



Standards of Presence

Guidelines to support optimized group experiences

The Approach: Co-creating a Safe Environment

All groups that come together for the purpose of learning, creating, communicating, living 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, inspired collaboration and vibrant living. The use of the Standards of Presence, a clearly articulated and easy to understand set of guidelines, provides a proven container of safety in any group.

The Underlying Principle: Acceptance

The primary underlying principle of the Standards of Presence is acceptance. Know that everyone is doing their best to learn, grow, respect, and follow these Standards.

Self-acceptance is particularly beneficial to experience a safe, empowering environment to learn, create, communicate, and celebrate.

The Practice: It is my intention to . . .

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 . . .*

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

3

. . . practice a positive focus.

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

4

. . . connect at a deep level.

- I practice opening my heart to the essence of what is being conveyed.
- I practice opening my creative and life-affirming mind.
 - I get out of my limiting and judgmental mind.
 - I release the need to evaluate and judge, at least for now, in the moment.
- I am anchored in the present as I connect with others.

5

. . . claim my experience as my own.

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

6

. . . listen deeply and with honor.

- I am 100% engaged and focus my positive attention on the presenter or person sharing.
- I refrain from side talk, cross talk, or interrupting when someone is sharing,
- I refrain from formulating my response until the person sharing is complete.
- I refrain from making repetitive comments or drawing attention to myself.
- I re-spect, and look again with new eyes.
 - I release anticipating what the person is going to share.
 - I see it as an opportunity to be fascinated by another.

- I look for the gifts being shared – their courage, authenticity, brilliance, etc.
- I allow the person sharing to indicate that he or she is complete.

7

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

- I am authentic while giving only positive feedback.
- I keep it simple and speak to the essence of what I experienced.
- I maintain eye contact and/or heart contact with the person to whom I am giving support.
- I allow this session to stand on its own, and I release comparing this session to past sessions.
- I 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 am open to receiving acknowledgment – as the gift it is – and let it sink in.
- I maintain eye and/or heart contact with the person acknowledging me while remaining fully present.
- I respond with a simple “Thank you,” and I 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 maintain a safe space for myself. I take care of and honor the wisdom of my heart, mind, and source of inspiration, allowing them to guide me.
- When I have a judgment, I say “Thank you for sharing,” to that voice within me, and I choose a more resourceful thought and focus.
- I empower others by allowing them to take care of themselves.

10

... be fully present.

- I maintain these agreements in and out of the learning space.
- I am here on time to start and after all breaks.
- I stay for the entire course.
- I wear my nametag in a visible place. (In a teleclass, I state my name when speaking.)
- I am free from the effects of mind altering substances.
- I value my intuition and my multiple intelligences to guide me.

**Adapted from the Standards of Presence from the Inspired Learning Foundation.