Developing Working Agreements

(1) Introduce **Working Agreements** as a vital tool for effective group work.

(2) All participants record on a sticky note 2-4 conditions that support, *for them individually,* having a personally satisfying and professionally compelling group work experience.

(3) In table groups, share and compare:

(a) each person reads what they wrote on their sticky note;

note areas of overlap. (Sometimes the same idea is presented in different language but is essentially the same.)

(b) keeping balance of voices in mind, discuss and come to consensus on your table’s top three working agreements…number them 1, 2, 3 (Please agree on a reporter.)

(4) Each table contributes their Number 1 proposed working agreement. (Facilitator records on public chart.) If it’s already been stated by another group, in same or similar language, facilitator places a check next to the previously written statement.

(5) Participants are asked to review the public chart and speak up if:

(a) there’s something on the chart that isn’t an agreement they can make

(or that they would like to clarify or discuss)

(b) they would like to add another Working Agreement that is particularly

important to their participation

(6) Review the list aloud. Ask for a show of hands from the group, as an agreement that all will keep this conditions at the forefront during our time together. (Or a thumbs up if in full agreement, to the side if ‘can live with it’; thumbs down if there’s one or more that I want to talk more about.)

**ACCOUNTABILITY (CHECKING BACK IN - not just when there’s a problem!)**

Midpoint: “Let’s take another look at our Working Agreements. Could we please hear from several people who will speak to one that you think we are doing particularly well with? (take several) And let’s hear from a few people who would highlight for us a working agreement that we could benefit from paying even closer attention to as we continue. (take as many as are voiced)

Subsequent: Let’s start by reading our working agreements again (*aloud or to self).* Please select one that you think would be a challenge to yourself, one that it would benefit you, and maybe the group ☺, if you paid particular attention to it. (Brief Private Think Time) Everyone have one in mind? (*Use elbow partner if the group has high trust level; ‘find a partner to share with’ if participants might be uncomfortable or wary of an assigned partner)*. Get with a partner, and I like to call this person our Intention Partner, and privately share with him or her the working agreement you’re going to dedicate particular attention today. Fine if you want to briefly say why, but no need to unless you want to. When both of you have shared, please (*next direction – return to your seats, gather in the circle area, whatever…)*

Check In: Here’s our Working Agreements Poster. In a moment, I’ll ask you to find your intention partner from earlier and check in with them as to how you did today. Take a moment to reflect and self-assess, with 1 being “I totally forgot we were doing that” (which happens!) and 5 being, I really noticed a shift in myself around this, I did a very effective job at attending to it…