

CONSENT ACCOUNTABILITY CHEATSHEET

First off, well done on taking this first step. It can be scary to practice radical honesty in this way, and it often runs counter to a lot of our social conditioning, but it's worthwhile and when properly used will immeasurably improve both the degree of trust and respect in your relationships with others - platonic, sexual and romantic alike - and your own sense of self-worth.

What is an accountability group?

Simply put, it's a private group of trusted individuals who you keep informed about a specific aspect of your life in order to track progress and offer feedback. That includes opportunities you've taken for personal development and reflecting on behaviour you're proud of, as well as instances where you've fallen short.

What it's not:

An accountability group is not a jury or a parole board; they are not there to offer forgiveness or decide on your worth as a human being. They are also not a substitute for professional counseling or similar talking therapies.

An accountability group and process should be a behind-the-scenes effort, and should not be used to increase your influence or standing in a dance scene.

Who should be in your accountability group?

Three or four people is plenty if they're carefully selected. Here's the core criteria:

- Do you respect them and admire their own record on consent issues?
- Do they know you well enough to be familiar with your relationship history?
- Do they have the time and emotional reserves to discuss potentially triggering or sensitive issues?
- Do they bring an additional perspective to your group, e.g. gender, age, orientation, social circle represented?

Who should not be in your accountability group?

Your group should not include anyone with whom you presently have a sexual or romantic relationship, nor should you pursue those with anyone while they are in this group. Your group should not include "ride or die" friends or anyone you feel has enabled or dismissed inappropriate behaviour in the past.

How does the group work?

It's up to you how often you want to check in, and in what format - so long as it's something you can consistently commit to. A group chat works best for many, which can be updated at the beginning of each calendar month. Updates are likely to cover any new relationships or play partners, a run-down of how you practiced good consent in those encounters and any indications that you overlooked some aspect of consent. As consent applies to much more than simply sexual or romantic situations, these reports can also extend to dance events, parties or

hangouts with friends, social situations, or instant messaging - any interaction that stayed with you or gave you pause for thought.

Can I change who's in the group?

Of course people can join or leave as the demands on their time or the nature of your relationship changes, but if you're actively considering removing someone from the group it's very important to discuss with your other accountability buddies and reflect on why: is their feedback unhelpful, or is it simply difficult to hear?

Should my group meet without me?

This group is specifically to assist in your personal development; your accountability buddies should only need to hold a discussion without you if they have reason to believe your actions or an established pattern of behaviour will go on to cause serious harm to yourself or others.

Should my group report back to anyone else?

Again, this group exists to assist your personal development, and that means different things to different people. You might want the group to provide broad updates to a third party as part of a transformative justice process, and you can negotiate with the group whether those updates cover specific behaviours or a general assessment of commitment and growth.

Unless this is negotiated, you should expect members of the group to keep the content of your discussions confidential. The only circumstance in which your accountability buddies should need to breach this boundary is if they have reason to believe your actions or an established pattern of behaviour will go on to cause serious harm to yourself or others.

Thank you again for taking on this project, and best of luck!