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4

SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

He touched me without my consent

5

SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

He moved my body without my consent

6

SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

He put his head between my legs

7

SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

He had hold of my ankles, and was hanging me upside down in a position that meant that I was completely physically dependent on him

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SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

I didn't know him and we had not established any rapport or trust that would indicate that this might be a welcome adjustment

9

SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

He was male

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SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

It was a physically demanding adjustment that could have easily caused physical injury

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SAFE CONTAINER

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

Having never experienced sexual trauma myself, I still hold the vicarious trauma of the millions of women in the world who have been sexually abused by men in positions of power, and the adjustment triggered fear in me

12

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

“ *Some teachers start to physically adjust without asking your permission to do so or even giving notice. They often just pop up behind you and put their hands on your hips. That is an absolute no-go for me.* ”

13

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

Predominately offer visual and verbal assists to students and rarely offer physical assists, as touching a student is *‘a serious decision that bears thoughtful deliberation’*

Emerson and Hopper (2011)

14

INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

1. The student will experience touch by their teacher as a traumatic reminder of previous trauma, resulting in overwhelming emotions, intrusive memories or dissociative flashbacks, or

Emerson and Hopper (2011)

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INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

2. The Yoga Teacher will use touch as it's more expedient than encouraging the student to have their own internal experience.

Emerson and Hopper (2011)

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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS

Visual assisting is where the teacher demonstrates a posture or practice themselves

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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS



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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS



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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS

When demonstrating a pose, consider your intention

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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS

Try showing your students different variations of the pose or practice, without making one appear better than the other

25

SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS

The emphasis is on showing different variations, not levels of skill or achievement

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SAFE CONTAINER

VISUAL ASSISTS

“ Encouraged students to work at their own pace and let students know it is normal to have variations in abilities to do a pose ”

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SAFE CONTAINER

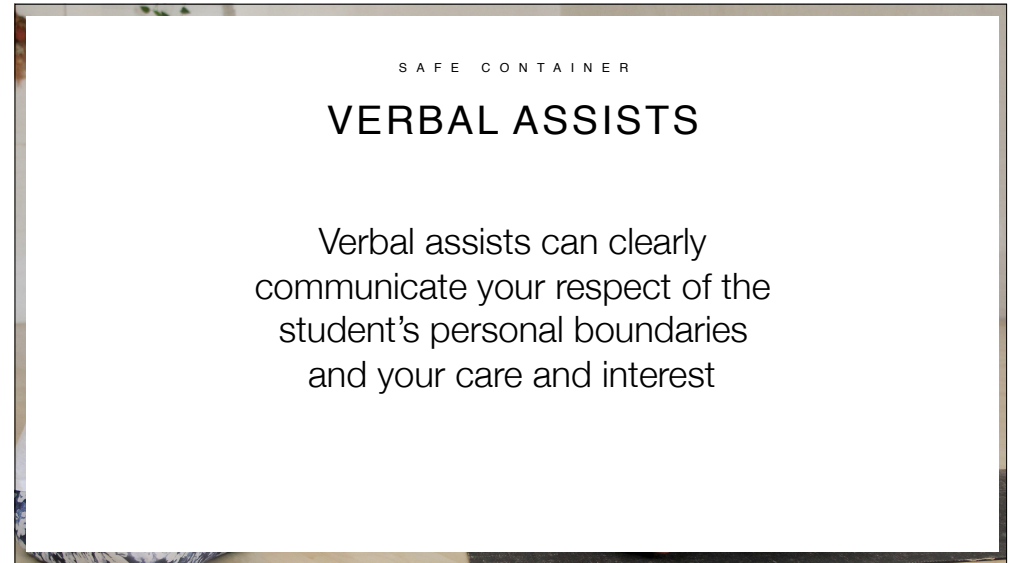
VISUAL ASSISTS

“ Creating a calm supportive environment is the most important for me. I can become nervous when meeting new people or compare myself to others, so it is great when the teacher makes sure there is no space for this ‘competition’, and instead focuses on methods to help bring a sense of calm. ”

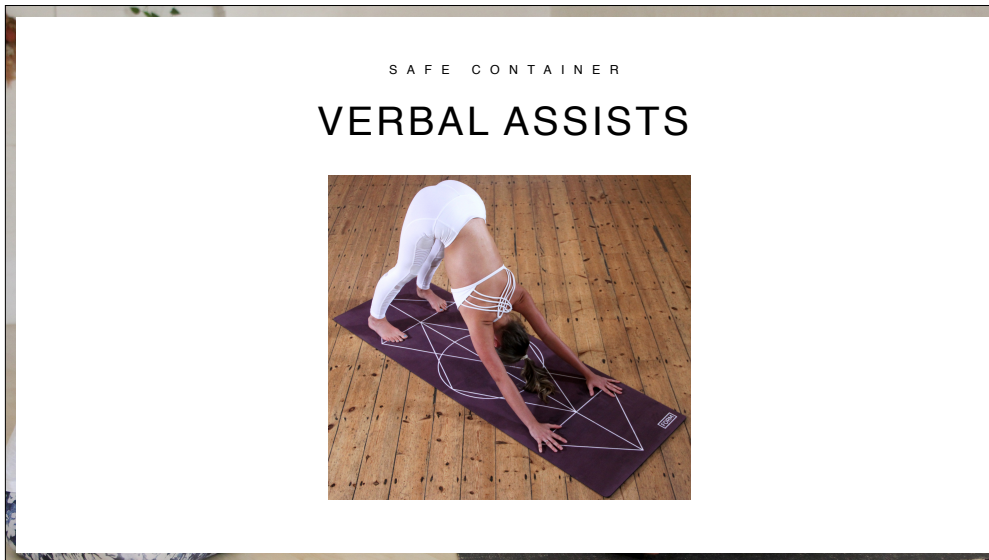
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SAFE CONTAINER

VERBAL ASSISTS

Choose language that is invitational, inclusive, non-judgemental, accurate, fostering connection and encouraging curiosity

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SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS



34

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

We need to respect our student's boundaries and be conscious in our decision whether or not to use touch in our yoga classes

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SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

We need to ask ourselves if touch could be triggering for the student

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SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

We need to ask ourselves if it's taking the student towards or away from their internal experience

37

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

Ask yourself if there is another way to offer assistance that could better support your student to be safe or to feel relaxed

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SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

A rule of thumb is to not touch students you don't know well

39

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

Consent is paramount

40

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

Never give a student a hands-on assist without first asking them, even if you have touched them many times before

41

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

If you are offering touch in your class, let students know in the beginning so they know what to expect

42

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

When offering touch stand where the student can clearly see you, make eye contact, and clearly explain the touch that you're offering

43

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

Always ask
Just because a student consented to touch in the past, it doesn't mean that they consent all the time

44

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

Students may consent to touch even though they don't really want it, so it's important to always communicate with your words and your body language that it's ok to say no

45

SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

For students to feel safe to say no, they need to see you genuinely communicating and honouring choice with all your students

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SAFE CONTAINER

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

This discrepancy between the student's communicated consent and their actual needs often happens because of the power imbalance between teacher and student

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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS



48

SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS



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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS



Place a Consent Token on each student's mat at the beginning of class with the **NO** side facing up

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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS



Invite your students to change the Consent Token to **YES** if they would like hands-on assists

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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS

Give a token to each student, rather than just leaving them at the front of the room for students to take or not

52

SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS

Let your students know that by indicating consent:

1. They will be offered hands-on assists
2. That they can still say no if they are offered

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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS

3. They're welcome to change their preference throughout the class
4. Just because they indicated consent in last class, doesn't mean that they have to consent again in this class

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SAFE CONTAINER

CONSENT TOKENS



Even if the Consent Token is flipped to **YES**, always ask for consent to touch

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SAFE CONTAINER

CHOICE AND EMPOWERMENT



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SAFE CONTAINER

CHOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

Giving our students choice, and deeply honouring the choices they make can be a very healing experience for our students

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SAFE CONTAINER

CHOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

When we don't offer and honour choice, we can reinforce the experience of powerlessness for our students

58

SAFE CONTAINER

CHOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

If hands-on assists are an important part of your style of yoga it is still important that you ask for consent each time you touch

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SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH



60

SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

Be mindful of how and where you touch your students, and ensure that the touch is for their benefit only, not for yours

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SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

Do not touch your students genitals, bottom or breasts

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SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

Do not touch your genitals, bottom or breasts against your students body or in front of their face

63

SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH



64

SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH



65

SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

Keep the touch as minimal as possible, don't linger

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SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

Keep your sexual energy in check, don't bring it into the yoga room and don't bring it into a hands-on assist

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SAFE CONTAINER

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

If a student tells you they don't want a hands-on assist, if they change their mind half way through a hands-on assist or anything at all in their body language suggests that they're not comfortable with it, do not touch your student

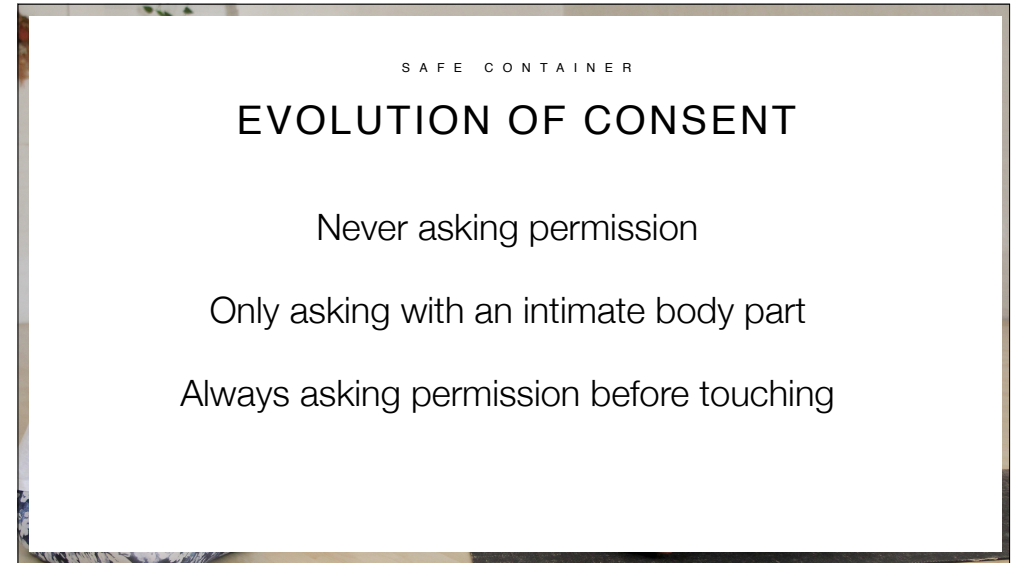
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SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

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SAFE CONTAINER

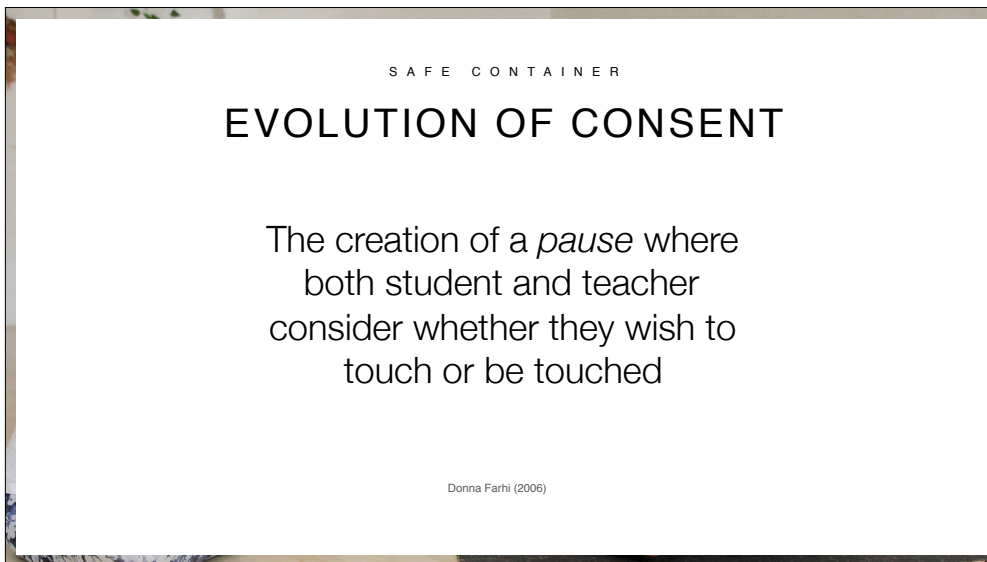
EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

Never asking permission

Only asking with an intimate body part

Always asking permission before touching

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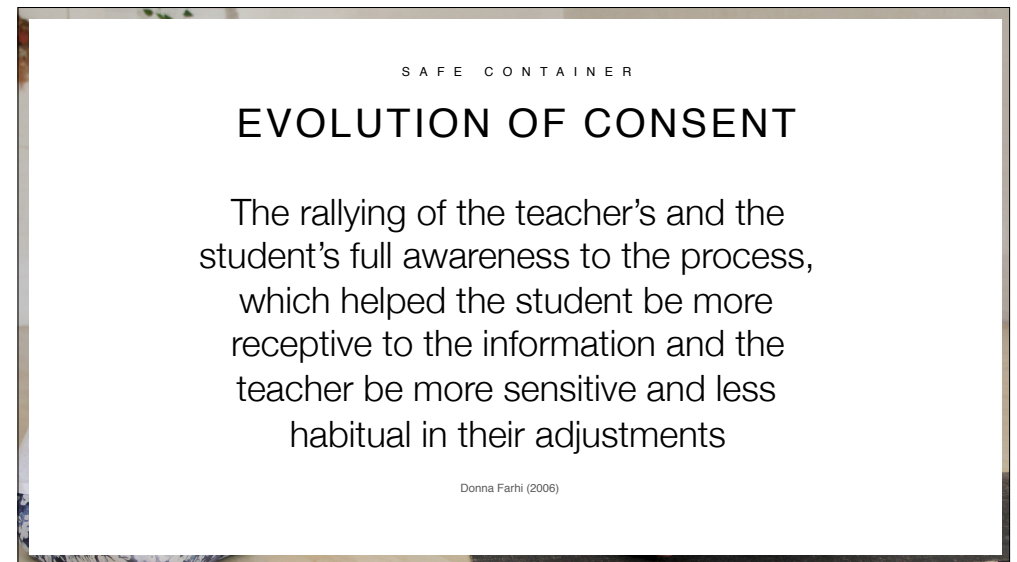
SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

The creation of a *pause* where
both student and teacher
consider whether they wish to
touch or be touched

Donna Farhi (2006)

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SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

The rallying of the teacher's and the
student's full awareness to the process,
which helped the student be more
receptive to the information and the
teacher be more sensitive and less
habitual in their adjustments

Donna Farhi (2006)

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SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

The acknowledgement that simply being present in the class does not automatically constitute permission to touch

Donna Farhi (2006)

73

SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

The recognition that the student has a role a play in communicating their personal boundaries

Donna Farhi (2006)

74

SAFE CONTAINER

EVOLUTION OF CONSENT

The acceptance that there are times when a student will not want to be touched

Donna Farhi (2006)

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SAFE CONTAINER

HUGGING



76

SAFE CONTAINER

HUGGING

Hugging students before and after class can be inappropriate

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SAFE CONTAINER

HUGGING

It's not black and white

78

SAFE CONTAINER

HUGGING



79

SAFE CONTAINER

PARTNER WORK



80

SAFE CONTAINER

PARTNER WORK

Partner work can be a great way to facilitate connection between people, but it can also be very confronting, whether it includes touch or not

81

SAFE CONTAINER

PARTNER WORK

If you do offer partner work, always offer an alternative in a way that is accepting of any choice

82

SAFE CONTAINER

PARTNER WORK

If there is touch involved, make sure it is always with clear consent and always appropriate between individuals who may not know each other

83

SAFE CONTAINER

PARTNER WORK



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