

## SAFER SPACE POLICY - Balfolk Toronto 2024

Balfolk Toronto is a non-profit organization that hosts cultural and social events, organized on an ad-hoc volunteer basis.

We are building a community based on respect and appreciation, and having fun through music and dance!

In order for everyone to have a safe and enjoyable time at Balfolk events, it is expected that everyone treats others with respect.

- **We welcome folks of all identities to Balfolk.** Racist, homophobic, transphobic, misogynistic, ableist, and body shaming language will not be tolerated.
- **Someone of the same, different, or indeterminate gender, of any age, race, or ability has the right to ask you to dance, and you have the right to decline without giving any reason.** Yes and no are equally valued here.
- In partner dances **we leave it up to you to decide together who will lead and who will follow** (or you can switch it up during the dance!) Ensure that you and your dance partner are comfortable with the way in which you are dancing, and don't assume which role the other would like to dance.
- We aim for all of **our facilitators and community members not to gender our dances** in order to make them available and open to all who want to participate. IE there is no "man's role" or "woman's role"; some dances have leaders and followers that can be danced by any gender.
- **Just because someone has danced a dance with you does not mean they are looking to stay connected the whole night**, go on a date with you, or more. If people ask for space after a dance, please respect their wishes.
- **Just because we are holding hands, doesn't mean we can touch people anywhere we want!** In partner holds, the leader's right hand should be between the followers shoulder blades. Not near breasts, hips, buttocks, thighs...
- **We take care not to injure our fellow dancers:** we watch out not to squeeze pinkies too hard, we keep our eyes open on the dance floor, we spin less if our partners are dizzy, we keep the lines of communication open with our partner!

**If someone breaks these guidelines, or engages in verbal, physical, or emotional manipulation or harassment, they will be asked to leave.**

If at any point you feel unsafe or uncomfortable as a participant, please let either Oriane or Emilyn know, or feel free to email us at [balfolktoronto@gmail.com](mailto:balfolktoronto@gmail.com) to discuss outside of an event. We are committed to ensuring folks feel welcome at all of our events.