

## **Acroyoga Montreal**

### **Guidelines for Professional Conduct and Community Agreements**

#### **Statement of Purpose**

Acroyoga Montreal (AYM) recognizes the great responsibility it is to be an Acroyoga teacher. Acroyoga is a physical practice, as well as a profession, a social circle, a political microsphere and a worldwide movement. In an effort to ensure safe and welcoming environments for healthy communities, we ask all AYM certified teachers to understand and agree to the following **Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines**. We offer this document as a statement of intent for staying accountable and maintaining healthy relationships with all members of the community.

#### **Responsibility to Self**

To uphold the highest personal standards, as Acroyoga Montreal teachers, we agree:

- To understand that the role of teacher is a position of service and power that carries great responsibility.
- To honestly, and accurately, self-assess our experience and skill level, therefore providing instruction **only** for those topics and skills that we are competent to share.
- To practice in a way that maintains our own safety and that of our practice partners. To understand the skills necessary to spot with precision and efficacy.
- To pursue education directly in the Acroyoga field or in any field relevant to Acroyoga to enrich our practice and teaching abilities.
- To engage in professional relationships and Acroyoga communities, recognizing that isolation can lead to a loss of perspective and discernment.
- To provide a service to our communities and students by taking care of ourselves, which entails acknowledging and accepting our limits and edges.
- To establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships and to recognize the complexity and responsibility of merging professional and personal dynamics.
- To manage our personal lives to the best of our abilities and seek out professional assistance for support when needed.

#### **Responsibility to the Community**

As AYM teachers and leaders in the Acroyoga Community, we agree:

- To avoid discrimination by learning about and questioning our biases, stereotypes and judgements about others based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, size, age, financial status or physical ability.
- To behave in integrity with the community's values of care, respect and responsible communication.
- To model a safe and healthy practice, empowering oneself and others to say "no" when needed.

### **Responsibility to the Profession**

- We are aware of and informed about the laws and regulations that affect us, our classes and participants and we do our best to abide by them.
- We use our knowledge and professional associations to benefit the people we serve and not to gain unfair personal advantage.
- Fees and financial arrangements are discussed with clarity and directness. We may at times offer services to groups in need, free of charge.
- We are careful to represent facts truthfully regarding our credentials and services offered. We will correct any misrepresentation of our skill set or qualifications.
- We do not knowingly solicit the students of other teachers.
- We are clear about potential physical and emotional dangers of the practice and inform colleagues and community about best practices to keep everyone safe.
- If a teacher is known to be unsafe not by hearsay but by fact, then it is our duty and responsibility as certified AYM teachers to speak directly to that teacher or communicate to them by way of a community leader or an ally, if, by doing so, we do not put ourselves physically or professionally in danger. It is also our responsibility to inform potential students of safety concerns related to this teacher.

### **Responsible Relationships**

- We recognize the unique power placed in Acroyoga teachers and that there is a potential for abuse due to the trust and dependency of students. Acknowledging the complexity of most acroyoga relationships and the intrinsic power imbalance that may be involved, we proceed with caution and care when choosing to engage in personal relationships.
- We avoid relationships with students (eg. business, close personal, sexual intimacy) that could impair our professional judgement, compromise the integrity of our instruction or be used for personal gain. Therefore, we exercise extreme caution when considering such relationships.

- We recognize that the student-teacher relationship involves a power imbalance, and that sexual involvement between teacher and student, in most cases, is unethical, even when the student agrees or invites the behaviour. Sexual behaviour is defined as, but not limited to, all forms of overt and covert seductive speech, gestures and behaviour, and/or physical contact of a sexual nature. AYM teachers that engage in sexual behaviour with students should be aware of potential risks and consequences, such as: negative reaction in the community, public denouncement, loss of reputation, loss of revenue and/or loss of AYM certifications.
- When the teacher is in a position of authority and is evaluating as part of a certification process, sexual intimacy is always inappropriate.
- AYM Teachers are asked to educate themselves about power dynamics and the potential impact of flirting or using sexual innuendos in class and practice settings.

### **Responsibility to Students**

- If we are unable to provide services to someone, or recognize that providing said services would be inappropriate due to exceptional circumstances, efforts are made to arrange for the continuation of instruction with another qualified teacher.
- We ensure adequate training to maintain the utmost safety in all classes, workshops and trainings. We teach students how to safely engage in Acroyoga both in guided session and in jam situations. We recognize the potential for injury in our practice and are as prepared as possible; ie. first aid kits onsite, basic first aid understanding, an emergency care plan of action, ideally training in first aid applicable to our practice.
- We show sensitivity to the moral, social and religious standards of students and groups we interact with. We avoid imposing our beliefs on others, although we are free to express them, when appropriate, in classes and workshops.
- We do not engage in harassment, abusive speech or actions, or exploitative coercion of students or former students (or anyone for that matter).
- Records of, and communications with, students are kept confidential.
- We obtain clear consent from students before audio and/or video recording sessions or permitting third party observers into practice spaces.

After reading and considering the guidelines outlined in this above document, we agree to hold ourselves and each other accountable as practitioners and as teachers in the Acroyoga community worldwide. Acroyoga Montreal reserves the right to **suspend** or **remove** certification if we feel that these ethical guidelines have been disregarded or broken by any of our teachers.

If you agree to act according to these guidelines, to the best of your ability, and uphold the values that Acroyoga Montreal puts forth in this document, as fundamental to our philosophy and way of being, please sign here:

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date:

*Thank you for your commitment to the continuous co-creation of a responsible and supportive community.*

Acroyoga Montreal



*This code was adapted from and inspired by the California Yoga Teachers Association Guidelines*

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