

Communication & Collaboration

When working in advocacy, it is essential that we all speak, listen to, and treat each other with respect. This work isn't easy. There may be times when people have big emotions. We need to make room to accept ourselves as full humans having human experiences.

No matter how far along someone is in their journey, they need to have space to process these feelings that arise. It is important we don't have a fear of being shamed or looked at differently if we show up with big emotions.

What is Collective Care?

Collective care is all a culture of “**prioritizing the emotional and physical structures we all need to live more loving and liberated lives**” as defined by two gender activists, Janey Starling & Seyi Falodun-Liburd.¹ For the Brave Movement, this means that we put in place policies, procedures, and a culture where we all contribute and shape it together.

Some examples of collective care at the Brave Movement are:

Being mindful of diversity and the different lived experiences that we all bring to the table.	Being aware of signs of *burnout or exhaustion checking in with others.	Being honest about feelings, opinions, and decisions in a respectful manner
Collaboration and a disregard for competition with other members	Leading with kindness and compassion for all other members	Supporting other members when they make decisions or set boundaries

***Examples of burnout can be:**

- Lack of energy, focus, or productivity
- Reduction in motivation or changes in behavior such as being late or completely missing tasks
- Frequent illnesses or expressions of insomnia or sleep changes
- Frustration or anger at what may be considered minor items

¹ TED Talks. (2023, March 8). *How collective care can change society* | Janey Starling & Seyi Falodun-Liburd | TEDxLondonWomen. YouTube. Retrieved June 14, 2024, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xj-alDQD2fg>

Principles for Trauma-Informed Communication and Collaboration

We communicate with transparency and sensitivity.	We prioritize clear and direct communication	We foster an environment where members feel safe to express concerns and needs.
We show deep understanding and respect for everyone's experiences and feelings	We seek to identify and resolve conflicts in a trauma-informed manner.	We uphold high ethical standards on confidentiality and non-discrimination
We value and respect the diversity that individuals bring to the movement.	We recognize the impact of trauma on communication styles and needs.	We strive to accommodate the unique needs that individuals may face.

Showing Up

Our impact is greater when we work together as a stronger, more unified movement. ***It is important to prioritize “showing up”.*** When you collaborate consistently and communicate clearly, it becomes easier for you and those around you to navigate challenges, support each other, and come up with solutions.

Oftentimes, advocates may focus too much on what we “owe” others that we work with. ***We may not share our work because we do not believe it is “ready” to share.*** We may create our own self-silos, separating from others when we have a project or task – because of a positive desire to deliver for those we care about and a negative anxiety that we may be judged on the merits of our work.

Prioritize showing up, and only commit within your means. Organize and/or participate in regular meetings, brainstorming sessions, and workshops. Show up and share the burden of our good work.

This work doesn't work if we do it alone.