

We (CDSS Community Culture and Safety Task Group) are just beginning our work on the Values section of the Toolkit. These 11 examples were sent to us in response to a survey of all CDSS Affiliates to discover Values Statements already written.

Group Name: John C. Campbell Folk School

Statement:

- **Joy**—We bring originality, creativity and passion to all endeavors—we sing behind the plow.
 - **Kindness**—We treat everyone with respect, humility and warmth.
 - **Stewardship**—We honor the traditions and spirit of the Folk School as we guide its evolution and preserve it for the future.
 - **Non-competitive**—We support and affirm each other in lifelong growth.
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Group Name: Portland Intown Contra Dance

Statement:

Portland Intown Contra Dance is a dynamic, growing community of people from Portland, ME and elsewhere who really love to dance and really like spending time with each other. We're creative, zesty, welcoming, loving, respectful, and delightful. We're tons of volunteers, a handful of core organizers, and a whole network of people we impact by spreading our joy. We take our values seriously and have fun with just about everything else. Here's what we're up to:

- Our contra dance strives to be welcoming to all people.
- We create a safe and respectful space together, encouraging healthy self-expression and high quality communication.
- We cherish our local dance community and act in ways that nourish it.
- As members of the broader Maine and national contra dance communities, we honor our roles in preserving and evolving contra traditions.
- And we have fun. Lots and lots of fun.

More found at: <http://portlandintowncontradance.com/picd>

Group Name: Arden Contra Dance

Statement:

Our Arden Contra Dance Community is:

Inclusive: We ask a variety of people to dance; we leave space for others to ask us and do not book ahead; we respect that anyone can dance any role and refrain from gendered role comments; we share our pronouns as we are comfortable and use other's pronouns appropriately, and ask when unsure; we accommodate the individual needs of all dancers; we avoid wearing fragrances.

Welcoming: We dance with whoever is coming at us, we respect personal boundaries and comfort; we give ourselves and each other grace when we mess up, and we learn from those mistakes; we are kind and respectful to all.

Safe: We prioritize consent and communication and ask our partners about extra flourishes; we do not shove or yell at people if we think they are in the wrong place; we speak up or ask for help when something is uncomfortable or unsafe; we understand that anyone can say no at any time without explanation; we know that a lead into a flourish is an invitation and cannot be forceful; we stay aware of our partner, hands four, set, and the entire hall while dancing.

If you have concerns about how we are living up to these agreements and you don't feel comfortable addressing them yourself, please speak to an organizer, leave a feedback comment, or email us at ardencontra@gmail.org.

*Thanks to the Hands Across community of CFOOTMAD for this document.

Group Name: Syracuse Country Dancers

Statement:

Who We Are

Hello! Welcome to our dance community! The Syracuse Country Dancers is a group of diverse people who are brought together by our love of dance, music, and community. We strive to be welcoming to all and encourage people of all ages and experience levels to join us for our dance events.

We teach and promote safe and enjoyable dancing, and we ask that our dancers be respectful of each other, the caller, and the band. Some ways we do that are by asking each other to dance, clapping for the band, listening to the caller, and asking about and respecting each others' dancing preferences (e.g. Would you like to twirl? How fast do you like to swing?). Syracuse Country Dancers' events are alcohol and drug-free, and we aspire for our dances to be open and comfortable to everyone. Please be aware of and respect others' personal boundaries and personal space. We do not tolerate harassment or discrimination in any form. If you have any concerns, please let us (any of the board members) know! We are always eager to improve our events in any ways that we can.

Happy Dancing!

Note from the Community Culture and Safety Task Group: LCFD has chosen to combine their values statement and code of conduct into a single piece. Some of the conduct material fits into what we call "courtesy and etiquette." The five elements of our suggested safety structure can be combined, or can be separate and complementary documents.

Group Name: LCFD (Lavender Country and Folk Dancers)

Statement:

Values and Conduct

As an explicitly LGBTQIA+ dance community, we hold the following values and expect this corresponding conduct:

Value: Community Mindedness

Conduct:

- Be inclusive and dance with people regardless of gender, age, gender identity, race, health status, national origin, relationship status, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and experience levels, etc.
- Avoid assuming anyone's gender, pronouns, or identity. Refer to people in non-gendered ways until you can determine the language and pronouns individuals want used for and about them.

- Be respectful to fellow dancers, callers, volunteers, dance organizers, etc. Recognize that our dance events take a great deal of effort from many individuals, and consider pitching in to help.
- Ask if people want feedback before giving it (except relating to others not hurting you).
- Change partners each dance and try to avoid booking ahead.
- Dance with the whole line and hall, not just your partner.

Value: Consent and Communication

Conduct:

- Acknowledge that consent is situational and can be revoked at any time.
- Realize that hugging or other intimate behavior is never obligated. Physical touch requires enthusiastic consent.
- Recognize that eye contact is a part of our dance culture but is optional for all.
- Communicate with partners about role preference, injuries, sensitivities, twirls, flirting, etc.
- Understand that if you have asked someone to dance and they decline, you are encouraged not to ask that same person to dance again during the same dance session.
- Ask anyone to dance and when asked, politely accept or refuse. No one is obligated to dance with anyone else, and declining to dance with one person does not preclude dancing that dance with someone else.

Value: Physical Safety

Conduct:

- Dance to avoid injuring others, for example by using open hand holds, holding your own weight, stopping when someone asks to stop or indicates that they are in pain.
- Offer flourishes, but only complete them if the other dancer accepts the flourish. Dancers who are unsure of how to accept or decline flourishes, or how to interpret others' responses, are encouraged to ask an organizer for advice or seek verbal consent from other dancers before flourishing.
- Be responsible for your own body and clothing on the dance floor and avoid bumping or stepping on other dancers. Take special care when the hall is crowded, and be observant of others who may have special physical needs or limitations.
- Be conscious of scent sensitivities. LCFD events and weekends are fragrance-free, and you may be asked to leave an event if your perfume, scented deodorant, scented shampoo, etc. poses a health risk.

More Information: <https://www.lcf.org/code-of-conduct.html>

Group Name: Madison Contra Dance Co-Op**Statement:**

The Madison Contra Dance Co-op welcomes people of all ages, genders, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, religious affiliations, abilities, and financial means to join us in carrying on the tradition of contra dancing to live music in Madison. We strive to cultivate a lively community where every dancer can find joy, respect, and safety. As such, we encourage dancers to practice good communication, be mindful of their contact with their fellow dancers, and dance with whoever is coming at them in a way that increases the joy of all involved. We are all here to have a fun time and create positive energy together, and we welcome all to join us in sustaining this wonderful dancing tradition!

For more information: <https://www.madisoncontra.org/values-and-guidelines>

Group Name: Ashland Country Dancers - branch of The Heather and The Rose**Statement:**

I (Brooke Friendly) said yes, but the answer is really 'kind of'. It's not an official statement of core values, however, our website is pretty clear about what we value and how our dance works: <http://www.heatherandrose.org/about.shtml>

The Heather and The Rose Country Dancers (H&R) is a statewide network of dance groups in Oregon which teach both English and Scottish Country Dance and use global /positional terminology for teaching. The H&R started around 1981 with informal meetings of volunteer teachers from around the state who had a similar philosophy informed by the teaching of Carl Wittman (1943-1986). H&R was incorporated in 1982 and got its 501(c)(3) status in 1986. The Eugene group had its first Harvest Ball in 1978 and the Ashland group's first Spring Ball was 1981. H&R has presented weekend dance camps since 1981.

Our philosophy is based upon community and inclusiveness. The emphasis is the whole of the dance community and the whole of the dance. We promote community and inclusiveness by teaching with global / positional terminology, by not using gender identity to determine who dances on what side or with whom, and by forming sets as individuals rather than as couples. At our dances you get to dance with everyone from any position.

Global terminology uses teaching language that is global and geography-based and the teaching/calling does not refer to gender roles in any way. Rather, we use language that refers to people's positions within the dance. This promotes community spirit by being inclusive – not discriminating and removing barriers. It has the added benefit of simplicity and clarity, usually requiring fewer words when teaching.

The way we teach supports the way we dance. We don't worry about who is on what side or dancing with whom. When you come to our dances, you will find everyone dancing with everyone else on either side of the dance, regardless of gender identity or expression. We feel this builds a stronger community – you get to know and dance with more people and everyone has an equal chance to dance. It is also more welcoming to LGBTQ+ folks.

Added benefits include dancers learning the whole dance rather than just one side of it (they become better dancers by learning all aspects of the dance, knowing the whole pattern).

Forming sets as individuals rather than couples adds to the feeling of inclusiveness. Everyone in the room is a potential dance partner. Rather than dancers having to find a partner for the next dance, they simply stay on the floor or come to the floor as individuals, sure that someone will come to stand opposite them. This manner of forming sets does not preclude dancing with a particular person on occasion, though couples are encouraged to come in at the bottom rather than leave holes in a longways.

When forming sets, we call for the number of additional dancers needed rather than calling for couples. Forming sets as individuals removes another barrier to joining the dance, reducing the competitiveness and scrambling for a partner (as well as the anxiety of asking or waiting to be asked) and enhancing accessibility and the sense of community.

Group Name: Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts

Statement:

Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts Values & Goals

The Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts is an amateur orchestra made up mostly of fiddle players but also players of other instruments.

- Not for profit
 - Professionally facilitated and conducted
 - Focus on learning
 - Focus on achieving a cohesive sound and cohesive spirit
 - Strive to play without sheet music at our concerts with the caveat that “by ear” is not suitable for everyone for a variety of reasons
 - All members respect and help cultivate the FOWM culture
 - Inclusiveness – We welcome, respect, and show kindness and friendliness to anyone who joins FOWM, regardless of their musical skill and background, gender, sexual orientation, age, race or ethnicity, culture, geographic location, etc.
 - Supportiveness – We help each other grow musically by playing together and through respectful, positive, open conversation and problem solving. All of us, from beginners to professional musicians, are learners.
 - Open-mindedness – We are open to playing and trying different kinds of music and participating in different orchestral roles as presented to us by our Director.
 - Sharing – We welcome appropriate ways to share with the community, such as by putting on an end-of-season concert, playing at community events, and allowing visitors to observe our practice sessions.
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Group Name: Young Tradition Vermont

Statement:

The mission of Young Tradition Vermont is to ensure that children, youth, and young adults have opportunities to be inspired by, learn about, and perform traditional music and dance, and to use that music and dance to serve communities in Vermont and places participants visit.

We are centered by core values: diversity, inclusion and equity; sustainability; affordability; high quality, and collaboration.

(This is part of an annual impact report that is still in draft form.)

Group Name: Downtown Amherst Contra Dance

Statement:

We aim to have participants fulfill our values at our events:

- **Inclusion:** We include attendees of all genders, races, sexual orientations, bodies, abilities, ages, and backgrounds. We actively work to offer events that create inclusive spaces and that do not present barriers to participation.
- **Safety:** We strive to create an environment where attendees can feel safe to express themselves and to have fun. Dancing should be done with consciousness of physical safety of self and other attendees.
- **Respect:** We respect each other as people. We believe that all attendees have something valuable to offer. We trust that our attendees will show this respect.
- **Fun:** We want to have fun! We love contra dancing as an art form, social experience, and recreational activity. We want to share that love with others, and we want to connect everyone with the joy of contra dancing.
- **Supporting new attendees:** We want the Downtown Amherst Contra Dance to be a place where new attendees can discover and experience contra dancing. We offer lessons, dances that are easy to learn, and we encourage experienced dancers to help new attendees learn.
- **Supporting students:** We aim to introduce students to contra dancing. We aim to foster connections between students and the broader community of local dancers. We aim to support local student contra dance groups.
- **Supporting local performers:** We recognize the amazing music being created by local folk musicians and wish to provide opportunities for growth of local musicians and callers.

Group Name: Asheville English Country Dance

Statement:

Old Farmer's Ball Values...

- **Welcoming** – A safe and inviting space for dancers, musicians, and callers.
- **Community** – We value respect, inclusiveness, diversity, consent, and multigenerational interaction.
- **Ownership** – Volunteer investment in the organization.
- **Joy/Smiles** – Presence in the moment.
- **Development** – Artistic growth and skill of callers, musicians, and dancers.

Board Values

- Transparency
- Leadership
- Activism
- Ownership
- Integrity