



***“A spirit and a setting
where we invite the ‘stranger’
and learn in public.”***

Gracious Space is a simple yet powerful approach to working better together. Defined as “a spirit and setting where we invite the ‘stranger’ and learn in public,” Gracious Space creates an environment for being intentional, welcoming diverse opinions, listening deeply and learning together. Gracious Space can move organizations and communities forward, together, with deeper understanding and solid problem solving.

Core Elements:

Spirit: Create a supportive environment

Gracious Space brings forth attributes such as safety, compassion, curiosity and humor. When we bring these attributes with us into relationships, we are “being” Gracious Space. The spirit of Gracious Space includes the spirit we bring, the spirit of the group, and tapping into a greater spirit that empowers the work. The spirit of Gracious Space helps us be the change we want to see in the world.

Setting: The container that shapes the interaction

Gracious Space has a physical dimension that can support our work with others. Our work and living spaces can build up or break down. By paying attention to simple hospitality, physical comfort or the history of the place, we can create a setting of Gracious Space. Setting includes paying attention to physical space, ensuring the approach complements our goal, and being intentional about adding items that can enhance Gracious Space.

Invite the ‘Stranger’: Intentionally seeking the other

Inviting the ‘stranger’ is an active commitment to welcome the other and listen to diverse perspectives, even those that are inconvenient or uncomfortable. Leaders working in complex or uncertain territory need to determine who we need in the room, identify the ‘stranger’ or strange idea, and what we can learn from the stranger. It’s helpful to remember we are each the ‘stranger’ to someone else!

Learn in Public: Let go and open up to possibility

In Gracious Space people listen more and judge less. They suspend judgment and remain open to learning. In this space we can work better across boundaries, share diverse perspectives, work through conflict, discover transformative solutions and carry out innovations for change.