



Safeguarding policy

At Yoga and Sports with refugees (YSR), we consider everyone as equal, thinking and reasoning human being, capable of making informed decisions.

We do recognize power differences:

- Hierarchical power dynamics
- Teacher students power dynamics
- Adults / minors
- Privileged / discriminated people
- Long term / short term people
- People with papers / no papers

We do not separate our team members and students into beneficiaries / aid workers categories. At the heart of YSR, we train together, wherever we are from.

We aim at facilitating healthy relationships between people.

We are very grateful you are here to give your time and energy for our project. Your presence here is very appreciated and needed. We will provide you with all the support we can, answer your questions.

Do no harm

Overstepping boundaries, advice and guidelines clearly communicated to you before, can be dangerous for you, for the other person you interact with, and for the organization, therefore, we communicate them to you beforehand. **The situation here is not about you, please remember to do no harm.**

Our purpose here is not to put people in dangerous or uncomfortable situations. The principle of Do No Harm is a very good thing to remember when you are in doubt about what to do. Do No Harm is a principle taken from medical ethics, and requires humanitarian organizations and individuals to strive to minimize the harm they might inadvertently cause through providing aid.

You are here to facilitate a safe space where people can train together, a peaceful place for people to visit. We do ask you to be committed to your volunteering time. Everything else, like going out, partying, visiting places, making friends, learning languages, etc... is secondary.



Volunteers

We want to make sure volunteers are accompanied in their first experience in a new context, when it might be their first time experiencing their privilege and work with people on the move. That is why we provide training, which is mandatory.

When you come here as a volunteer, you need to remember that

1. You are here for a short period of time
2. You are here by choice, which is rarely the case for people on the move

Please make sure you do not put your emotional worries on the people who come to the gym, and also do not try to be an emotional support for them. Indeed, you will leave.

Maybe you feel like making close friendships, but these can be quite harmful, remember you are here for a short period. For you, this might be a new experience, but for people living here, they see volunteers coming and going all the time. Do not take it personally if people don't want or don't have the capacity to bond with you.

Let friendships grow in a natural way, don't rush anything.

When you leave, please be mindful about what you say. Most people on the move have been stuck in Greece without papers to travel. Sentences like "I'm so sad to leave this beautiful island/city" or "I wish I could stay forever but I have to study at home" may be perceived differently from a person who doesn't have freedom of movement or access to education.

Interactions between people with different cultures, backgrounds and stories are amazing and very enriching. However, keep in mind to:

- Be mindful of cultural differences, keep a respectful distance and give your hand to shake if you wish. Do not hug people, even if you see other people doing it (a coordinator who has been working at the gym for 4 months will have different relationships with people)
- Be very clear with your own actions and set boundaries. For instance, we do not have clothing guidelines, but please be mindful, wear clothes which make you and people working with you comfortable. The gym is a safe place for everyone.
- Be mindful of the conversations you have. Most of us can have very strong political opinions, and be moved here by a sense of revolt towards the world. We love heated discussions, but maybe the gym, where people come to train after a long day, is not the place to have these conversations.
- Do not give advice about things. For instance: which country is the best, where should I go? Your experience of a country is in no way everyone's experience. It is a big responsibility to give your advice on things



- Do not ask questions to people about their past or asylum process:
 - People on the move have been asked to share their personal stories many times. It is a very invasive process, and a very discriminative one. We do not discriminate according to people's past, or according to their asylum status. Not asking is also a way of showing we do not discriminate according to that.
 - It can be traumatizing to constantly share difficult stories. We are not here for that
 - If someone feels like sharing, listen, of course. You can say "Thank you for sharing with me, I am sorry this happened to you, it is nice that you are here now". If you hear something difficult, you can always talk to the coordinator, but do not share people's personal stories to your friends, etc...

We do not judge or show favor to any of the other volunteers, team members, teachers or users of the gym at any given moment. We contribute to a balanced and fair environment.

We do not aim at changing the background or cultural environment of the users of the gym. Of course, we can have beautiful and heated discussions about it, but the gym is not the place to push any of our ways or morals in a colonial way, on the users. We do not know better.

The gym is a place where cultures meet first. This is the place where people sometimes make their first steps into Europe and European law, culture and behaviors. Just like we wish to be respected in our beliefs, morals and behaviors, we respect everyone's differences. We slowly get to know each other and learn from each other.

Social media & contacts

You are free to share your personal social media accounts, or personal phone numbers, but we do not necessarily advise it. If you are a visiting volunteer, it can feel very weird to post stories of your travels when you know people following you can't take a plane.

Also be mindful that if you share it with one person and not with others, it creates inequality. We would say, only accept friendship requests from people you know and consider as friends :)

If someone contacts you on Whatsapp and you did not share your personal details with him/her, you can share this message:

"I do not feel comfortable with you sending me a message. I did not personally give you my phone number, and it is not ok to take it from a Whatsapp group for work. Please do not message me again. " (you will find this message, translated in several languages, on the volunteer drive)



Rules and code of conduct

Most of what we do, we do for a reason. Rules at the gym are made to ensure everyone feels respected. Follow them.

You are welcome to ask questions about them, discuss them and challenge them. We love questioning what we do, growing, learning and receiving feedback.

But while you do that, follow them in the meantime.

Support

If there is any situation which makes you feel uncomfortable, let us know, if you are unsure how to handle something, how to act, what to say, whether it is at the gym or outside of YSR's spaces, never hesitate to ask!!

We are always available to support you, and most of your questions are useful for everyone. Indeed, if something raises interrogations, there is a big chance it does for other people as well.

Photos and videos

Please, refrain from taking photos or videos.

If you really can't restrain from it, you can take a photo of yourself in your own training.

If you want to take a photo or video **of** people, you need to get permission from a coordinator first.

If your photo or video involves other people, do not take photos or videos without **REAL and EXPLICIT** consent. You need to explain what the photo or video is for, where they will be shared, make sure everyone on the photo or video understands and agrees.

What does that mean? You need to make sure someone is translating for you, and that everyone agrees. Really.

Never, I repeat, never, take photos or videos of minors.

Also choose wisely if you want to be on a photo or video yourself.

For events, a particular rule can apply, you need to follow the instructions of the coordination team.



Process for safer recruitment

We have a process in place to ensure volunteers, teachers and partners arriving in the project are as aware and prepared as possible for the work on the field.

The training and documents sent before coming are mandatory to take / read, and volunteers should understand the content, and write down questions to be answered in their onboarding.

We are always very happy if you recommend our project to other potential volunteers, teachers or partners, but if you want to bring a friend over, please contact the coordinator first, and we need to check/train him/her.

Relationships

As stated at the beginning of this policy, we consider everyone as equal, thinking and reasoning human being, capable of making informed decisions. But we acknowledge the many power imbalances in our context. We aim at facilitating healthy non romantic relationships, and really advise against romantic relationships with power dynamics!!

Indeed, in addition to power dynamics, it is important to remember that having a relationship in the context of YSR might jeopardize the neutrality and safeness of our space. Also keep in mind that there might be an imbalance in the support network available to people in a vulnerable situation.

If you have any romantic relationship within the context of YSR, so with people you meet at work, at the gym, or collaborate with in your work, you have to inform your coordinator.

Indeed, we do not forbid relationships, but we do want to be able to protect and inform people. We aim at protecting people in vulnerable situations without taking away their agency.

Disclosure enables us to make sure power dynamics are acknowledged, without forbidding connection or patronizing people.

After disclosure, the situation will be assessed, and different measures will be taken, such as having a discussion to talk about power, so that both people can give informed consent, or a measure could be taken to make sure both people don't work together.

Directors and coordinators cannot have a romantic relationship with teachers, volunteers or students with direct hierarchical relationships.

It is, of course, absolutely forbidden, as an adult, to have a romantic relationship with a minor.



Reporting channels

Disclosure of relationship

Romantic and sexual relationships between international volunteers and people from the gym are strongly discouraged, but not forbidden. However, any romantic and/or sexual relationship within YSR should be communicated.

So, in case of romantic relationship within the context of YSR, you should disclose the relationship to your line manager or to a director:

- For a volunteer: the volunteer coordinator
- For a teacher: the teacher coordinator
- For a coordinators: a director
- For a director: other directors

If the person is not comfortable approaching the first level of contact, or is not satisfied with your contact's response, you are encouraged to speak with another coordinator, or directly to a director.

In discussion with the directorate, a suitable solution for the situation will be found. This could, for example, mean that both people don't work together anymore.

Disclosure of violence

In case of disclosure of violence (someone tells you about something which is happening to them)

Contact the person responsible in your location:

- Athens: **Claude**
- Ioannina: **Maeve**
- Lesvos: **Katerina**
- If not available / not possible: **A director**

More details in document: ***Procedure for disclosure of Violence***

Complaints and feedback mechanisms

If you have complaints or feedback, they are always welcome. You will be listened to, the feedback will be addressed, and you will receive feedback about it if you didn't voice it anonymously.

More details in document: ***Complaint and Feedback mechanism***



Whistleblowing

If you have concerns about suspected wrongdoing, misconduct, and/or unethical activity within an organization.

The person raising concerns should disclose the malpractice to their line manager:

- For a volunteer: the volunteer coordinator
- For a teacher: the teacher coordinator
- For a coordinators: the director of operations
- For a director: other directors or a board member

If the person is not comfortable approaching the first level of contact, or is not satisfied with your contact's response, you are encouraged to speak with another coordinator, or directly to a director.

If the malpractice concern a director, the person can contact:

- Haley Ritsema +1 (616) 460-3992

More details in document: ***Whistleblowing Policy***

By signing this document I declare that I have read and understood the safeguarding policy and express my willingness and understanding to behave accordingly,

Name:

Date:

Signature: