

# Agreements of Care and Care-giving

## A Success Model For A Thriving Organization

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**"In an organization whose goal it is to bring sustainable solutions resulting in peace, we agree to live the very principles we seek for ourselves and in our work."**

### Introduction

A primary reason that volunteer and/or grassroots organizations fail, or often don't reach their ultimate goals, is the missing element of protocol for reconciliation. We join or start an organization with a noble and important mission at hand, and find ourselves surrounded by like minded, passionate people. However, it is our human nature, and it can be expected that personalities clash, and feelings get hurt. The inter dynamics and conflict that arise among personalities is, too often, a reason people leave an organization or effort they were, or still are passionate about. We tend to not apply the very peaceful communication and operation that we work so hard at providing our community/world.

There exists very simple rules of engagement that serve as a safety net should an incident arise. This protocol is found in many indigenous traditions, and just about every human resource department in a business setting, and for good reason. So, why don't we institute such a protocol for the grassroots sector? It is non-hierarchical and insures shared leadership as we commit to holding ourselves and one another accountable.

If peace begins with each one of us, then our real work is in our intimate circles. This Agreements of Care and Caregiving sets an intention and commitment to those around us whom we need and trust. You may use this document or write your own.

## **The essential principles are:**

- Respond swiftly to an incident or feeling.  
Respect the other if they wish a little time to process, but agree to that time frame
- Commit to not engaging others in your intimate circle until you have followed your process.
- Establish and agree to your process

## **Suggested Template Agreement For Care and Caregiving**

It is our responsibility as General Congress of Women to nurture an environment of trust, fellowship and mutual support so that we can do our sacred work most effectively.

We recognize that we are a team designed to support our vision and mission and function as a healthy, unified body.

We are respectful of each of our rights, feelings and caring for our individual and collective general welfare.

We acknowledge that we come together with a spirit of unity that binds us in common affection and common cause.

We serve without undue recognition, understanding that it is the work that is important.

We operate in an atmosphere of transparency and authenticity.

We are concerned for one another's well-being and practice compassionate conflict resolution whenever the need emerges, starting with the processes below.

We will provide a safe space to share and explore feelings, flesh out ideas, or express concerns without judgment and in confidence, to protect the sanctity of a healthy leadership council and insure unity and healing, while issues remain unresolved.

In the event that there are signs of unethical or abusive behavior, confidence must be broken to a member or members of the Leadership Team immediately.

## **Steps for Care and Caregiving when conflict arises**

We understand that side conversations can be disruptive and provide an environment of distrust and we agree to take every measure to minimize how many people we involve in personal or other matters.

1. We commit to addressing any personal difficulty swiftly with the individual directly first. We know everyone has different rhythms and personalities, however, it's advisable not to let too much time to go by before making that first outreach.
2. If any personal/organizational difficulty continues to be distracting and disruptive, it is agreed that a 3rd objective, and mutually agreed upon party join in the conversation to:

Listen without judgment  
Provide positive and constructive feedback  
Help find a resolution between the 2 parties

- 3 In the event a convening of third person does not result in a satisfactory reconciliation, a Reconciliation Trust Circle is held, where a small thoughtful group who agree to be available to providing a loving and supportive environment so the member can safely express their feelings and collectively find a peaceful resolution.
4. If still at an impasse, it is determined that there be a gentle exit of the individual where the problem exists.

**The Following Guiding Principles For Reconciliation are recommended tools to consider in your process.** <https://www.sarah4hope.org/agreements-for-care-and-caregiving>

**Circle Guidelines can be found at Millionth Circle**

<https://millionthcircle.org/circle-resources/circle-guidelines/>