

FLOURISH COMMUNITY COVENANT

The following was created by Flourish Community participants as a collective agreement about the community space we endeavor to create.

By initialing each guideline and signing at the bottom of this document, you are acknowledging awareness of and willingness to uphold the community agreement.

Habitual disregard for these guidelines will result in individual meetings with staff, and in prolonged and/or extreme cases, a respectful request that you leave the program.

As a part of the Flourish community, I agree:

To be mindful that Flourish is a children/youth-friendly environment. This means that when children/youth are present, we do not use any vulgar language. We do not show up for meetings intoxicated or under the influence of any substances. We do not act violently or maliciously, in words or actions, against other members of the community. We – as a community – endeavor to model the type of behavior and actions that are healthy, loving, and supportive for all children/youth.

To participate in the community's "Brave Space" environment. Brave Spaces ask that ALL members of the community engage in authentic, honest, and mutually respectful communication. A "Brave Space" recognizes that "Safe Spaces" are often not actually possible for many of our society's most marginalized. Brave Spaces honor the courage that it takes for marginalized people to be authentic about their experiences with systematic oppression (racism, sexism, poverty) and personal discrimination.

Honoring these individuals' courage means that others, who have not experienced the multi-layered marginalization as the person sharing, do not respond by saying things like: I understand how you felt in that situation, I know what you mean, I had the same experience when _____, or I highly doubt that so and so acted that way/the agency did that/what you say is true.

Instead, Brave Spaces encourage responses like: Thank-you for sharing. I can't imagine how you must have felt when you were treated or spoken to in that way. I appreciate you telling us about your experience because it really opened my eyes to (insert privilege/mindset you need to be aware of/shift) that I had not been aware of before.

To appreciate diversity and be understanding of differences.

Appreciating diversity means being grateful for all the factors that make each individual unique. This includes (but is not limited to): ethnicity, economic class, race, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, cultural background, where we live, education, professional experience, etc. Appreciating diversity means we do not discriminate against others because they are different than ourselves in some/many ways.

To be mindful that it is natural for people to disagree, especially in a community whose members are diverse racially, culturally, economically, in age, professional backgrounds, education levels, etc.

Part of the Flourish experience can include learning/understanding how to disagree with others without being disagreeable.

To practice active listening and offer compassionately honest responses in group engagement.

Active listening involves being present (body/mind/heart) and paying attention when others are speaking. It means not interrupting or thinking about all the ways to “correct” things that you believe are “wrong.” Flourish believes that permission to be honest and have honest conversations is vital to community development and growth.

That every member of Flourish has permission to learn. No one in this community is perfect, knows everything, or has all the answers.

We all make mistakes, have tough days, and growing edges. We all have a lot to contribute and room for growth. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, things to teach and things to learn.

To respect the limits of others and exercise healthy boundaries.

Everyone has limits – physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, financial, time-related. On an emotional level, respecting the limits of others would be not asking anyone to share more about a personal situation than they are comfortable sharing.

Exercising healthy boundaries means that you know where your own personal limits are and can (compassionately) let others know when they are asking more than you are comfortable doing.

That I will not tell anyone else’s story without their permission.

To remain aware of the commitment I make to the community when I agree to participate in Flourish.

This commitment includes (but is not limited to): the community covenant, childcare agreement, and participant (Achiever, Bridger, and Companion) application, agreement, and attendance policy.

_____ **Flourish should be a positive, uplifting, and supportive community that is willing to laugh, love, have fun, share, do the hard work of personal transformation and grow together.**

Participating in Flourish and attending meetings should never feel like a dreaded obligation. If I begin to feel this way, or experience behavior from another community member/s that make me feel unwelcome and/or uncomfortable, I will reach out to a Flourish/The Shalom Project staff member about my feelings and/or experience.

If you any questions or concerns about the above guidelines, please contact a Flourish staff member for clarification before signing below.

I, _____ (print your name), understand and agree to uphold the above community guidelines to the best of my ability. If I, at any time, have questions, concerns, and/ or experience a community member repetitively not upholding the above guidelines, I will discuss the matter with a member of Flourish/The Shalom Project staff.

Signature: _____ Date
____/____/____

Witness: _____ Date
____/____/____