



Agreements for Young Men's Groups¹

by Paul Kivel

1. CONFIDENTIALITY

I agree to keep what comes up in the group to myself. This means I don't repeat what someone says without his permission, even to other group members outside of the meeting.

2. NO PUT-DOWNS

I agree not to put down, make fun of, minimize, or attack other people. Also, I will not put myself down by saying things like "Well, this probably isn't important but..." or "This may sound stupid but..."

3. THE RIGHT TO PASS

I agree to do my part to make the group work, but I have the right not to talk in the group when I don't want to.

4. THE RIGHT TO LET IT STAND

I have the right to say what I want in the group without having it debated, decried or attacked- or agreed with or supported, it gets to stand on its own without being taken over by someone else.

5. FEELINGS

Everyone in the group will sometimes feel hurt, sad, bored or angry. These feelings are part of the healing process and the change process. I agree to respect my feelings and the feelings of other group members.

6. RESPECT / LISTENING

I agree to listen to others in the group, and I expect that others in the group will listen to me. This almost always means that only one person talks at a time, without interruptions

7. "I" STATEMENTS

I agree to speak for myself and my own experiences. I will not speak for others unless asked to. This means I will use the word "I" in place of the words "you," "we," or "they." This is very difficult, but crucial. It will help me speak about what is true for me and keep me close to how I feel.

8. TRYING ON THE PROCESS

I agree to try on the process of the group. I don't have to agree without or accept it, just try it on.

9. TAKING CARE OF MYSELF

I agree to take charge of my own needs. I will make myself physically comfortable, and I will ask for help when I need it. I will try to have fun during the process.

10. NO ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS

I agree that I will not use alcohol or other drugs before coming to the group.

¹ From *Young Men's Work: Stopping Violence and Building Community*. Please send comments, feedback, resources, and suggestions for distribution to paul@paulkivel.com. Further resources are available at www.paulkivel.com.