

Health Justice Classroom Guidelines:

These guidelines create a shared understanding of how to participate in a classroom setting based on respect and equality. Have them present in your classroom, in your class materials, present them to teachers entering into the space for the first time and go over them with students as a group so all are on the same page. Allow for open engagement and questions about these guidelines, using them as a learning tool without judgments.

Please try to avoid labeling these guidelines as “Politically Correct”. We prefer to think about these guidelines as “Pretty Compassionate”. We are working towards creating a classroom culture that is inclusive, safe and anti-oppressive. These guidelines do not give anyone the right to be the PC police; they are there to encourage communication about each others’ experiences and build mutual respect.

These guidelines are not meant to stifle opinions, thoughts or statements. They are a tool for clear communication. Changing language to be “PC” (pretty compassionate) can make a hard discussion easier for everyone involved.

1. We are committed to non-violence, anti-oppression, and compassion with all communication that takes place within our classroom.
2. Use language that is non-offensive! Avoid using language that may be potentially racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic.

3. Please speak from experience. Starting sentences with, “from my experience.....” adds validity and builds trust within the group. We all have answers and valid experiences. Before opening up the discussion, it can be helpful to remind people that they don't have to have the "right" answers in the discussion, and that one of the main objectives is learning together, not already knowing the "answers".
4. Consider prefacing potentially triggering comments about trauma or sexual abuse with a warning. We all need to speak our minds, and understand that this can be potentially triggering when speaking about our own experiences regarding things like sexual abuse and trauma. A warning may sound like: “I am going to talk about sexual abuse and understand this may be traumatic / hard / triggering for some folks to hear.” We also acknowledge that we are not responsible for others’ emotions or experiences, so there is a balance here. Being a compassionate herbalist means being open and flexible with communication and aware of potential triggers when sharing space with others.
5. Move Up, Move Back: People who often talk a lot, challenge yourselves to listen more. People who don't talk that much, we want to hear what you have to say!
6. Be Aware of Time: We have a limited amount of time together. Lets try to be on time and stay on topic.