

## Create an Aspirational Culture Contract

(This is a continuation of Helpful Adult Behaviors activity from Section 6 of the toolkit.)

**Create an agreement for a compassionate staff culture by defining behaviors that lead to that culture.** This activity is a continuation of the healthy workplace behaviors activity from section 6. Between section 6 and 7, the facilitation team needs to consolidate the “Yeses” brainstorm from the healthy workplace behaviors activity into themes. A compassionate culture is also one that is trauma-informed and equitable. Where in the themes generated do you see trauma-informed and equity practices? Is more needed in your themes to highlight these two components?

### Directions for staff meeting:

1. Share the themes from the healthy workplace behavior activity that support a compassionate staff culture generated in the section 6 healthy workplace behavior activity
2. To have a truly compassionate culture, you need one that is centered in equity and trauma-informed practices. Ask the group how they see these in the themes generated. What additions do they feel are needed to ensure these two components are incorporated into our list? Add any additions to the list and support the group in identifying behaviors instead of broad concepts.
3. If there are more than ten items brainstormed on the list, ask each staff person to put a dot/mark/sticker next to what they see as the five most important items to achieving a compassionate culture.
4. When voting is complete, circle the 10 items that receive the most votes. These will become the base for the Aspirational Culture Agreements generated between Section 7 & 8.
5. Ask participants to answer the following questions based off the 10 circled items. *Facilitator note: Please decide as a facilitation team how you would like your group to respond to the following questions, taking the size, the amount of time you have available, and the psychological safety of your group into consideration. Some options for the group to engage with the questions include use of the go-around, open-mic, pair-share, and individual journaling formats.*
  - Looking at these ten items, what are your strengths regarding these behaviors?
  - Where would you like to see growth in your ability to think and act in these ways?
  - What help could you use from other team members in fulfilling these behaviors?





### After the staff meeting:

1. The actions are written into an aspirational culture agreements document.. The document is enlarged and hung in staff gathering areas.
2. Copies are made available to staff to keep in their workspace. The individual copies should include four self-reflection questions on the back. These questions are:
  - a. What behaviors do I regularly demonstrate as a colleague?
  - b. What behaviors might I enhance to be the colleague I want to become?
  - c. What steps can I take to maintain my strengths and grow in areas I identified in B?
  - d. Who of my colleagues can I talk to about these commitments I have made?
3. Examples of two aspirational agreements are on the following page. Limiting the agreements to no more than 10 specific behaviors is best.

## Aspirational Culture Agreements Example

**We seek to consistently engage in these ways towards each other and those we serve:**

1. Be open and welcoming to all through our presence, tone, words, and body language.
  - Work to minimize the impact personal biases have on your treatment of others.
  - Respect various cultural values surrounding communication.


**Practice mindful presence with colleagues.**

2. Speak up when we see problems or conflict in the workplace with a solution-focused, strength-based perspective.
3. Seek to understand and value diverse perspectives.
  - Pause to set aside judgments. Be curious. Embrace discomfort.
  - Assume positive intentions.
  - Practice active listening.

**Determine if broader understanding needs to lead to consensus on action or not.**

4. Work together as a team to accomplish goals.
  - Take responsibility for contributing to team and share credit for positive results.
  - Identify and engage team members' strengths.
  - Seek out the voices of colleagues traditionally not included.
  - Set and ask for clear expectations and boundaries.
5. Seek support when needed, respond to requests for help, and offer to assist team members when possible.
6. Prioritize and support work life balance and individual well-being.
  - Consider balance when scheduling, setting expectations, and making requests.
7. Use transparent and direct communication.
  - Practice two-way, proactive, respectful, clear, and concise communication.
  - Choose language that is equity-focused, respectful of diversity of all people.
  - Be strategic about communication methods based on the individual situation (face-to-face, email, phone, text, and Teams chat).
8. Practice effective use of communication technology.
  - Respond to email in a timely manner (teams determine maximum response time).
  - If urgent and requiring response, text or call as appropriate.
  - Avoid unnecessary and lengthy emails and blind copying (Bcc).
  - Leverage daily huddles to reduce email and increase direct communication.
  - We uphold these agreements and other commitments through individual responsibility and in respectful conversations with our colleagues. Address concerns early and directly with the person involved. Start with self-reflection and compassion for self and others.
  - Encourage healthy dialogue, then, if possible, move forward and let it go.
  - Seek and accept constructive feedback.
  - Allow space for growth – self and others.

## My Commitment to My Co-Workers

Category	My Commitment	My Behaviors
<b>Teamwork and Problem-Solving</b>  	<b>I will be Innovative, flexible and use team-based problem-solving techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I won't point fingers – I'll focus on solutions instead</li> <li>• I'll help those who are carrying a heavier load at the moment; I will put myself in someone else's shoes</li> <li>• I won't take short-cuts if it makes more work for someone else;</li> <li>• I will follow up on issues to ensure resolution has been reached</li> <li>• I will anticipate the outcome and think about the team as a whole when considering my actions and decisions</li> <li>• I will get to know others and let them get to know me</li> <li>• I will try to understand that we're all human – I will give grace</li> <li>• I'll work to look past our differences to find common ground; I will try not to let "quirks" get in the way of business; I'll work peacefully with those around me and have fun</li> <li>• I'll collaborate and leverage my team's collective talent and knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>Being a Leader</b>	<b>I will be a leader with a positive attitude and will demonstrate respect for everyone on my team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regardless of my role on the team, I will be a leader; I will be courageous and take the lead</li> <li>• I'll be respectful of others' time, workload and current stress/pressure; I will show kindness and be respectful, pleasant and supportive</li> <li>• I will work to maintain a positive attitude and look for the good; I will keep my eye on the big picture and the greater journey beyond today</li> <li>• I will work to maintain a sense of humor and laugh with others</li> <li>• I will acknowledge others and say "hi" to them the first time I see them each day, and I'll ask the same of others</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>I will focus on communicating effectively with my team and my customers to produce the results we all want</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will provide outstanding customer service both within and outside of my team; I will represent our team with excellence</li> <li>• I'll follow up on all open issues to ensure resolution</li> <li>• I will not assume anything; instead, I will ask questions, clarify needs and do research</li> <li>• I will communicate my needs and encourage others to do the same</li> <li>• I will avoid gossip</li> <li>• I will respond to calls, emails and text messages promptly</li> </ul>

Category	My Commitment	My Behaviors
<b>Communication</b> <i>(continued)</i>	<b>I will focus on communicating effectively with my team and my customers to produce the results we all want</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will not interrupt when others are talking</li> <li>• I will be honest, provide constructive feedback and praise when it's deserved; I will be supportive with both validation and challenges as appropriate</li> <li>• I will ask you to tell me if there's something I could do better, and I will have the courage to deliver bad news. I'll ask you to do the same</li> <li>• I will work to support, not criticize you, and ask the same of you</li> <li>• I will remain open to feedback</li> <li>• I will share ideas, information, discoveries and knowledge with the team</li> <li>• I will work to remain open-minded and willing to accept change</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Responsibility and Accountability</b>	<b>I will hold myself accountable for my work and the outcome of my actions and decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will do my best; I will work hard, be prompt and be on-time</li> <li>• I will take personal responsibility for my decisions, actions, work product and outcomes; I will look to myself first for the reason why something turned out the way it did</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Growth and Development</b>	<b>I will drive my own growth and development in my current role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will look for opportunities to learn and grow</li> <li>• I'll practice flexibility, innovation and remaining calm under pressure</li> <li>• I will think outside of "it's not my job" and jump in when needed – I will get involved in the team's business</li> </ul>