King County

King County Office of Equity and Social Justice, January 2015

Guidelines for Multicultural Interactions (by Laurin Mayeno and Elena Featherston, 2006, adapted from VISIONS, Inc.)

Be present… Bring your full attention to the process. Acknowledge anything that you need to let go of in order to be present.

Try on new ideas, perspectives… Be willing to open up to new territory and break through old patterns. Remember, "try on" is not the same as "take on."

It's OK to disagree… Avoid attacking, discounting or judging the beliefs and views of others. Instead, welcome disagreement as an opportunity to expand your world.

Confidentiality… It helps to remember that the story belongs to the teller.

Step up, step back… Be aware of sharing space in the group. Respect the different rhythms in the room; it is ok to be with silence.

Self-awareness… Respect and connect to your thoughts, feelings and reactions in the process. Monitor the content, the process and yourself.

Check out assumptions… This is an opportunity to learn more about yourself and others; do not "assume" you know what is meant by a communication especially when it triggers you – ask questions.

Practice "both/and" thinking… Making room for more than one idea at a time means appreciating and valuing multiple realities.

Intent is different from impact… and both are important. It is also important to own our ability to have a negative impact in another person's life despite our best intention.

Listen deeply… Listen with intent to hear, listen for the entire content and what is behind the words. Engage heart and mind -- listen with alert compassion.

Speak from the "I… is speaking from one's personal experience rather than saying "we," it allows us to take ownership of thoughts, feelings and actions.