

Peer Accountability Learning group participant agreement

This agreement sets out shared expectations and boundaries that will guide us as we work through the [curriculum](#) together. The points in this agreement are not intended as burdensome rules but instead as a framework to facilitate an open, honest and useful discussion that includes all participants and provides space for a variety of perspectives.

There are two sections to this agreement: general points about the spirit and approach of the group, and procedural points for the meetings themselves.

If you have any questions, please email peeraccountabilitylearning@protonmail.com

By joining the group, you agree to the below while participating.

General

- 1) The group is intended as a space for conversation, self-reflection and shared learning between men. This means not just cis-gender men but all who define themselves as men.
- 2) The group is peer-led. This means that it is non-hierarchical, there is no teacher or trainer, and everyone's perspective is taken as having equal weight in the discussion. There will be discussion facilitation for each meeting by a member of the group.
- 3) Participants are welcome to join the group whatever harm they may have caused in the past.
- 4) However, if you are currently involved in a formal accountability process or an active situation that involves taking accountability, that should take priority over joining this group for now. The group will hopefully continue beyond this first run of sessions, so future participation is not precluded by prioritising direct accountability work right now.
- 5) Within the wider group, participants do not need to disclose anything about their past or present beyond what they want to share.
- 6) Open, honest sharing of perspectives and expressing vulnerability is welcome and encouraged within the group, particularly given the lack of this between men in everyday life is a foundational aspect of the problems we are trying to work through in the group.
- 7) However, the group is not a therapeutic space and cannot function as counselling. There is no professional support available through it. If you feel you need further support, please see the organisations listed at the bottom of this document as a starting point.

- 8) Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in a peer-led space, but participants are asked to respect the openness and vulnerability being shown by others in the group and not to raise things said in the space outside of it without permission. This includes casual conversation, to avoid “gossip” about what people share within the group.
- 9) To help us remain accountable and keep our discussions useful, the facilitator(s) of each session will write up a brief, anonymised summary of the discussion from each session. This will record topics discussed, the directions the conversation took, problems or challenges that arose, and any other relevant issues. This summary will not name anyone or contain identifying information. It will be sent to a small reference group so they can read it and offer any feedback or suggestions if they feel appropriate. The reference group will not have access to the participant list.
- 10) We commit to interacting with each other in a respectful, generous way that allows each participant to openly express and develop their perspectives. In the opening session, we will work together to create an additional ‘Interaction Agreement’ that sets out how we will interact. The Interaction Agreement will include but not be limited to zero tolerance towards any abusive behaviour or bullying of any kind within the group, or related to the group in any way, and an understanding that this will lead to the participant being removed from the group. Rude behaviour is not necessarily the same as abusive behaviour, but persistent rudeness (e.g. deliberate interrupting or mocking the perspectives of others) will also lead to the participant being asked to leave the group
- 11) Where disagreements or differences in perspective arise, we will try to reconcile them in a generous, kind and respectful way. We accept that there may be perspectives that cannot be reconciled within the confines of this group. We will leave space for accepting that we are all at different points in coming to terms with the issues we are discussing and that there is not a ‘correct’ end-point at which the work is done.
- 12) Before the first meeting, a list of who will be joining the group will be shared around the participants so that we all have an idea of who we will be working with. You don’t need to give your full name but it is asked that you at least give the name you are commonly known by plus a surname initial for this list.
- 13) Recording or screenshotting any aspects of the meeting is a significant breach of trust which will result in removal from the group.
- 14) Participants do not need to have fully read, or even read at all, the resources that will guide each discussion in order to attend. However, discussion will be more fruitful if everyone has read as much as possible.

Procedural

- 1) The discussions will take place in the style of a book club, where we'll discuss set reading based around a few questions or discussion points provided in advance.
- 2) Each week will be facilitated by one or two members in terms of keeping the discussion on track, prompting with the questions/discussion points where appropriate and beginning the session with their own reflections on the reading. It is asked that each member of the group who feels able to do so takes at least one turn at facilitation during the course of the group.
- 3) There will be, initially, 8 meetings of the group, plus a final open 'cooling down' session to reflect on what we do next. Participants might (hopefully!) decide that extending this or building the group into something further is desirable. We can discuss this as a group.
- 4) Meetings will take place over Zoom.
- 5) You will need to be in a private space and/or use headphones to ensure confidentiality.
- 6) The room will be password protected with a waiting room.
- 7) Don't share the zoom link or password with anyone not in the group.
- 8) You will need to set your display name on Zoom to match the name provided to the facilitators when signing up for the group.
- 9) Participants should have their video turn on during the sessions, at least during check in or when speaking. Anonymous/semi-anonymous participation may disrupt openness and erode trust among participants as a whole. Our aim is to replicate people sitting in a circle in the same physical location.
- 10) Each discussion will be 1.5 hours long. Participants are asked to stay for the full meeting if possible.
- 11) In order to make online discussion easier, please use the hand raising button on zoom when you would like to speak. A facilitator will lead on guiding who speaks next based on this.

Sources of support (UK based)

Samaritans – Call 113 123 (Open 24/7 or email jo@samaritans.org)

Rape Crisis Helpline – Call 0808 802 9999 (emotional support and signposting for women, open 12-2:30 pm and 7-9:30 pm)

National Male Survivors Helpline– Call 0808 800 5005 (see opening hours at safeline.org.uk)

National Domestic Violence Helpline – Call 0808 2000 247 (24hrs)

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline – Call 0800 999 5428 (see opening hours at galop.org.uk/domesticabuse – trans specific service Tuesdays 1-5pm)

Lucy Faithfull Foundation - 0808 1000 900 (confidential helpline for adults concerned about child sexual abuse, including as perpetrators or potential perpetrators of it. Open Mon-Thu 9-9, Fri 9-5)

Re-using this material

You are welcome to re-use/re-work/copy from this document for starting your own group, accountability work or anything else you find it useful for. You don't need to credit anyone when doing this, but you could link back to palg.neocities.org or include the email address if you like.

If you want to, you are welcome to email to say what you are up to with it or just to share ideas and learning about tackling harm, men's work, accountability work and transformative justice:peeraccountabilitylearning@protonmail.com