

Episode 11

Safer Spaces Statement

Arika

Episode 11 is a gathering for people who are interested in exploring abolitionist and anti-colonial ideas, strategy, and struggle. The introduction to the Episode gives an idea of what we mean by these terms, and of what our position is in relation to them.

MAKING SAFER SPACES

We are mindful that people come from different communities, experiences, countries, backgrounds, educations and contexts and that we might not always have a shared language, vocabulary or understanding. Throughout this event, we aim to foster a space where we can communicate thoughtfully and respectfully of difference.

Some events might be complex and/or emotionally affecting. We want to foster an environment of open-mindedness, willingness to learn, collaboration, and respect for each other's experiences and perspectives. We want all participants to feel able to express themselves and ask questions without fear of reprisal or humiliation, while also being able to listen to challenges and engage in active reflection.

This event aims to support the wellbeing of participants whilst recognising that challenging environments can allow opportunities for growth, and new understandings and connections.

We live in a world where oppression and violence are socially entrenched and pervasive. Challenging and undoing oppression, whether on individual, community or structural levels is an ongoing practice that we are committed to doing.

We recognise that many of the people attending the Episode experience oppression on multiple intersecting axes and that living with constant oppression can be exhausting and demoralising. Attendees are asked to recognise and honour this in themselves and in others, and attend with the awareness that unlearning our own internalised prejudices is ongoing and imperfect work.

Whilst we are committed to resolving conflict and addressing harm with compassion, we believe it is extremely difficult (especially in the context of short term events) to achieve anything productive or transformative with people who are not acting in good faith. Based on this, if anyone attending the Episode shows intent to cause harm or distress to participants or audience members, they will be asked to leave the event.

We have **Active Listeners** at the Episode who are attending the events and are available to listen and offer one-to-one support if required. We also have a **Quiet Space** for people who need a break. It is designed around the needs of autistic people but everyone is welcome.

The following are some suggested guidelines for building a productive and supportive space:

- Be thoughtful about and check that you are using people's correct name and pronoun.

You cannot identify someone's gender identity or the pronouns they use simply from looking at them. If you feel able to do so, please feel free to introduce yourself with your own name and pronouns and ask others for theirs. If you are not sure

how to pronounce someone's name, please ask them. If you mistakenly use the wrong pronoun for someone, or mispronounce a name, please apologise briefly, correct yourself, and move on.

- Be careful to avoid making generalisations or assumptions about others.

Many of us experience oppression related to factors including (but not limited to) work, gender, disability, race, transition, sexuality, migration, class - and others that may not be immediately obvious. Please be aware of your social position in relation to others. Think about how your view of the world may have been shaped and who might be excluded or harmed by your words, opinions and actions.

- In order to foster a culture of consent, please respect others' physical and emotional boundaries.

Please ask before touching someone, even in passing, and change your behaviour if someone lets you know that you are crossing their boundaries. You are encouraged to think about and communicate your own boundaries. If you need support or assistance with this the Active Listeners are available.

ACTIVE LISTENERS

We have an Active Listener present at most of the events. They will attend and observe, identifying themselves at the start. If required, the Active Listener can offer support to those who might need it either during or after the event. The support required might be to listen and hear what someone wants to share about their experience at the event, to offer brief emotional support if they have been particularly triggered at an event. Personal matters shared with the Active Listeners will be held in confidence.

Active Listener at the Episode is Nosheen Khwaja.

THANKS

With thanks to SWARM, Abolitionist Futures, Sisters Uncut and Decrim Now for sharing their safer spaces documents to help us build our own.