

LATERAL KINDNESS

Pass it on!

WRITE A KINDNESS MESSAGE TO LIFT SOMEONE'S SPIRIT

TO _____

FROM _____



WHAT IS LATERAL KINDNESS?

Lateral kindness is an approach to address lateral violence based on Indigenous values that promote social harmony and healthy relationships. Lateral violence impacts people around the world, but it manifests in unique ways for Indigenous people because of the impacts of colonization, racism, and intergenerational trauma. Lateral kindness has the ability to impact public health in a number of ways.

1

Lateral kindness works to address and end the lateral violence in the workplace, families and communities as a public health issue impacting individual mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health.

2

Lateral kindness has the power to improve health services and address lateral violence in health organizations and systems; by shifting the cultural norms about interactions between patients, health service providers and partners within health services, lateral kindness helps create more safe, inclusive and culturally safe services.

3

Lateral kindness has the power to improve health services by increasing workplace safety; improve retention of health staff by setting values, standards and relationships by building personal skills.



First Nations Health
Directors Association

Sharing experience for community wellness

DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT: LATERAL KINDNESS

As leaders, we support lateral kindness practices that create safe spaces and forums by:

- Taking an active role in setting a positive tone at the beginning of forums and in work spaces; consider opening in prayer, ceremony or traditional song.
- Utilizing Elders and cultural people as teachers of our cultural values, moral stories, and protocols at meeting forums and spaces.
- Collectively determining positive solutions together, built on consensus; traditionally, we had to rely upon each other within our kinship systems in order to survive and we continue to need one another in the present day.
- Utilizing our traditional dispute resolution protocols to address possible incidences of lateral violence.
- Clearly outlining how participants will treat one another at forums and meeting spaces based on our values of respect, compassion and kindness.
- Participating and contributing to discussions with a positive attitude and kind regard for peers.
- Demonstrating our quest to seek clear vision by asking questions respectfully in order to seek clarification and understanding.
- Demonstrating our cultural value of respect by actively listening and by not speaking over or interrupting our peers.
- Considering the use of talking/sharing circles or roundtable discussions as a fair approach to the sharing of speaking time wherever possible and when time permits.
- Demonstrating mutual respect by sincerely apologizing for any possible misunderstandings or inadvertent disrespect while also offering meaningful forgiveness.
- Expressing concerns in a concise and kind manner while offering up constructive solutions to issues that are raised in a diplomatic manner.
- Participating throughout the duration of a meeting, staying focused on the deliberations and being “present” in the moment by actively listening.
- Accepting varying opinions as they are a positive way to enrich conversations, and where there are differences, always striving to develop constructive solutions.
- Developing empowerment strategies (or positive “challenges”) based on practising lateral kindness, promoting innovative ideas and best practices, and encouraging the lateral kindness practitioner.

A CALL TO ACTION TOWARDS A ZERO TOLERANCE OF LATERAL VIOLENCE

The First Nations Health Directors Association Position Statement issued a decree of 13 actions (in remembrance of the phases of the moon). It calls all those who share the same values to take a stand against lateral violence and strive to ensure wellness in physical, spiritual, mental and emotional health on an individual and collective basis.

By fostering an environment based on our values of respect, discipline, relationships, culture, excellence and fairness, these 13 actions promote the end to lateral violence in the name of peace, productivity and prosperity and take advantage of the FNHDA's readiness for remedial interventions. The FNHDA calls upon everyone to action, to get involved and be a part of finding and determining solutions towards a zero tolerance of any form of lateral violence.

In response to the FNHDA Position Statement, the First Nations Health Directors Association, First Nations Health Council, and First Nations Health Authority committed as a collective to the Joint Declaration of Commitment on Lateral Kindness. The three entities support one another as a collective and respond to lateral violence by using traditional teachings about respect, fairness and the importance of relationships, to create an environment built on the foundation of kindness.

As partners in our First Nation health governance structure, our journey of health transformation is guided by our shared vision and values. It is through our shared values and vision of “Healthy, Self-Determining and Vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families and Communities,” that we seek to create transformative change in First Nations health and wellness.

Learn more here:

FNHDA Position Statement towards a Zero Tolerance of Lateral Violence

<http://fnhda.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/FNHDA-Lateral-Violence-Position-Statement.pdf>

FNHA-FNHC-FNHDA Declaration of Commitment: Lateral Kindness

<http://fnhda.ca/wp-content/uploads/Lateral-Kindness-Declaration-of-Commitment.pdf>

FNHDA Website

<http://fnhda.ca/>

