

Welcome to the Community Engagement Learning Network!

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New resource launching in January 2026!

Does your organization have room to improve how you engage people with lived experience?

Curious how to strengthen your practices?

Too busy to read through 100 pages and need tailored advice?

We got a resource for you!



Sign up to receive
updates from INSPIRE!

Q Please join us for our next session on **Jan 28th** from 3-4:30pm ET

Q Featured presenter:
National Institutes of Health's
Engaging the Public as
Partners in Clinical Research
(ENGAGE) Initiative



Community engagement refers to the different ways in which health (& social) care organizations can reach out to, engage, and partner with people with lived experience, with the goal of working together to improve healthcare and achieve positive health outcomes.

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Community agreements

- Take space & make space
- Listen to understand, speak to be understood
- No one knows everything, but together we know a lot

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Navigating Conflict Together



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Welcome & Purpose

- Introductions
- Why are we talking about conflict?

What We'll Cover Today

Today we will:

- Share a story of conflict and resolution
- Explore how to use communication strategies and tools to work through conflict together
- Highlight how to handle conflict in ways that can strengthen relationships





A Story: When Conflict Became Connection

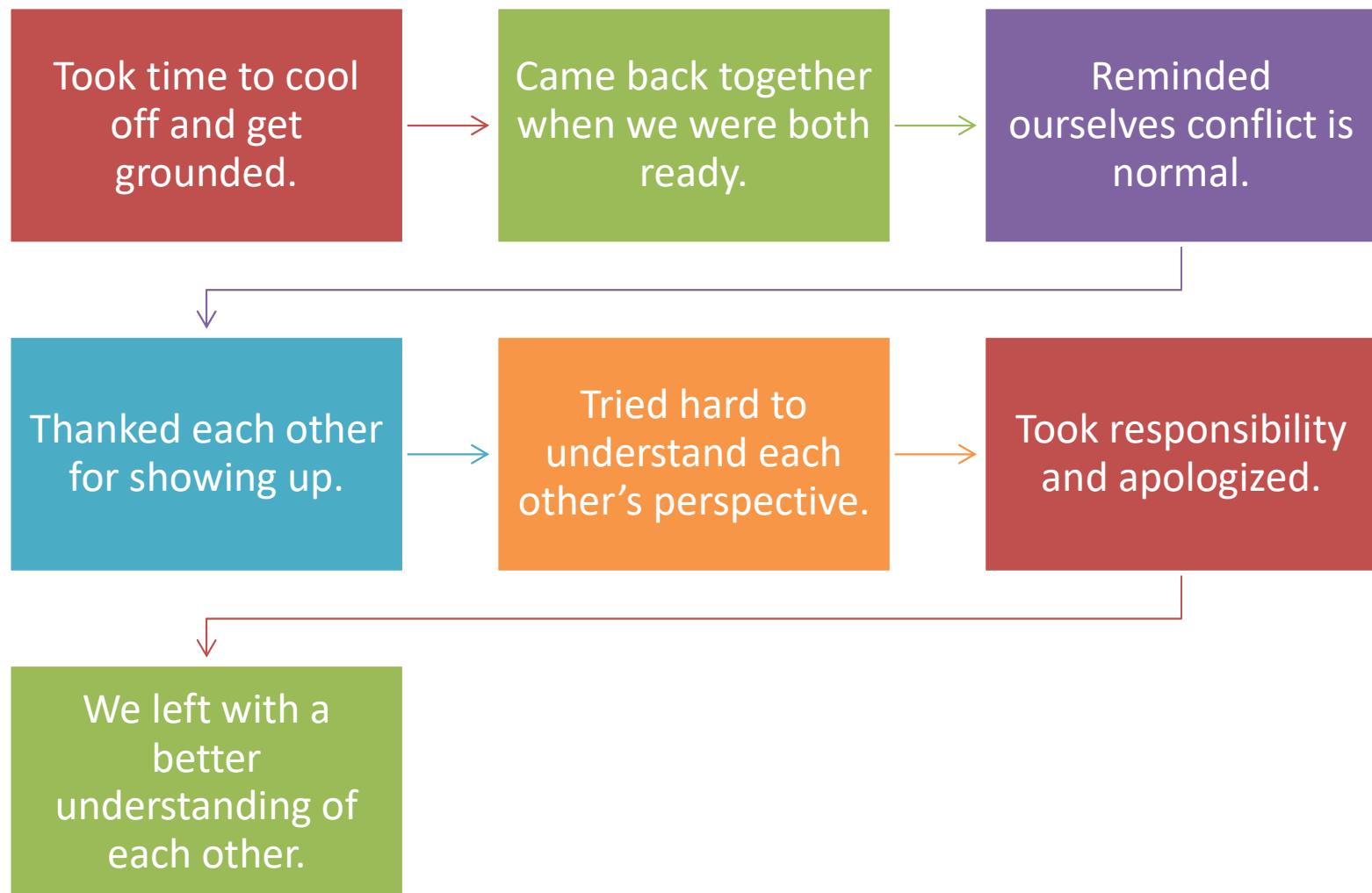
What Happened

Change and uncertainty triggered tension.

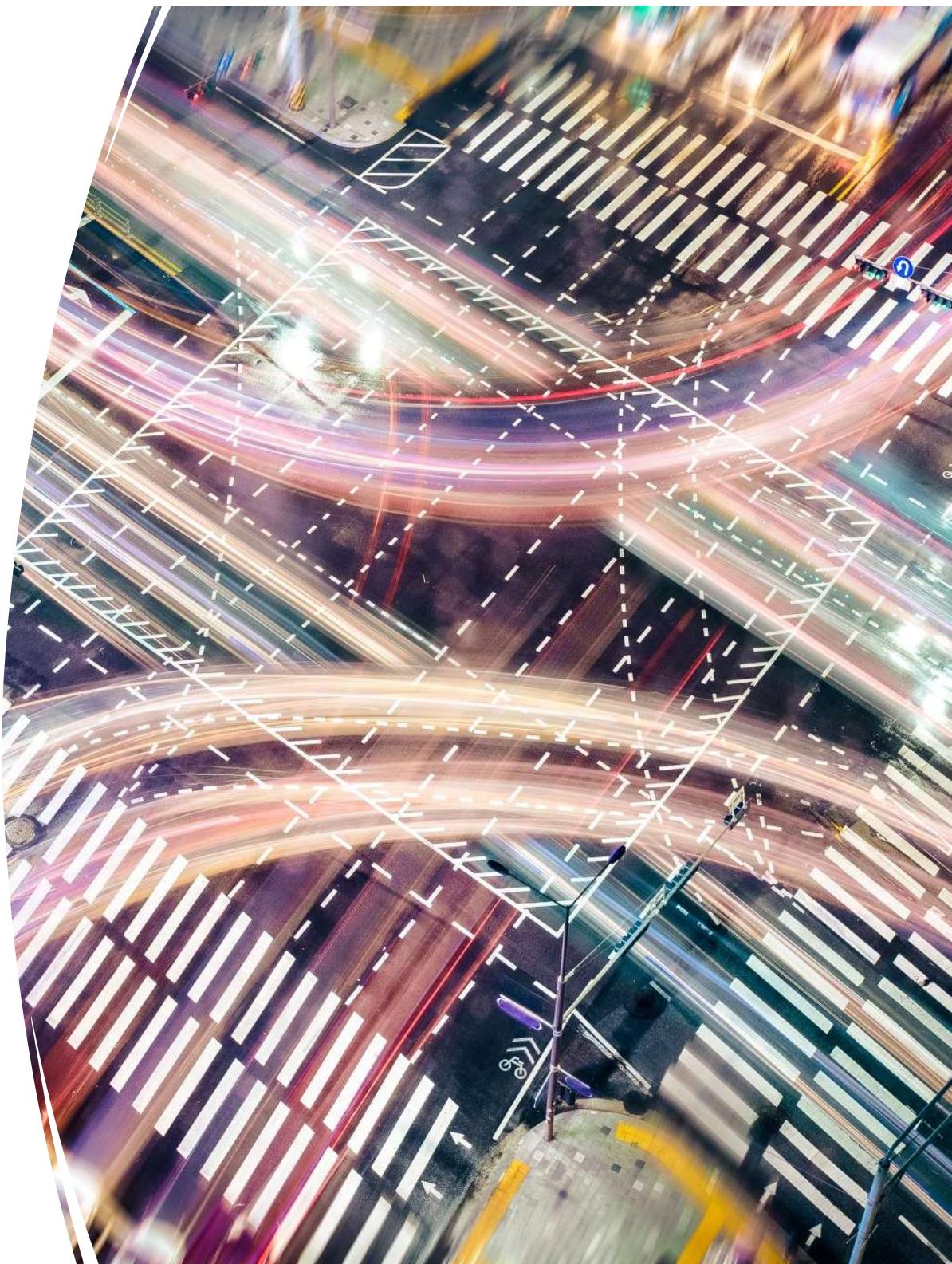
Feeling unsupported intensified conflict.

Strong emotions surfaced.

What Helped: Strategies to Address Conflict



What helps
your group
work through
conflict in
constructive
ways?



Key Lessons Learned

Focus on
building
relationships.

Give each
other grace.

Remember:
we each
bring our
own stuff to
the table.

Refocus on
the work and
the common
goal.

Where Conflict Can Show Up

Two common types:

1. Between the staff liaison and board members
2. Between board members



Tools That Have Helped



GROUP
AGREEMENTS



CONFLICT
RESOLUTION &
EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION
TRAINING



GRIEVANCE
GUIDELINES



Group Agreements

- Group agreements we used to help resolve our conflict
- Why group agreements matter
- Process our team used to create group agreements

Developing Group Agreements



1. Team members took time to think on their own.
2. We talked together as a team and drafted the group agreements.
3. We worked together to choose 10 group agreements.
4. We ensured all team members could commit to all 10 group agreements.
5. We start each meeting by reviewing the group agreements and end it by checking in about how we did honoring them.

Conflict Resolution & Effective Communication Training

Why it matters:

- Builds shared language and skills for addressing conflict
- Offers opportunity to build relationships, get to know each other, and strengthen team unity

Examples of skills we practiced:

- Clarifying what the disagreement is about
- Using active & reflective listening
- Using “I” statements

Grievance Guidelines



Why they matter:

- Give everyone a clear, predictable way to raise concerns
- Reduce confusion about things like “who do I talk to?” for support
- Help people know what support is available



Developing Grievance Guidelines



1. Start simple by naming values and principles.
2. Write down a basic flow.
3. Build on what you already have.
4. Think about equity, inclusion and trauma-informed practices.
5. Make them a living document.
6. Talk about the guidelines regularly.

Reflection & Discussion

- 💡 What is one action step you could take to strengthen conflict resolution on your team?

QUESTIONS



Community Building

- ❖ Community Engagement Learning Network Feedback Session to inform 2026 planning