

A small, stylized purple flower icon with a yellow center.

## BodyMantra Etiquette

Guidelines to make our collective experience as safe, growthful and enjoyable as possible.

Though there are numerous implied standards of behavior associated with any body-based group experience, we feel it important to outline specific topics that raise the most questions in our community. Respect, boundaries, navigation of space, and safety are everyone's responsibility in a group practice. As a member of the BodyMantra community, you agree to take part in cultivating awareness of and respecting the boundaries of others in the group. We ask that you kindly observe the following guidelines.

**Time** is an important part of our BodyMantra practice. Doors close right at class start time to support the creation of intentional, sacred, space.


**Speak up.** While BodyMantra encourages us to develop our physical sensitivity to the ebb and flow of boundaries in a group, our willingness to speak about our experiences can provide new insights as well as help to dispel assumptions and misunderstandings that inevitably arise in community practice. By speaking up and staying open to feedback from others, we will strengthen overall understanding and respect of boundaries in the room.

**Stay aware.** Safety stems directly from individual awareness in the room. If you are moving around the room, your eyes should be open. If you are trying a movement that is unfamiliar to you or requires a lot of space, it is your responsibility to make certain that you are not putting those around you in danger. If you run into someone because you were in a trance state or you were not fully aware of your surroundings, reset and dial up your mindfulness in the room. Also, be aware that many people move on the floor in this practice, requiring you to pay attention to what is at both eye and foot level. If you are dancing with another, or with more than one other, you must remain connected to your surroundings in order to prevent unsafe or disruptive conditions. Be aware of the line between deep, conscious communion and self-indulgent, unaware interactions.

**Interact. Or don't. It's your choice.** BodyMantra is a community-based practice, but that does not imply that direct interaction is required. Some people come to be witnessed in their process without a need for overt interaction with others, while others come to make contact and be in direct connection with others. Both are encouraged, which means that we all must be willing to respond compassionately to the choices of others.

**Touch** is not a required part of this practice. If someone is clearly signaling that they do not wish to interact through touch, respect the clear signal; consent is an essential part of safe practice. If you do choose to touch, please refrain from distractive, acrobatic movement that becomes an exercise in physics; this is not a Contact Improvisation practice.

**Consider others.** Body awareness is fundamental to our practice. As with any group practice, we ask that you bring attention to personal hygiene in general. Specifically, please do not wear essential oils, perfumes, heavily-scented lotions, or other aromatic body products, as people can be highly sensitive to these odors. If you tend to sweat heavily, bring a towel to help control perspiration. Not only does a sweaty body impact interactive experiences, but dripping sweat on the floor can become a hazard.



**Sound smartly.** Sounding and talking are a natural part of being human, and are a part of the BodyMantra practice. Just as we need to respect others' physical boundaries, the same applies with sound boundaries. If you want to socialize with another community member, please step outside of the room so as not to disturb others. Should you stay in the room to extend a brief hello or to check in with someone about something directly related to their process, be mindful of your volume; this applies during arrival time as well as in the middle of an event.

Sounding – which can manifest as humming, moaning, grunting, and many other expressions – is a healthy and welcome part of BodyMantra. Pay attention to your volume and how your sounding mixes with the overall sensibility of the room. If you need to undertake extensive, theatrical, or dissonant sounding, please consider finding another method of support for that work.

**Care for the space.** Many people like to stretch or rest during class, which is always welcome. If you choose to use a mat for this purpose, please stay on the edges of the room, leaving the center of the room for those wishing to move more. When you complete your work on the mat, it is your responsibility to move the mat out of the way so that it doesn't become a hazard.

**Adults only.** This practice is for adults only, given the nature and depth of our work together.

**Close with care.** The end of our practice is just as important as its beginning and middle. Sometimes we choose to close with few words, sometimes with a group circle for participants to speak openly. Our closing rituals are intended to focus on our BodyMantra-related experiences. If you have announcements about personal or other community events, please share those outside of the movement space. We provide space just outside of the room for people to post information about events, etc.