

Skills to Counteract Lateral Violence

Directions for Lateral Kindness

Part of healthy communication is making sure that we are speaking with others in respectful and collaborative ways. We can use our words to help or hurt people. When our interactions with people become difficult, it can be easy to get defensive or angry. The list below can help us maintain respectful relationships with our family, friends, colleagues, and community members.

- Set a positive tone to create safe spaces. Be kind.
- Be direct and say what you have to say in a respectful way.
- Utilize cultural practices and protocols to guide how people are treated.
- Use “I” statements to state your feeling, describe the behaviour or issue and its effect on you, and ask for what you need.
- You have the right to express your ideas, feelings, and needs; remember to also respect the other person’s right to their ideas, feelings, and needs.
- Ask respectful questions without speaking over. Actively listen and be present.
- Ask clarifying questions to get more information and to clarify what the other person means.
- Be willing to work things out and believe that things can be worked out. Try to be as cooperative as you can.
- Collectively determine positive and creative solutions.
- Stay open to all ideas. Agree to disagree when there is a difference of opinion.
- Use your sense of humour.
- Take responsibility for your own feelings. Avoid using roadblocks to communication like blaming, threatening, shaming, or judging.
- Apologize if you need to.