

Psychophysical AntiRacism (PAR) Study Group Agreements

These agreements were sourced with permission from Anti-Racism educator Gleason Bauer and were adapted by MICHA's PAR study group. They are a living document, referenced, adapted as needed by the group. These agreements are also adopted at other MICHA discussion groups convened by the Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Council, the MICHA Faculty and Board of Directors.

- 1.) **Use "I" statements:** Speak from your own experience. Avoid de-personalizing, using the 2nd person "you", and generalizing unless it is truly appropriate. Avoid speaking for others. If it is important to share another person's story with us, tell us how it impacts you.
- 2.) **Vegas Rules:** Hold each other's material in confidence. While you can speak generally about what you are hearing and learning outside of the group, never use another person's name or identifying characteristics to out someone in the group.
- 3.) **Expect non-closure:** Anti-racism work stirs up our systems. Expect that all of your questions will not be answered. Expect that your feelings will not always be resolved. Expect that, despite our best intentions, racism will not be solved in one sitting. Expect to be in process. Pace yourself for a sustained engagement with 'not knowing' and uncertainty.
- 4.) **Growth:** Anti-racism work requires a deep undoing. It requires reflection and vulnerability. It requires growth. Growth is rarely comfortable. If you're not uncomfortable, lean in a bit more. On the other hand, don't risk so greatly that you re-inscribe old traumas. Learn the difference between discomfort and actual danger.
- 5.) **Step up/Step back:** Challenge your habits. If you are someone who tends to speak first and/or frequently, step back and notice what happens when you let others speak first and/or allow yourself to listen. If you are someone who tends to wait for others to go first and/or avoids speaking at all, step up. Notice what happens when you speak first and/or more frequently than you might normally.
- 6.) **Stay focused on the topic at hand:** While anti-racism intersects with many other liberation strategies, the work at hand is addressing racism, anti-blackness, white supremacy culture and similar colonising patterns.

7.) **Own your impact:** Know that we are all doing the best that we can under the circumstances and with the tools that we currently have. That said, we still must be accountable for the impact of our words and actions.

8.) **Ouch/Oops** - If someone says something and it has a negative impact on you, say, "Ouch" and know that we will circle back around to process it, if necessary. If you regret something you've said or need to apologize, offer a quick "Oops" to acknowledge the hurt and know that we will come back around to process it, if necessary. Other than that, do not comment on what another person has said unless you are given permission to do so by the speaker.

Tools -

~ **The Pin Board or Parking Lot** - This is the notion that lots of questions and issues will arise that are not part of the specific thing we are addressing at the moment. Surface it, if that is useful, but expect that we will put a pin in it or put it in the parking lot for a later time. This will keep us from getting derailed.

~ **Process Journal** - This journal is a place to record your reflections, responses to materials, and to note how you are feeling when it isn't appropriate to speak up. It is a place to vent, to take notes, to color, doodle, and express yourself in whatever way feels useful and healthy for you. You will often hear in this work that "it's not about you", but your process journal IS and SHOULD be about you. It is another way to hold yourself accountable and to track your growth.