**Ground rules for great meetings.**

People are more likely to adhere to rules if they've contributed to them – so agree on them together.

Here are some example ground rules for meetings to get you started.

**"We all agree to..."**

* Have a positive attitude and try to always be constructive
* Avoid criticising others
* Turn our mobile phones off (or at least on silent)
* Give the meeting our full attention
* Try to build on ideas rather than dismiss them
* Be patient and not interrupt others or speak over them
* Put our hand up and/or use hand signals. (If you are using hand signals, make sure that everyone knows how to use them. [Learn more about useful hand signals.](http://www.lovelifepractice.com/practice/using-hand-signals-for-better-meetings/))
* Be prompt and respectful of time
* Stay on topic. Avoid distracting diversions
* Never tolerate sexist, racist, disablist, classist, transphobic or homophobic comments. Even if they were not made to offend, they are never okay
* Give people the opportunity to reflect on and learn from any such comments they made
* Never tolerate bullying
* Operate a "safe spaces" policy. This means that if someone's words or behaviour creates discomfort or distress, regardless of intent, they will be asked to modify these.

Everyone should show understanding if asked to use different language or change their behaviour. Importantly, try to agree what will happen if someone persistently breaks the rules.

We suggest that the first couple of times, they are politely reminded of the ground rules they agreed to. If their behaviour persists, they should be asked to leave. It’s important that this decision comes from multiple members in the group and not just the group lead. It should be clear that challenging problematic behaviour is the culture of the group and not a vendetta.

If anyone experiences or observes any behaviour that makes them feel at risk or vulnerable, they should speak out about it as soon as possible. Some people won’t feel comfortable doing this so make sure everyone knows they can come to the group lead privately with any concerns too.