

Community Agreements

We ask that all clients and students of Positive Force Movement, LLC read and sign these agreements around relationships, boundaries, and behavior. Our hope is that setting up these expectations around how we'll relate to each other will help foster a safer and braver space where all people will feel more free to be themselves. If something in these agreements is unclear, please feel free to ask Lore or Christine to clarify.

I agree to respect others.

Violence, bullying, intimidation, and name-calling will not be tolerated. Please respect people's opinions, beliefs, differing states of being, and differing points of view. Avoid talking over other people and interrupting. If you disagree with someone, engage in respectful debate without yelling, insults, or name calling. If you ever feel unsafe or disrespected, please tell Lore or Christine and/or ask for help and safety from the community.

I agree to practice consensual dialogue.

Give space before you take space when engaging in dialogue. In group training sessions and facilitated discussions, one person speaks at a time, and all people acknowledge that active listening is important. Being present in the group and community, keeping our attention focused on the task or conversation at hand, observing body language, and taking breaks when appropriate are all encouraged.

In online forums, we honor each person's autonomy in regards to determining whether to have their cameras on or off; furthermore, we honor the right of all people to decide for themselves whether or not to make eye contact during conversations or to engage in stimming behaviors.

Remember that silence is okay in the midst of conversation! Unforced dialogue is one in which all people are free to step up safely. Be sincere and consistent, and practice respectful honesty in all interactions.

I agree not to touch anyone without their consent.

Each person has a different comfort level around touch, and for a variety of different reasons (including, but not limited to, trauma, chronic pain, having a bad day, etc.). Please don't touch anyone without their expressed consent. This includes hugging, touching on the arm/shoulder/back, tapping on the shoulder, and so on. If you would like to hug someone, ask ("Hug or handshake?" works well) or give an open-armed gesture

and then let them move toward you if they want to accept the hug. If the answer is no, please accept the no without judgment.

I agree to be mindful and to notice when I'm making assumptions or judgments based on body size, age, gender presentation, or ability.

The *only* thing you can tell about a person by looking at a person's body is roughly the size and shape of that person's body. You *can't* tell what they eat, how much they exercise, if they are healthy or sick, if they have an eating disorder, what their gender is, what their body can or cannot do, and so on. Noticing the assumptions we make based on our cultural conditioning **and** questioning/challenging those assumptions is an important step in our liberation, individually and as a community. Treat everyone as an individual and not representative of a group.

I agree to honor and use people's correct gender pronouns.

Please don't assume someone's gender identity or pronouns by looking at them; Positive Force Movement is a space where all people can develop the habit of asking others' correct gender pronouns. If you don't know or don't remember, it is always best to ask. This is also an excellent space to practice getting into the habit of offering your pronouns first! For example, "My name is Lore, and my pronouns are they/them/theirs. What are yours?" or "I'm Christine: she/her/hers pronouns. Can you remind me what pronouns you use?"

Repeated misgendering of anyone within Positive Force Movement in person or online is a violation of our Community Agreements.

I agree to refrain from making comments about body shape, size, or weight.

Maybe a person is happy with their body as it is, or maybe they aren't. Ultimately, other people's bodies are not our business. Even a comment that you perceive to be a compliment might be uncomfortable to the other person, regardless of their size.

I agree to refrain from invalidating people's experiences.

If a person is talking about something that you have experience with and you don't agree with how they are talking about their experience, please don't assume that you are right and they are wrong. No one person's experience is universal. (Examples: "I had a terrible migraine; it lasted 3 hours." "That's not a real migraine: mine last for days!" or "When I was in the restaurant, the waitress gave me a dirty look when I ordered food, and I'm sure that it's because I'm fat." "How do you know why she looked that way? Shouldn't you give her the benefit of the doubt?" or "I was treated differently at that store than my friend was, and I know it's because I'm Black and they aren't." "Are

you sure that's the reason?" Trust people when they tell you about themselves, and honor the validity of their experiences!)

I agree to refrain from proselytizing about intentional weight loss or dieting.

Body weight is not a determinant of health. Body size is not equated with morality. Health is not an imperative, nor is it guaranteed to anyone, even if they make "healthy choices." Promoting, espousing, or celebrating dieting, weight loss, or weight loss surgery are prohibited in this space. While we respect the rights of all individuals to foster their own views and make choices about what to do with their bodies, there are approximately a gazillion other places on earth where dieting and weight loss will be celebrated. Positive Force Movement is not one of those places.

I agree to refrain from talking negatively about bodies (mine or anyone else's), including body snark or shaming.

Positive Force Movement is a safe space to explore joyful movement and forthright conversation without negative body talk. We understand that learning to love your body is a process, but we ask that you refrain from shaming your body or anyone else's while you are in this space. Negative body talk won't be tolerated. If you're not sure what constitutes negative body talk, please feel free to ask Christine or Lore!

I agree not to fix or rescue people.

We do not give advice unless it is explicitly asked for. The inverse of this agreement is that if you want advice, please ask for it explicitly.

I agree to use "I" instead of "you" when speaking about myself.

Personalize your knowledge, don't project it. When we talk about ourselves in the second or third person, it's a way of distancing ourselves from our own lived experience, and it can make it more difficult to remain present. If you mean "I," say "I." (Example: "When you go to a yoga class and the teacher assumes you're a beginner, it really makes me mad!" versus "When I go to a yoga class and the teacher assumes I'm a beginner, it really makes me mad.")

I agree to assume good intentions.

We all have the right to be human. Humans are imperfect. Not everyone comes into this space with the same experiences and knowledge, so please assume that people have good intent. Sometimes we express our thoughts imperfectly, get emotional, feel triggered or offended, or feel fragile. Please give each other the benefit of assuming good intentions in every interaction. Please have positive intent yourself, and be accountable for the impact of your actions and words as well. If you truly don't feel that

you can be supportive and positive in a discussion then it is best to walk away from it temporarily or to bring your concerns to Lore or Christine.

I agree to respect the confidentiality of others.

Movement spaces and facilitated discussions can bring forth wonderful, vulnerable conversations, insights, and connections. Sharing lessons that we learn is okay, but please don't assume permission to share personal, identifying information.

I agree to practice self-care to address my critical needs.

This will vary from individual to individual, but might look like:

- Having food and water beforehand so that I can think clearly, stay present, and engage in the activities at hand.
- Taking time to slow down, breathe, and ground yourself when you arrive and as often as necessary during your time with us.
- Coming prepared with anything you'll need to minimize feeling flustered or stressed.
- Meeting your physical needs (going to the bathroom when you need to, bringing food if you're likely to be hungry, staying hydrated, etc.)
- Take agency and responsibility to say yes or no when you need to. Communicate your needs to others.
- Take breaks if/when you need to.
- After your time with us, make time to care for yourself whenever possible.

I agree to abide by boundaries set regarding scope of practice and areas of expertise.

The team at Positive Force Movement agrees to communicate honestly and forthrightly regarding the limits of their respective scopes of practices and areas of expertise, and to refer people to additional resources and specialists when it is advisable and necessary. Please honor the boundaries that we set in these regards, as they are for your safety and wellbeing!

Furthermore, please understand that the herbalism, Reiki, and other related services that we offer should in no way take the place of seeking the care and guidance of a medical doctor and are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Herbal care and holistic care services can provide incredible healing stimulus to the body, but should not be a replacement for care from your primary care physician. Please do your own research to ascertain none of the products or services that we offer are contraindicated for you.

I agree to refrain from the use of alcohol and unprescribed drugs prior to coming to Positive Force Movement.

- Positive Force Movement is a sober space, and that as such we define practicing self care to include not showing up when hungover or while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and that at no point should any of those substances be present within Positive Force Movement's in-person spaces. Providing sober spaces for people with marginalized identities (who are disproportionately affected by drug and alcohol addiction) is a valuable aspect of self care and community care.

I agree to refrain from wearing strong scents into the space for in-person classes and events.

Many folks are sensitive to chemical fragrances which can cause headaches, shortness of breath, allergies, difficulty in concentrating, and more. Please refrain from wearing or bringing the following into the space: perfume, cologne, scented aftershave, scented hairspray, etc.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

This document was adapted from the Community Agreements form used by Amber Karnes of Body Positive Yoga. Amber gives further credit to The Berkeley Student Cooperative and the Anti-Oppression Network for their guides on safer spaces, and she acknowledges that some of the ideas and language within this document are adapted from those guides.