

Approach

All groups that come together for the purpose of learning, creating, communicating or celebrating are served when the creation and maintenance of a safe space is established. A truly safe group environment provides the basis for powerful transformation, empowering exploration and inspired collaboration. The use of the Standards of Presence, which is a clearly articulated and easy to understand set of guidelines, provides the container of safety in any group.

Acceptance

The primary underlying principle of the Standards of Presence is acceptance. Know that everyone is doing their best to learn, adjust, and follow these Standards. Self-acceptance is particularly beneficial to experience a safe, empowering environment to learn, create, communicate and celebrate.

The Practice

Each person in the group agrees to practice these Standards to the best of their ability. The co-creation of this group's safe space begins with . . . *It is my intention to . . .*

1

. . . maintain confidentiality.

- What I see and hear that is personal or specific to another within the group will stay here.
- When sharing the essence of someone else's story, without the names and specific details, I agree to share in an honoring manner that celebrates the original person's magnificence.

2

. . . adopt a stand for innocence.

- I intend to have a beginner's mind.
- It's my intention to release evaluating or comparing what I am learning.
- I'll allow myself to "try on" and wear the information for a while, as it stands.

3

. . . practice a positive focus.

- I plan to focus on the 98% (or more) that is working.
- What I focus on expands.
- I'll fill my tank with the power of positivity.
- What I perceive in others I strengthen in myself.

4

. . . connect at a heart level.

- I'll practice opening my heart to the essence of what is being conveyed.
- I am willing to get "out of my limiting and judgmental mind."
- I intend to release the need to evaluate and judge, at least for now, in the moment.
- I'll connect with my own body as I connect heart-to-heart with others.

5

. . . claim my experience as my own.

- I'll focus on the parts that are magnificent, particularly in myself and particularly when learning or exploring new areas.
- I intend to speak in "I" statements so I can claim it as my experience and to
- I release telling others what they should do, feel, or believe, how they should act, etc.

6**... listen deeply and with honor.**

- I intend to be 100% engaged and focus my positive attention on the presenter or person sharing.
- I'll refrain from side talk, cross talk, or interrupting when someone is sharing,
- I'll refrain from formulating my response until the person sharing is complete.
- I'll refrain from making repetitive comments or drawing attention to myself.
- It's my intention to re-spect, to look again with new eyes.
 - I'll release anticipating what the person is going to share.
 - I'll see it as an opportunity to be fascinated by another.
 - I'll look for the gifts being shared – their vulnerability, authenticity, brilliance, etc.
- I want to allow the person sharing to indicate that he or she is complete.

7**... give only authentic and positive acknowledgment and support.**

- I'm authentic while giving only positive feedback.
- I'll keep it simple and speak to the essence of what I experienced.
- I'll maintain eye contact and/or heart contact with the person to whom I am giving support while remaining fully present in my body.
- I'll allow this session to stand on its own, and I'll release comparing this session to past sessions.
- I'll notice when I want to give unsolicited advice, criticism, counseling or consulting, then release it without sharing it!

8**... fully receive acknowledgment and support.**

- I'm open to receiving acknowledgment – as the gift it is – and let it sink in.
- I'll maintain eye and/or heart contact with the person acknowledging me while remaining fully present in my own body.
- I'll respond with a simple “Thank you,” and I'll refrain from “cross talk” or comments back to the person acknowledging me.

9**... practice self care and self responsibility, and allow others to do the same.**

- I intend to maintain a safe space for myself. I'll take care of and honor the wisdom of my body, heart, mind, and source of inspiration, allowing them to guide me.
- If something feels like a judgment or advice, I can simply ask that it be reframed.
- When I have a judgment, I'll say “Thank you for sharing,” to that voice within me, and I'll choose a more resourceful thought and focus.
- I intend to empower others by allowing them to take care of themselves.

10**... be fully present.**

- I intend to maintain these agreements in and out of the learning space. (I'm honoring!)
- I plan to be here on time to start and after all breaks. (I'm here!)
- I'll stay for the entire course. (I stay here!)
- I'll wear my nametag in a visible place. (I'm known!)
(In a teleclass, I'll state my name when speaking.)
- I'm free from the effects of mind altering substances. (I'm conscious!)
- I value the energy and brilliance of my body, mind, and spirit in each moment. (I'm fully present!)