



Example Ground Rules

These are some basic ground rules that your group may want to adopt:

Show respect. Because CLIP participation depends on everyone feeling that they are in safe, hospitable environment, it is vital for everyone to obey basic rules of courtesy. Listen without interruption. Strive to understand each others' perspectives. Speak about the issue, not the person.

Everyone participates. In many cases, the group members will not know each other. As the facilitator, you will set the tone for the group. Give everyone a chance to speak. Let them know that it's okay to disagree, but that it's important to find common ground for continuing the inquiry. Have the group consider how it would like to handle conflicts and tensions. Perhaps people can discuss their personal styles and what makes them comfortable and uncomfortable about interacting in a group.

Schedule meetings to fits the needs of the group. Because most meetings will be participatory, you will need to set up enough time for issues to be discussed. Some CLIPs set aside a time and place for regular meetings. Some meet informally at regular intervals. Others hold meetings on as-needed basis. Find out what schedule will work best for most people. Set up ways to effectively inform people about meetings.

Begin and end meetings on time. Building the CLIP community aspect of a CLIP relies on regular attendance because this builds both familiarity and trust. Promptness will help the group function more efficiently and reliably. Discuss with the groups how they want to handle these issues. Also, consider that timeliness goes beyond prompt arrival at meetings. People need to rely on prompt responses to emails and other communications. Determine what people consider to be a reasonable response time.

Determine tasks and responsibilities during the meetings. Confirm with the group what your role will be as the facilitator. Describe some of the tasks (e.g., Recorder) that may need to be filled for running the meetings.