

A person with a backpack is seen from behind, looking out over a vast mountain range. The scene is partially obscured by a blue overlay on the left side. The right side of the image shows a clear view of the mountains and a valley.

# FINAL DETAILS

# LEDGE

LEADERSHIP

## 6 FOUNDATIONAL RELATIONSHIP PRINCIPLES

# Our Vision

# Our Mission

# Our Message

# Our Values

**We Envision a World Where People Lead Relationally and Share Power**

**We Inspire Young Adults to Lead Themselves and Thrive in Teams**

**Lead Yourself... Change the World**

## **Inspire Young Leaders**

We invest in this life stage as it is critical to shaping leadership effectiveness.

## **Embrace Differences**

We value all people equally and work to build relationships in a non-judgemental and caring way.

## **Engage the Whole Person**

We nurture all aspects of a person to enhance their personal contribution and impact.

## **Cultivate Teams**

We are convinced working together is the most effective way to generate lasting results.

## **Engage Inter-culturally**

We build relationships across the road and around the world.

## **Build Partnerships**

We strive for connections with individuals, organizations, and communities to generate mutually beneficial outcomes.

# The Need for Safe Relationships

All team members (including paid and unpaid staff, volunteers, and board) of Ledge Leadership are asked to read, process, and follow our 6 Foundational Relationship Principles for their role with Ledge. The principles are outlined in this document.

## Our Philosophy

The health and quality of our relationships increase as we grow as whole people (physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual).

Leadership is an ongoing process of leading ourselves and relating as whole people who work together to share power.

Power is inherent in systems of leadership, society, and individual relationships. When we share power, we create an environment that welcomes differences, levels inequities, removes oppression, and increases accountability in these systems.

## Our Relationship Principles:

1. We relate as equals and actively pursue equality.
2. We function as a team.
3. We nurture our relationships.
4. We talk through our differences, problems, and concerns.
5. We avoid misusing/abusing our power and control.
6. We hold each other accountable to take personal ownership for the Foundational Relationship Principles

## Our Commitment

Ledge Leadership has a commitment, as well as a legal obligation, to provide a relationally safe, caring, and secure space for volunteers, paid staff, and all participants (including children, youth, and vulnerable adults) in our organization and in our experiences.

It is our commitment to live according to the 6 Foundational Relationship Principles as outlined in this document. We believe this will create a community of safe and empowering relationships for all team and board members representing Ledge Leadership. Everyone involved in Ledge shares a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment of safety and trust based on these Relationship Principles.

# Foundational Relationship Principle 1

## We Relate as Equals and Actively Pursue Equality

We are all born with worth, lovability, beauty, courage, creativity, the power to choose, and the ability to connect with compassion.

When we interact with individuals or groups who are different than us, we may consciously or subconsciously treat them as 'other' or, in some cases, 'less than' or 'better than' ourselves. Many of us have been on the receiving end of unequal treatment, and have internalized false beliefs that someone else is better than or less than us.

We have learned tendencies to judge people by these differences and view and treat them as if they are not our equals. These tendencies are reinforced by historic, systemic, and structurally engrained inequities that cause people to experience the world very differently. The inequities cause an unequal distribution of power and resources, in which some individuals and groups disproportionately receive benefits or face barriers.

### **We recognize that we have individual and shared responsibilities to:**

1. Acknowledge, challenge, and work to undo the prejudices we personally or collectively hold.
2. Apologize for and seek reconciliation to undo harms caused by acts of discrimination.
3. Actively dismantle the systems of oppression that prevent us from relating as equals at an individual and societal level, such as white supremacy, colonialism, misogyny, ableism, and heteronormativity.

On our team, although we are different and have varying experiences, roles, functions, and responsibilities, we strive to live our values with an attitude of equality in how we interact with and respond to each other every day. We work together to recognize possible barriers to participating as equals and take reasonable efforts to minimize or remove the barriers which are within our sphere of influence, so all people feel safer and able to engage and contribute to the best of their ability.

Ledge strives to provide programs and services in a way that respects the dignity, independence, and equal opportunity of all people who experience systemic oppression. When we create our programs and spaces to be accessible to all who are most oppressed and to all with disabilities, they are safe and accessible for all. We are committed to giving everyone the same opportunity to access and benefit from our programs and services.

# Foundational Relationship Principle 2

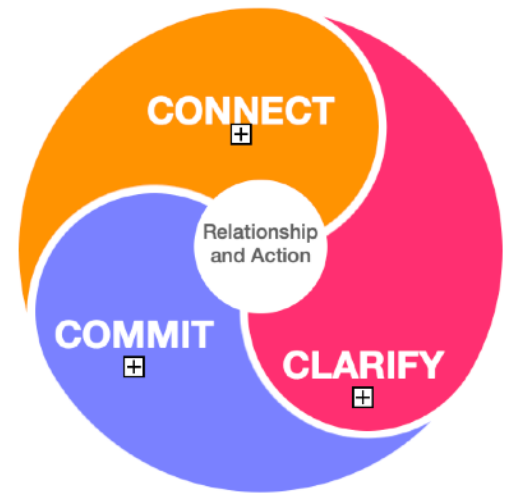
## Function as a Team

Working with one another is collaborative. It is about sharing, supporting, and encouraging each other as we grow and develop. Ledge Teams operate as Shared Leadership Teams with both paid and unpaid staff offering their abilities and insight to the regular activities of Ledge. The Board provides governance and overall direction.

Taking the time to build and nurture relationships will accomplish goals, enhance activities, build community, and promote whole human beings. When leaders do not do the 'work' of relationship, inevitably this will lead to destructive relationships and organizations. To keep our teams healthy and functional, we engage in three core principles:

- 1. Connect to Team Members**  
Build a sense of trust and openness in our team relationships.
- 2. Clarify Team Action**  
Ensure our team strives for quality and reaches goals.
- 3. Commit to Team Action**  
Move in a unified direction to accomplish our goals.

These 3 principles inform the Ledge Meeting Method we use to guide all of our team meetings.



# Foundational Relationship Principle 3

## We Nurture our Relationships

We prioritize building healthy relationship that foster equality and trust. Ledge is aware of the importance of the following areas:

### Privacy

Ledge is committed to the protection of the personal information of each participant, client, donor, team, and board member.

All personal information collected by Ledge will remain confidential. It is not shared with, or transferred to any other corporation, body or individuals unless required by subpoena.

### Finances

Ledge Leadership will conduct its financial activities, fundraising, and relationships with donors in a responsible manner, consistent with the ethical obligations of stewardship and the legal requirements of the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

No more will be spent on administration and fundraising than is required to ensure effective management and resource development. Spending will meet, or exceed, Revenue Canada's requirement for expenditures on charitable activities.

### **Safe Relationships Team**

A point person will be appointed to the Safe Relationships Team from the existing Operational Team. The Safe Relationships Team Point Person is the Privacy Officer responsible for compliance related to team, board member, participant, client, guest, and donor sensitive information.

### **Training**

We take seriously our Safe Relationships Policies and Procedures and will screen, inform, and train all Ledge Team and Board Members in the practice of our Safe Relationships Policy and Procedures.

### **Working with Other Organizations**

If we are working with or for another organization at their location, we will respect their organization's policy and procedures while also being mindful of the Ledge Safe Relationships Policies and Procedures.

### **Health and Safety:**

#### **Risk Assessment**

All workplaces must be assessed and reviewed or revised, at a minimum annually, for risk factors pertaining to all Safe Relationships Policies and Procedures.

Risk assessment may determine the need to develop specific skills and knowledge. All Ledge team and board members will be required to take training for their role, based on the results of the Risk Assessment.

#### **Mental Health & Safety**

Ledge Leadership provides resources and training that are evidence-based and our content aligns with positive mental health, reduces stigma, and builds resiliency.

We consult with our partners about presentations and discuss topics in ways that are inclusive and culturally sensitive. We are mindful of the diverse perspectives of individuals with lived experience related to mental health concerns.

#### **Cultural Health and Safety**

Ledge Leadership will provide resources and training that acknowledges and embraces cultural differences. Our commitment to cultural health and safety requires us to be aware of, examine, and shift any internalized 'colonial mindset' that sees our own cultural values as somehow inherently superior (biases, attitudes, assumptions, stereotypes, and prejudices) which contribute to unsafe relationships.

#### **Physical Health and Safety**

Ledge has policies and procedures in place to increase the physical safety of individuals participating in our programs or meeting in our office space.

# Foundational Relationship Principle 4

## We Talk Through our Differences, Problems, and Concerns

Each one of us is uniquely different and we experience those differences when we are in relationship with each other.

Conflict is the end result of not talking about our differences when we notice them. In order to bring love and peace to our relationships, we need to engage in honest and transparent conversation with each other.

Talking directly with another person about our differences, misunderstandings, or questions as they arise, means we do not accumulate any hurt, resentments, or misunderstandings that get in the way of positively relating to one another.

# Foundational Relationship Principle 5

## We Avoid Misusing/Abusing our Power and Control

Misuse of power and control in leadership refers to demeaning, disrespectful, or unwelcome behaviour where an individual, group, or organization feels objectified, dominated, or threatened. It can be one or more specific incidents or a pattern of behaviour.

Ledge is committed to the prevention of misusing or abusing power and control and to providing a safe environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

Misuse or abuse of power and control can take many forms including:

### 1. Financial Power and Control:

Financial power and control can be exerted in subtle and non-verbal ways. Those receiving money may go along with those who have the money because of fear of losing their income or funding if they do not agree.

### 2. Emotional Power and Control:

Emotional power and control involves using persistent and intentional verbal, non-verbal, or physically aggressive or offensive acts such as:

- Isolation
- Minimize, Deny, and Blame
- Put Downs and Name Calling
- Mind Games
- Intimidation
- Coercion and Threats
- Privilege
- Using Others



### **3. Sexual Power and Control:**

- Sexual power and control behaviour includes any unwelcome sexually oriented actions, language, innuendo, gestures, flirtation, other communication, etc.

### **4. Racial/Ethnic/Cultural Power and Control:**

- Racial/ethnic/cultural power and control involves any unwelcome racially, ethnically, or culturally oriented actions, language, innuendo, gestures, and other communication.

### **5. Spiritual Power and Control:**

- Spiritual power and control occurs when religious leaders use their power and position to manipulate, control, and/or coerce their congregation/followers/members.

### **6. Physical Power and Control:**

- Physical power and control involves any physical force or touch used to express power or control.
- It also includes the physical neglect of children.
- Included is the concept of safe touch. Physical contact with participants should be age, developmentally, and culturally appropriate.

### **Complaints, Investigation, and Appeals**

- A complaints and investigation procedure will be used when an individual or group of individuals believe the Ledge Method for Dealing with Differences has not been able to resolve the issue, problem, or concern, or it is perceived to be emotionally or physically unsafe to begin or continue using the Ledge Method.
- Although Ledge respects a team or board member's need for confidentiality and self-determination, they are responsible for disclosing any situation which threatens the safety of the workplace. This includes threats an intimate partner or ex-partner has made toward them.

### **Disclosure of Persons with a Violent History**

- The Safe Relationships Team is required to provide information to a team or board member about a person with a history of violent behaviour if the team or board member could be expected to encounter the person in the course of his/her work and there is a risk of a misuse or abuse of power and control that may expose people to physical injury.
- Personal information shall be disclosed only as is reasonably necessary to protect the team or board member from physical injury.

### **Organizational and Team Healing**

- When Ledge is dealing with a misuse or abuse of power and control, it will create hurt, pain and confusion for all involved and has a far reaching impact beyond Ledge. It is of vital importance to find a way to help all involved in Ledge to process their thoughts, feelings, and concerns, as well as create a vision for Ledge and for their relationships moving forward.



# Foundational Relationship Principle 6

## **We hold each other accountable to take personal ownership for the Foundational Relationship Principles**

We enter this pursuit for safe relationships with an openness to compassionately listen to all about how we are practicing these principles and together find creative solutions for change. We humbly admit we have and will fall short of our vision for safe relationships. We recognize our need to function in teams to make this policy a reality in our organization and in our lives.

We hold each other accountable to the following, including but not limited to...

- **Engage with the Ledge Vision, Mission, and Values**
- **Follow our Foundational Relationship Principles and Procedures**
- **Practice vulnerability in relationships**
- **Utilize our individual skills, abilities, and passions**
- **Follow through on the commitments we make during our team/board meetings**