Tools for Resolving Difficult Conflicts in Open Source Communities and Projects

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Conflict Scenarios

- Miscommunication

- Disagreements

- Inappropriate/harassing behavior

  - Offensive pictures in online meetings

  - Unwanted contact (physical, as well as other communication)

  - Misogyny and other forms of hate speech

  - Mansplaining

  - Any other forms of (White) male dominance behavior

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Prevention

- Brainstorm: What is acceptable behavior in your group?

- Create an unambiguous and clear Code of Conduct

- Define expected behavior

- Define unacceptable behavior

- Spell out the consequences of unacceptable behavior

- Define where and how to address grievances

https://berlincodeofconduct.org/

Code of Conduct Tips

- Inclusion and Safe Spaces:

  - Privilege vs Entitlement

- Don't reinvent the wheel and learn from others:

  - Code of Conduct (CoC) Templates

- Your CoC is only as strong as your enforcement of it:

  - CoC Enforcement Workshops

Awareness

- Awareness means being attentive to situations where a person's boundaries and sense of security are crossed

- Awareness work is based on the understanding that spaces are created differently by people who are in them

- We always want to treat each other respectfully so that everyone feels as safe as possible, and we want to be attentive and sensitive to individual boundaries and needs

- Boundary crossings are always defined by those affected themselves

Awareness

- Agree on an Awareness Concept for your group

- Define and communicate a safe word, e.g., Panama

- Establish a sub-group that focuses on Awareness

- Publish your Awareness Concept and educate your group

- Designate an Awareness Person, especially for online or hybrid meetings

- Empower the Awareness Team

- Establish clear lines of communication

https://blog.fkpscorpio.com/frag-nach-panama-neue-bausteine-im-erfolgskonzept-fur-noch-mehr-sicherheit-auf-unseren-festivals/

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Non-Violent Communication

- Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a communication process created by psychologist Marshall Rosenberg

- Communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is a form of exchange and negotiation between partners. We can perform these exchanges with or without compassion

- NVC assumes that compassionate communication yields different results than uncompassionate communication and that these differences have a significant impact on both individual and societal levels (Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015)

https://positivepsychology.com/non-violent-communication/

Non-Violent Communication

- *Observations* are what we see or hear that we identify as the stimulus to our reactions
- *Feelings* represent our emotional experience and physical sensations associated with our needs that have been met or that remain unmet
- Our *needs* are an expression of our deepest shared humanity, our core values, and deepest human longings
- We make *requests* to assess how likely we are to get cooperation for strategies we have in mind for meeting our needs
- We offer to take *personal responsibility* for our needs
- We *appreciate* the person and the situation

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Communication Tips

Communication:

- Moderators and De-escalation
  - Set the tone
- Nonjudgmental listening
  - Don't assume malice
  - Space for vulnerability
- Active listening
  - "Seek first to understand, then to be understood"
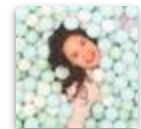
Tips & Reminders

- Motivations, Assumptions and Conclusions

  - Intent does **not** equal or erase Impact

- Connection over Perfection

  - Mistakes are human, take responsibility and learn

  - Feel seen, heard and valued

- Meet people where they are

  - Accommodations for e.g. language, neurodiversity, disabilities

  - We all have our own, different operating systems

- Support and care

  - You cannot pour from an empty cup

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Resources

CoC Templates:

- contributor-covenant.org

CoC Enforcement Resources:

- [CNCF CoC incident resolution procedures](#)

- opensource.guide/code-of-conduct/

- otter.technology workshop

- [WordPress Incident Response Training](#)

NVC links

- Dr Marshall B. Rosenberg - Nonviolent Communication: a Language of Life - cnvc.org

- positivepsychology.com/non-violent-communication

- baynvc.org/basics-of-nonviolent-communication

Communication, Support & Care:

- [Community Manager Self Care](#) - the opensourceway.org

- osmihelp.org

- helpguide.org

- Brene Brown - The Gifts of Imperfection

- Shawn Achor - The Happiness Advantage
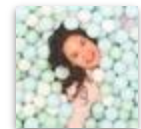
Thank you!

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