



Safe Spaces

WSCF Europe aims to create safe spaces for intercultural and ecumenical dialogue. A safe space is where everyone feels respected, and is able to learn by stepping out of their comfort zone. They are free of intimidation, fear and harassment. Safe spaces give you an opportunity to learn by stepping out of your comfort zone.

Safe spaces are created together. Everyone who attends our conferences is responsible for making sure there is always safe space.

During times of discussion, it's everyone's responsibility to make sure that those around them feel safe.

- Be willing to speak up if you feel unsafe. Chances are someone else feels the same.
- Make sure those around you have the opportunity to speak, while remembering that no one should be forced to share,
- Refrain from judging the individual or from making broad judgemental statements.
- Confidentiality after a discussion is essential.
- Don't reignite a sensitive discussion outside the context of small groups or plenary discussion.
- Keep in mind that most participants are speaking a second language, so they may express their opinion in a harsher way than they intend.

Please let someone know if you feel unsafe for any reason. You can speak to a pastoral care person, or a member of the conference leadership team.

What is a Safe Space?

A place where anyone can express themselves without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, physical or mental ability or religion or denomination; a place where commonly agreed guidelines protect each person's self-respect and dignity and encourage everyone to respect others.

Three keys to creating safe space are:

- Respect
 - Confidentiality
 - Active Listening
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Always remember the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Respect

Respect is a regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others. It is possible to respect another person while disagreeing with their point of view.

Confidentiality

To make the conference and ERA a safe space for everyone, we ask you to respect the confidentiality of every individual at the conference and not to repeat personal details or stories shared by other participants outside the conference.

Active Listening

Active listening helps to create a safe space for dialogue. It is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding.

Active listening means you give your full attention to listening to another person, rather than thinking about how to respond. Once they've finished speaking, summarise what they've said, and ask questions to make sure you've understood them.

- Look at the speaker directly
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language
- Keep your posture open and inviting
- Allow the speaker to finish
- Summarize the speaker's comments
- Be candid, open, and honest in your response

Comfort Zones

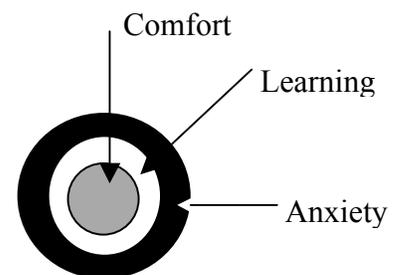
You're in your comfort zone when you feel physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually comfortable. Your comfort zone is a place you know very well.

Sometimes to learn and experience new things we have to step out of our comfort zone, which is both exciting and frightening.

The comfort zone – what you know and are comfortable with.

The learning zone – challenges you and takes you out of the known.

The anxiety zone – where you only feel uncomfortable and are no longer learning.





Tips for stepping out of your comfort zone:

- Remember it will feel uncomfortable, be ready for it!
- Learn to recognise the boundaries between comfort and learning, and learning and anxiety
- Do it in a safe space with other people where you can talk to others about it