**Safe Camp Challenge Summary**

The burn is one of the most exciting places on earth – from exceptional visual art installations, to music of every type, to places to drink and dance and move and perform and spin fire. This engaging atmosphere attracts people of so many backgrounds, identities and cultures. There is no one way that burners look – from shirt cockers and nudists, to leather kinksters, to the person rocking playa couture – there is no one burner aesthetic, and there is no one burner personality. Not only do burners come in a variety of clothing options, they also come with a large variety of identities – some of which are historically invisible, marginalized or targeted (in our broader culture and on playa). That includes identities around race, culture, sexual orientation, gender, (dis/)ability, and class. The playa does not exist in a vacuum – the tensions of default world follow many folks to the burn.

All this diversity brings out the best expressions, the most exceptional art, the deepest connections and the best communities. All of this diversity can also result in the folks with the most diversity experiencing the most harm. In the current political climate, and all of the tensions occurring off of playa, dedicating time and space to creating a common agreement of what the culture of our spaces are is extra important.

***Intentions VS Impacts*** When people’s identities’, bodies’ or autonomy is not respected, there are very real physical and emotional impacts. The more this happens, the more the impacts add up. Most folks in our community would blatantly disavow racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, fatphobia, ableism and sexual assault. However, our community (both the broader US and global culture, and burning man as a whole) does not have a shared definition of when behaviors reach those categories. Or even which of those categories are of concern. Further, it is important to recognize that intention are not the same as impacts. Frequently people don’t intend for their actions to have negative impacts on others. And yet, frequently those well-meaning actions do have very real consequences. From feeling unwelcome, to unsafe, or violated, or assaulted or coerced, there are many very real negative consequences, to many actions, even if those were not the intention. **Intentions are not the same as impacts.** It is up to each of us, who co-create our communities (our theme camps and the burn culture as a whole) to determine what behaviors we find acceptable, and what we don’t. It is up to us to actively condemn – if we chose – racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, fatphobia, ableism and sexual assault. But this takes more than simply *saying* we think these things are wrong. It means actively *looking* for when these show up in different forms in our community AND *listening* to feedback of when we are fucking up.

**Little Actions Add Up** When we take actions to stop racism, sexism, homophobia etc, the culture changes. When we ignore them, pretend they are not happening or that their impacts are negligible, then they become more prevalent in our culture. Determining where your own community stands on issues is important. Some places where we see a lot of impacts include power & influence, compliments, jokes, lack of cultural competency and entitlement to work/time/emotions/bodies.

Marginalized folks have a long history of not being given positions of power, and not having their voices heard and not being visible. That creates a feedback loop, where they don’t have the capacity to get support or be heard, or positively improve the culture. Consider who holds the power in your community. Also consider how you are getting feedback from folks who hold less power.

Consider the community norms you are setting around both language, jokes and compliments. These are very common ways to make people feel included, or excluded. Jokes at the expense of marginalized groups further marginalize people. Also, rape Jokes aren’t funny y’all. And neither are jokes at the expense of fat folks or differently/(dis)abled folks or about queer folks or trans folks. They cause harm – and more importantly they create a culture where people feel unwelcome and unsupported. It is important to decide where your community stands on these types of language, and let people know what is and is not acceptable in your space.

Remember, compliments are only complimentary if someone feels complimented. Avoiding sexualizing people before they sexualize themselves – otherwise people feel unsafe. When spaces ignore all of the little ways we are making each other uncomfortable, it makes it much harder to discuss the bigger things, like sexual assault. Inability to have these conversations is one of the many reasons that folks don’t come forward with negative experiences – especially around sexual assaults. The most marginalized folks are the most likely to experience sexual violence and other forms of violence. If we want to keep our burn diverse and full of beautiful humans, we need to do the work to support all of us.

Also consider the ways in which roles are assumed to go to certain bodies or identities. Consider if this is best serving your camp. Take time to recognize the importance of all labor, not just the physical labor.

**Group Norms**

So your group knows who it is – great! Now you have to decide where your community stands on the above issues. Part of opening community dialogues is learning where we share common ground, and where our opinions differ. Whether we see it or not, whether it affects us or not, these harms are happening at the burn. Determine your norms – lay out where your community’s lines are on the above issues. If you want to support marginalized folks, be explicit – let folks know what behaviors are ok and not ok in a community and remember to include any particular special interests to your camp. Let your campers know what their policies are on jokes (at the expense of others), compliments (that might not feel complimentary), pictures (with or without permission), touch – even non-sexual touch without permission etc. Remind folks nudity is not consent. Further, if your camp is going to condone jokes at the expense of others, it is a good idea to let the broader community know that, so that people who can be actively harmed by those decisions can opt out of your space. Further, letting everyone know where each of our individual communities stand opens up the opportunities for more connections and conversations, and the opportunity to learn from each other.

Check out the 11th Principle’s Creep Cards – they are a great way to set up a really easy dialogue of feedback about when someone’s impacts might not be what they intended. Alternatively consider setting up a camp safe word – an indication that someone has massively crossed a boundary, and that they need to disengage immediately.

**Accountability**

So you have set up the acceptable, and unacceptable behaviors in camp. Consider how you intend to hold your community accountable. Remember, for our intentions to support folks to have the intended impacts, we need to follow through on upholding the community norms or boundaries. Consider as leadership, what dealing with circumstances where people have had their boundaries violated looks like (check out the supporting survivors guide for suggestions specific to holding space for survivors of sexual assault). Also, consider how to get feedback from your community. Frequently, we have no idea when people are feeling unsafe or excluded. Frequently we had no idea that someone’s behaviors are having negative impacts. Actively soliciting feedback can short-circuit patterns that might result in ongoing harm or escalations of negative behavior patterns. Learning how to give and receive feedback goes a long way to improving communication patterns but also, dealing with small issues well, encourages folks to bring forward larger concerns.

**Infrastructure**

Part of creating a culture of consent – and reducing the risk of boundary violations – is creating an environment that minimizes the likelihood of sexual assault and other boundary violations. Part of that is being explicit about what is unacceptable behavior in your community. You can do this through group norms, and holding your community accountable. We recommend having a mediator who can help with camp disputes, and help to resolve conflicts if a camp lead is involved.

Another huge part of the burn is interacting with the broader community – the burn has all types, some of whom are really well versed in all the most pc language, some of whom are not. Some of whom will share your communities default, “duh” norms, some of whom won’t. Consider how you can alert folks to the norms of your space, when they wander into an event or just in off esplanade to hide from a white out. Some good tips are post a set of group norms – or print some of the 11th Principle’s Consent Themed Schwag to remind people what behaviors are and aren’t ok. Also, if you are throwing events with lots of loud music, drugs or alcohol likely to be present, lots of touch, sex themes etc, add folks to be present to actively make sure that your group norms are being maintained. Make sure they are well-versed in de-escalation and bystander intervention.

Please please consider having narcan/naloxone in camp. The opioid epidemic is real, but also extends far beyond people just intending to take opioids. There has been a large uptick in many other substances are cut with fentanyl and other opioids, which can result in unexpected overdoses. Know what an overdose looks like, and have a naloxone kit in camp. Check out dancesafe.org for testing kit info and more resources.

***Share the info*** Even if you your camp has your shit on lock, that does not mean stuff won’t go wrong – it might not even be in your camp. But folks might still need resources. You might know all the ins and outs of playa, and how to get all the resources you need, but your camp mates might not. We strongly recommend having a resource binder, where folks who are impaired or stressed or just cannot remember where the place they need to go is, or how to get help. At minimum, know where to send folks having mental health issues, needing emotional support, needing health care, or needing support after a sexual assault. Know what resources exist on playa, and the ways to get people to the things they need (we have a few resource guides up under safe camp resources – check them out). Also remember! It is super important to support survivors. And that might not always look how you would want to be supported. Follow their lead, and let them guide the process (Check out the supporting survivors doc for the basics).

**Consent 101 – Remember to have all your campmates watch the consent 101 video!**