed, be concise and considerate of others' time.

# Meta Agreements

1. Anyone can ask to make an agreement at anytime.
2. Anyone can ask to modify an agreement at anytime.
3. If not all agree, it is not an agreement.
4. It is not just the facilitator's job to maintain these agreements; it is the responsibility of all circle participants.

# Forming Agreements and Consensus



*Consensus* is important when making agreements, because each participant should be able to hold themselves accountable to said agreements. Asking for a vote of thumbs to get everyone's input is a good way to get participants to agree. If someone says no or gives a thumbs down, politely ask why and modify the agreement so all participants feel validated and supported.

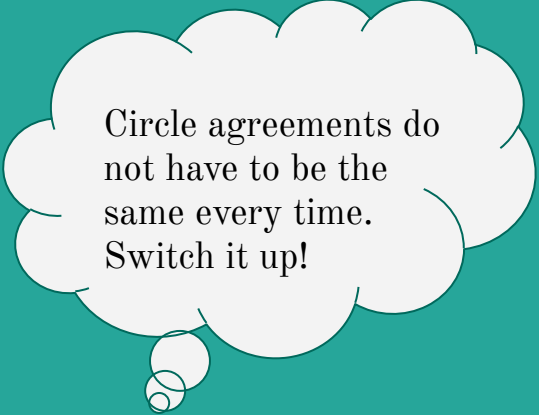
Thumbs up: Yes.

Thumbs sideways: Don't mind either way.

Thumbs down: cannot agree and needs to be modified.

## Most commonly used Circle Agreements are:

- Respect the talking piece.
- Whatever is said in circle stays in circle.
- No cross-talk or side conversations
- Honor perspectives that differ from your own.
- Honor self-care needs but be mindful and curious of others when doing so.



Circle agreements do not have to be the same every time. Switch it up!

# Remember...

When making up your Circle Agreements, keep in mind that having basic universal agreements can be helpful.

Example: Confidentiality, respecting the talking piece, no side conversations.

**But** each set of agreements are tailored to the needs of the participants of that session. Example: Someone may need to ask for an agreement that allows for them to have a fidget toy because they have anxiety.