

**PEACE  
OVER  
VIOLENCE**



**Our Practices & Values**



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- Trauma and Resiliency Informed
- Empowerment Based
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- Inclusivity & Diversity
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## Introduction

At Peace Over Violence, we practice to create a workplace environment that is supportive, kind, inclusive, creative, and productive. The work we do is challenging, compelling and demanding. We are a social service, social change and social justice organization with a deep commitment to survivors, their families, and healthy and safe communities. We intend to be here for the long haul. We continue to evolve with and for the needs of the community, the work, and our ever-changing world. As advocates and activists it is important that we show up for the community and that we take care of each other. We are constantly adapting to better ourselves and our services to meet and exceed the demand. This means we need to be good at self care and we need the support of each other.

We have sought to identify practices that reflect the values we hold in high esteem as we work one on one and one by one to intervene and prevent violence. The very name and brand peace over violence is a value and a practice. We call them practices because that is what we must do to live and embody our values... practice.

We have separated these practices into three categories of values: foundational, core and aspirational. Our foundational values are long-standing and fundamental, and have worked together in building the organization we are today. Our core values remain constant and are at the root of our work. Our aspirational values drive our everyday commitment to individual and collective betterment.

This handbook was developed in collaboration with the Center for Collective Wisdom. It is an expression of our collective, agreed-upon ideals and values at Peace Over Violence. Please use this handbook as an inspiration as you join in our everyday practices to create an environment of which we can all be proud.





## Mission & Vision

Peace Over Violence is a nonprofit, feminist, multicultural, volunteer organization dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence.

Our vision is a world without violence. Where no child is abused, no wife battered, no friend raped. A world without terror, without threats, without wounds from intentional actions. Where the strong provide for the vulnerable, where the vulnerable become empowered, where every kind of family is safe and secure, and girls and boys and women and men have a fair and equal chance at the pursuit of happiness in a tolerant and talented society.

### FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

Survivor Centered  
Trauma and Resiliency Informed  
Empowerment Based  
Prevention Oriented  
Learning Driven  
Volunteer Powered

### CORE VALUES

Integrity  
Collaboration  
Leadership  
Community & Kinship  
Generosity  
Communication & Connection  
Social Justice

### ASPIRATIONAL VALUES

Excellence  
Inclusivity & Diversity  
Nonviolence  
Peace





## Manifesto

Violence against women is the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world. For over three decades, women's advocacy groups around the world have been working to draw attention to the physical, psychological, and sexual abuse of women and to stress the need for action. We have provided abused women with support and protection, lobbied for legal reforms, and challenged the pervasive culture of violence.

Peace Over Violence has a grassroots origin revolving around volunteer contributions. We are present in the streets, schools, hospitals and courts; acting up, advocating against and healing violence. Our call to action over the last four decades for a world free of violence has garnered widespread respect, support and dedicated allies among police, prosecutors, politicians, healthcare providers, individual supporters, celebrities and a growing list of sponsors from corporations and foundations.

We understand violence in relationships, families and communities is a root cause for violence in society. To address the problem at its core is to change how this problem manifests and magnifies itself in society at large. Changing an individual point of view toward sexual, domestic, and interpersonal violence will—one on one, one by one—cause social change, a transformation of society, a world without violence.

Our vision is a world without violence. Where no child is abused, no wife battered, no friend raped. A world without terror, without threats, without wounds from intentional actions. Where the strong provide for the vulnerable, where the vulnerable become empowered, where every kind of family is safe and secure, and girls and boys and women and men have a fair and equal chance at the pursuit of happiness in a tolerant and talented society.

The agency's approach toward realizing this vision is to run crisis intervention, violence prevention and education programs tailored toward women, youth and children, and by natural extension, men. We listen, counsel, support, guide and work to heal survivors of violence. We teach teens about healthy relationships, train girls in self-defense, advise politicians on public policy. We organize, we advocate. Not only do we believe, we know that violence is preventable. We stand at the center of a social movement that is advancing individuals, groups and society to stand over violence.

## Foundational Values

Our foundational values are longstanding and fundamental to the work that we do with each other and in community. Peace Over Violence is committed to social service, social change, and social justice.

- Survivor Centered
- Trauma and Resiliency Informed
- Empowerment Based
- Prevention Oriented
- Learning Driven
- Volunteer Powered

## We Are:

### **SURVIVOR CENTERED**

Started by survivors, in service of survivors, POV is committed to survivors in all of the work that we do. We understand the trauma that survivors of violence go through, and therefore we are mindful of this in everything we do.

- Create and develop survivor sensitive and trauma informed communication, messaging, design and spaces for healing
- Engage collaborative partners in trauma/resiliency practices and trainings
- Respect privacy of all survivors and practice confidentiality when dealing with personal and sensitive information internally and externally

### **TRAUMA AND RESILIENCY INFORMED**

We promote a culture of healing. Our approach is compassion based and rooted in understanding and celebrating differences. We understand that one size of healing does not fit all. We know separation causes trauma and connection brings healing. We provide a wide range of advocacy and comprehensive intervention services so no one has to go through the trauma of violence alone and that each person's healing and recovery is unique to them.

- Cultivate empathy and kindness in all aspects of our work
- Create an environment where authenticity is embraced; we meet each other with no judgement
- Institutionalize self care as a meaningful practice among all employees and volunteers
- Meet people where they are
- Provide a menu of integrative healing modalities and as new methods arise incorporate them to be part of our TRIUMPH program offerings
- Recognize that brain science and neurobiology is impacting how healing happens and incorporate these new teachings in our work
- Respect the work of the movement and all that has been done to make these issues come alive

**Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.**

**–John Wesley, Letters of John Wesley**



## EMPOWERMENT BASED

- Understand that those who harm others have also been hurt themselves and practice bridging the gap between trauma and healing, victim and perpetrator
- Incorporate the intersectionality of gender and race, historical trauma and other intersecting aspects of oppression

Empowerment is central to the work that we do and informs the practices and services that we provide. We support processes that help people gain control and agency over their lives. We show up, we activate and we advocate.

- Enable individuals to adopt new behaviors that further their individual, healing and life goals
- Encourage the development self advocacy skills
- Encourage individuals to develop their own authentic voices
- Encourage empowerment self defense training as a practice to increase awareness, assertiveness, safety skills and engagement with social justice
- Advocate for the rights of others; we believe no one should go through the trauma and healing from violence alone

## PREVENTION ORIENTED

We believe violence is a learned behavior and can be unlearned and individuals grouping together can impact systems and cultural change

- Practice and teach trauma informed violence prevention as a methodology
- Nurture young people to become peacemakers – now and in the future
- Recognize the intersectionality of all violences
- Consider nonviolence practices as alternatives to violence prone systems
- Work to strengthen the larger movement for violence prevention through education, innovation, collaboration and strategic partnerships
- Impact policy on the local, state and national level

*An individual has not started living until  
he can rise above the narrow confines  
of his individualistic concerns to the  
broader concerns of all humanity.*

–Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*We teach best what we need to learn.*

–Richard Bach



## LEARNING DRIVEN

We promote a culture of learning - constantly learning individually and collectively to function at the highest level and be as effective as we can be. This learning takes different forms and is an ongoing process. Sometimes we teach what we have to learn.

- Exercise self-leadership by embracing not-knowing, deepening self-awareness and strengthening relationships
- Recognize mistakes as opportunities to improve our processes and
- Understand the necessity of and welcome tough and meaningful conversations
- Evaluate and adapt our personal efforts and our programmatic impacts
- Understand that as we as individuals learn, the organization grows and adapts

## VOLUNTEER POWERED

From the inception of POV, volunteers have been central to the growth and development of the organization. Starting with a volunteer board of directors all the way to our intervention and prevention programming, volunteers are critical to our work, mission and vision. Volunteers donate their time, commitment and energy to the high functioning of our programs. The wisdom and practice that volunteers bring to the organization cannot be measured. Peace Over Violence is powered by its volunteers.

- Expertly train volunteers to be counselor advocates, violence prevention specialists, voices over violence and youth advocates
- Recruit and retain local and national advisory boards; these diverse groups play a critical role in helping guide the organization and support its programming
- Know that the volunteers who serve on our 24/7 rape and battering hotline are the heartline to the community
- Encourage and provide availability for volunteers to switch from one program to another; volunteers are often considered for open staff positions

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

—Booker Washington

Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.

—Helen Keller





## Core Values

Our core values remain constant and are at the root of our work. They drive our every day service to survivors and the community one on one, one by one.

- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Community & Kinship
- Generosity
- Communication & Connection
- Social Justice

## We Value:

### INTEGRITY

When we commit to doing something, we do it.

- Operate with the mission and vision of the organization as the priority
- Honor our promises and commitments, including utilizing all funding and donations effectively and for their intended purposes
- Support the transparency and accessibility of all financial information
- Follow through on our commitments; we respect the time and effort of each other as well as outside partners
- Strive to do the right thing in all of our interactions and decision making

Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching.

–C.S. Lewis

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

–Maya Angelou

Talking and listening to one another is still one of the main recipes for peace in relationships, families, communities and yes, even countries.

–Patti Giggans

Teamwork begins by building trust. And the only way to do that is to overcome our need for invulnerability.

–Peter Lencioni

### COLLABORATION

We know that we cannot do this work alone and it is only by strengthening our relationships internally and externally and working together that real and lasting change can be made.

- Seek out and build diverse partnerships to serve POV's mission and enter into partnerships with clear understandings and expectations
- Work to enhance collaborative partnerships by discovering common values and taking the time to invest in relationships
- Engage volunteers and interns to be full partners in our mission and encourage program cohesion and alignment of divisions across all departments
- We work in teams; good teamwork is building trust, acknowledging the diversity of abilities, good communication, respecting creative ideas and encouraging accountability

### LEADERSHIP

We are leaders in the movement to end violence against women and girls and in the wider violence prevention movement.

- Welcome, recognize and develop the leadership potential and provide opportunities to all staff, interns, and volunteers
- Provide an ongoing teaching/learning environment

## COMMUNITY & KINSHIP

- Take opportunities to practice collective leadership, orient to the whole, welcome all that arises and nurture alignment of intention
- Value the importance and skill of self reflection
- Develop the capacity of staff/employees to grow and excel professionally as organizers, managers and leaders
- Challenge ourselves as a leader in the fields sexual violence, domestic violence, child abuse, and interpersonal violence
- Adapt to new thinking and new ways of serving, promoting change and seeking justice
- Continue to engage in intersectional efforts to make the world a better place

We promote and create healthy communities internally and externally.

- Work toward orientation to the whole by working collaboratively and in teams
- Embrace the practice of council<sup>1</sup> to build relationships and community
- Create opportunities for employees and others to interact and learn about each other
- Actively foster support by sharing our resources and expertise to build stronger connections and communities
- Practice listening: not only to survivors/clients, but also to influencers, donors, and community members - and to each other, the employees and volunteers at POV

## GENEROSITY

We believe in the daily practice of gratitude and regularly appreciate the unique contributions everyone brings and celebrate the abundance that arises.

- We publicly celebrate successes and personal milestones
- Incorporate a time for appreciations into POV staff meetings
- Appreciate and acknowledge all forms of donations and support
- Invite and honor the gifts and talents of all involved
- Share our skills and transfer our knowledge

No daylight to separate us. Only kinship. Inching ourselves closer to creating a community of kinship such that God might recognize it. Soon we imagine, with God, this circle of compassion. Then we imagine no one standing outside of that circle, moving ourselves closer to the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased. We stand there with those whose dignity has been denied. We locate ourselves with the poor and the powerless and the voiceless. At the edges, we join the easily despised and the readily left out. We stand with the demonized so that the demonizing will stop. We situate ourselves right next to the disposable so that the day will come when we stop throwing people away.

—Father Gregory J. Boyle, S.J.

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.

—Maya Angelou

<sup>1</sup>The practice of council is an invitation to build relationships and community. It is about creating an experience of bonding, empathy, teamwork, trust, support, rapport, fellowship, community, and ultimately love.

## COMMUNICATION & CONNECTION

We practice effective, loving, and ethical communication.<sup>2</sup>

- Honor privacy and confidentiality and discourage gossip and triangulation
- Speak from the heart, listen with the whole body and refrain from judgment
- Address and resolve conflicts through self-inquiry as well as constructive and healthy conversations, including mediation and other productive means
- Promote high touch, high tech communication
- Strive to be a storytelling organization encouraging authentic voices to inspire, educate, and connect
- Recognize and be open and willing to have critical and crucial conversations

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice promotes and works towards equality and equity - these values promote opportunity, growth and social well-being.

- Aim at decreasing or eliminating inequity
- Promote inclusiveness of diversity
- Establish environments that are supportive of all people
- Strive to help develop policies and practices within society and its institutions to help rather than hinder the well being of all people
- Respect diverse cultural history and strengths

Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge; and through humane ways.

—Dalai Lama XIV

Let us realize that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

<sup>2</sup>Ethical Communication encompasses dialogue that is straight forward, honest, respectful and non-judgmental. It is direct and “up front” communication in which parties listen to each other with an open mind to differing points of view and a willingness to reach understanding or compromise. If necessary or desired, a third party can be called upon to help mediate conversations that involve conflict or confrontation.



## Aspirational Values

Our aspirations drive our commitment to individual and collective betterment.

- Excellence
- Inclusivity & Diversity
- Nonviolence
- Peace

## We Work Toward:

### EXCELLENCE

We set high standards and incorporate best practices to achieve personal and collective goals.

- Exercise personal responsibility and promote mutual accountability; we understand that struggle and resolving conflicts can lead to breakthrough and innovation
- Promote personal development, growth and education; encourage critical thinking about social issues and current events
- Assess results through inclusion of qualitative data and practice-based evidence
- Strive to be the best we can be

### INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY

We work to provide a welcoming and safe environment for anyone and everyone and create a feeling of belonging amongst staff and guests.

- Support cultural humility<sup>3</sup> and understanding through trauma informed services, shared activities and events to engage individuals from all cultures
- Promote self-awareness and try to understand our own biases in order to understand and embrace others' perspectives and experiences
- Respect and celebrate survivors as experts of their own culture and resist stereotyping
- Constantly work to help bring those at the margins of society to the center
- We hold multi-identities and we recognize that when people come to work or volunteer or seek services that they bring all their identities with them
- Work to be particularly sensitive to various communities and their needs: LGBTQ, religious groups, immigrants, people who are Deaf and/or differently abled, etc; we are non-binary inclusive

There are three main components to cultural humility: lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique, fixing power imbalances, and developing partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others.

—Lisa Asbill

Cultural humility is the “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person].”

—J.N. Hook

While radical feminism wants to get to the “root” of oppression, non-violence is the seed we want to sow when we get there.

—Stephanie Van Hook

<sup>3</sup>Cultural humility incorporates a consistent commitment to learning and reflection, but also an understanding of power dynamics and one's own role in society. It is based on the idea of mutually beneficial relationships rather than one person educating or aiding another in attempt to minimize the power imbalances in client-professional relationships.

## NONVIOLENCE

We are ambitious and work to end violence by not engaging in violence. Nonviolence is and has been a challenge since the beginning of time.

- Teach and practice nonviolent methodologies in all areas of our work
- Recognize that nonviolence does not come naturally and work to teach and promote an environment that supports its development
- Practice non-judgemental communication and decision making

## PEACE

Striving for peace in everything that we do, the active form of peace is the ultimate aspiration. We chose the name Peace Over Violence because we were looking for an all encompassing inspirational name for the organization. It expresses where we want to go, what we want to get to, and what we want to practice. We want to practice peace over violence and keep coming back to it as not only the name but the central vision of the organization. The concept of peace is a beacon—everything that we do points in that direction. It is individual, familial and communal. It is elusive and accessible at the same time. Peace is an everyday practice.

- Structure and promote healthy practices and policies that promote a peaceful working environment
- Understand that acceptance is peace; when you accept what is, that is peaceful

When I say it's you I like, I'm talking about that part of you that knows that life is far more than anything you can ever see or hear or touch. That deep part of you that allows you to stand for those things without which humankind cannot survive. Love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed.

—Fred Rogers

Peace: it does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of these things and still be calm in your heart.

—unknown







## Appendix

- A. Three steps to peace
- B. Statement of values of philosophy
- C. Donor's bill of rights
- D. Leadership for collective wisdom/sabotage for collective folly

## Three Steps to Peace

### STEP 1: BEGIN WITH NOT-KNOWING

Empty yourself and let go of all your knowing. Be spacious and open. Step out of your confirmed views.

### STEP 2: BEAR WITNESS

Begin with Not Knowing. From not-knowing, see as many positions of a given situation as possible. Listen deeply with an open heart. Be inclusive and connect with many perspectives, without being limited by attachments and aversions and without fixing your position. Pay attention to all the ingredients in your life and in the world.

### STEP 3: DO A LOVING OR APPROPRIATE ACT

An impulse to action will arise. We call this a loving or healing action because it has naturally emerged from not-knowing and bearing witness to the wholeness of a situation. Trust yourself. Take action—do it! Offer your action with gratitude and love for the well being of all.

*Thank you to the Zen Center of Los Angeles for Three Steps to Peace*

## Statement of Values & Philosophy

Peace Over Violence is a nonprofit, feminist, multicultural, volunteer organization dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence.

This violence takes many forms and exists on many levels of society, and we have adopted several approaches in our effort to effect social change: education, prevention and intervention. We seek to empower women and youth and engage men in this critical cultural transformation. We believe that self-defense is the most effective mode of self-protection, that peer counseling is the most effective mode of intervention and that education is vital to prevention of abusive relationships. We provide services that inform the community about the problems of interpersonal violence, teach women, youth and children to defend themselves, offer intervention and support for survivors and promote and organize social change through activism and policy work.

We are a feminist organization. By this, we mean that we work to improve the quality of life for all people in a patriarchal society that ranks the concern of all women and children as a low priority. We believe that everyone should be free from the oppression of sexual and domestic violence. By improving the lives of women and girls, the lives of men and boys will improve. We understand men and boys are also victimized by violence; we cannot do this work without serving men and boys to help heal their wounds and engaging them as allies to achieve the vision of a world without violence.

In our practices, we are sensitive to the historical and sociological status of women in our culture. We believe in the importance of empowering women, youth and children with the greatest range of options and with making their own choices on social, reproductive, or other issues. We value and respect the voice and experience of every member of the Peace Over Violence community and are attentive to the feelings of our constituents.

We believe that violence is preventable. We recognize that ending violence against women, youth and children will require energy, support, and commitment from multiple groups in our society. We are part of a large network of people active against violence and thus our work cannot be separate from the awareness and repudiation of sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, discrimination against people with disabilities and other forms of oppression.

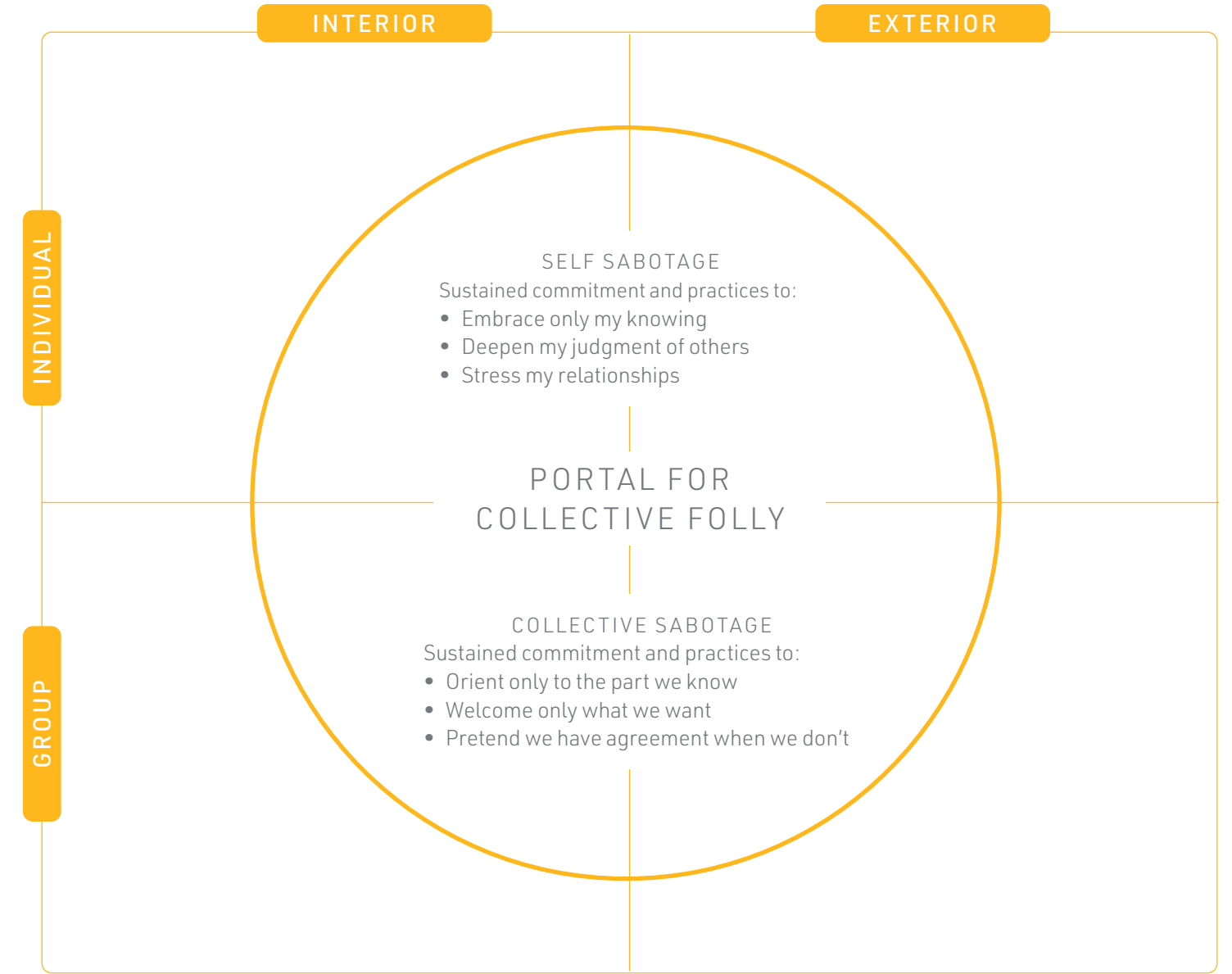
The work we do is difficult and challenging. It requires a strong commitment to the community, much perseverance and faith that one day we will celebrate the fact that our services are no longer necessary. Until that day, we will work together to maintain our vigor, flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the women, children, youth and men in our society.



# Leadership for Collective Wisdom



# Sabotage for Collective Folly



## Donor's Bill of Rights

To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the nonprofit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

- To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for its intended purposes
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities
- To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given
- To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization, or hired solicitors
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers

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