

A misty forest path with tall trees and sunlight filtering through the canopy. The path is a dirt road that leads into the distance, flanked by tall, thin trees. The ground is covered in green grass and some fallen leaves. The overall atmosphere is serene and peaceful.

# Making Safe Sanctuaries Safe

Reflecting on the Meanings of Safety

# What Does Safety Mean to You?

- Are we protecting someone? If so, who?
- From what or from whom?
- Might these be the wrong questions?
- Possible reframe:  
Safety as an experience or feeling rather than a state of being



**SAFETY SPOTLIGHT**

# Risks of an Primary Focus on “Protective” Safety

- Fosters Hyper-attentiveness and Fear
  - If we look for threats, we will find them
- Reduces agency of “protected”
- Too much attention to rigid process
  - Contexts are dynamic, rules tend to be static
  - When harm happens in “protected” space, may lead to “sanctified harm”
- Plays into Existing Biases or Stereotypes
  - Stranger danger
  - Racial and gender justice
- May lead to overconfidence in tools on hand
  - Sex offender registry or background checks

# What Might Contextual Safety Mean?

- What are the key components of our context?
  - Physical Space
  - Participants/Neighbors/Colleagues
  - Rules, Norms, Expectations
  - Language
  - Common Values and Goals
  - Others?
- How do we ensure these components are explicit, known, and shared?
- Is there room for welcoming and making feel safe those who have offended? (May be too much to go into today.)

# Breakout Discussion

- Each small group will review the key components
- Discuss what can be done to make these part of a space that is more likely to be experienced as safe
- Identify ways to ensure regular review of these context components
- Identify ways to make raising concerns or reporting harm more likely and less traumatizing

The most radical  
step you can take  
is your next one.”

-- James Baldwin



Questions or comments?

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Don't hesitate to reach out!

Thank  
you!!