



Rowe Camp & Conference Center
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SENIOR HIGH CAMP COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Rowe Camp, founded in 1924, is located in a small New England town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The camp is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association, which in 1984 adopted a revised set of principles, the first four of which affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth;
A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

We believe in these principles. Our goal is to share them with teenagers by emphasizing individual freedom of choice within a framework of responsibility and respect for the community. Rowe Camp has a long tradition of respect for teenagers. We provide leadership, guidance, programming and role models to encourage the development of our principles. By creating a safe and trusting environment, we offer a rare and effective opportunity for young people to sharpen their awareness of the consequences of making their own choices. Rowe Camp is small enough for this purpose and encourages the growth of teenagers. Our policies call for watchful awareness from the campers and the development of sensitivity toward others in the community. We trust that, within the parameters of these agreements, each Rowe camper will have a safe and rewarding experience filled with a lasting sense of positive, energetic, personal and community wellbeing.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND MARIJUANA

Illegal drugs, alcohol, marijuana, and all psychoactive substances are not allowed during camp. Despite alcohol and marijuana being legal in the state of Massachusetts, both are illegal for anyone under the age of 21. A possible exception to this is for the use of medical marijuana. We will work with campers on a case by case basis around their need for medical marijuana. We will ensure that all medical needs around psychoactive medication are met by working closely with the camp nurse.

One of the fundamental principles of Rowe is that everyone is intrinsically worthy of respect and inclusion. The use of drugs or alcohol can have the effect of creating ingroups and outgroups. People possessing and/or using such substances will be asked in a humane and appropriate manner to leave camp. We discourage the behavior, not the person.

SMOKING AND VAPING

Campers (including Spirits) are not allowed to smoke or vape during camp. Although Rowe honors a tradition of respect for individual freedom and choice, we recognize that smoking and vaping is extremely unhealthy and that teenagers are particularly susceptible to nicotine addiction. Because of the health risks associated with smoking and vaping at an early age, we cannot in good conscience permit Senior High campers to do either. The camp will offer education and support about addiction and the health hazards involved with smoking and vaping. We will provide support to any person who may be struggling with quitting or resisting the urge to smoke or vape. Campers who smoke or vape while at Rowe may be asked to leave camp.

AGGRESSION, VIOLENCE, AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY

Aggression can take many forms including physical and verbal aggression. One of the fundamental principles in the philosophy of Rowe Camp is respect for the dignity of every person. Aggression and/or violence against people, their property, or the natural world is contrary to this principle. Campers will be held responsible for the repair or the cost of replacement to any property which is damaged.

STEALING

Living at Rowe Camp involves sharing a small living space. Trust and a feeling of safety are essential for the creation of a community and stealing breaks this trust. Any individual caught stealing will replace the stolen items.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

Firearms and all other weapons are forbidden at camp. Knives that are less than four inches in length may be used for whittling. However, any object that is used as a weapon will be removed from the camp community.

RAIDS

For some, raids are an intricate part of the camp culture. They are a fun outlet for creativity that allow campers to interact with the community in a novel way. Raids are an action or activity that people do to change camp or add something sweet or silly to the space. Some examples of raids include rearranging the furniture of the rec hall or making food for your sibling cabin. The intended impact of raids is to bring the community together.

Raids may not be done in such a way that they isolate or victimize campers or staff, cause harm, have the potential to cause harm, or damage property. Raids which result in any of the above are considered interpersonal violence and are not allowed at camp. It is a challenge to campers' creativity to balance the needs of the community with the need for personal expression. Rowe

Camp offers an opportunity for youth to explore the edge where self-expression meets community.

NUDITY

Nudity is not allowed in public spaces at Rowe. This includes everyone keeping their shirts on in public spaces. We have this policy to promote gender equity. Campers can expect that they will not find themselves uncomfortable, unwelcome, or triggered at camp because of nudity.

Staff-accompanied, clothing-optional workshops such as nude swimming, saunas, and sunbathing are made available throughout camp. Staff running nude workshops will announce that they will be nude before the workshop begins and workshops will never become nude after it has started. These activities sometimes occur in semi-public spaces. They are chosen by the staff to provide a safe setting and only Rowe campers and staff attend them. The purpose of these workshops is to give campers the opportunity to explore and become comfortable with their own bodies. Campers may opt out of a workshop at any time.

Sexual activity and the sexualization of others' bodies will not be a part of these workshops. Consequently, behavior that sexualizes nudity in any way is prohibited. We hope to combat society's pervasive conditioning, which has equated nakedness with sexual activity and foster instead a healthy respect among campers for their own bodies and for each other.

SEXUALITY

In light of our commitment to individual choice within a framework of responsibility to community, we find it inappropriate in the Senior High Camp setting to ignore or forbid sexual activity. We recognize that sexuality is an ongoing aspect of the lives of some high school-aged people. Prohibiting sexual relations among young people at camp would likely not eliminate the activity nor some campers' preoccupation with it. In addition, many young people receive little to no support in how to lead safe, respectful, and fulfilling intimate lives. We believe this lack of education and the stigma placed on young people's sexuality can force sexual expression along pathways of exploitation, rebellion, sexism, and even violence.

Camp staff provide a comprehensive sexual education workshop, established by a sexual education professional from the Pioneer Valley, at the start of camp. This consent-based workshop focuses on health, risk reduction, mutual care, and communication. The goal is to empower campers to honor individual choices and to respect the boundaries made by others. Part of this is to train teenagers to communicate yes, no, maybe, and not right now. This workshop provides a philosophy and approach for campers to pursue positive sexual experiences throughout their lives. It also establishes a structure with which to engage campers in conversation about sexuality throughout camp.

Camp staff are trained to actively listen to the experiences of all campers, and critically engage them in conversations about their choices. Staff assist campers in recognizing how their actions affect those around them. As such, camp staff take every opportunity to address and discourage toxic behavior and hypersexualized atmospheres if they arise. We strive to create an environment in which sexual freedom is balanced with responsibility to oneself and the camp

community. We do not allow campers to engage in sexual behavior in any public space in camp, including the cabins, which are respected as the homes of the campers assigned to them.

As a part of upholding these values, sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated at camp. A camper who violates others' personal boundaries or makes a breach of consent with another camper may be asked to leave camp. This camper may also be asked not to return to future sessions. Furthermore, sexual and/or romantic relations between staff people and campers (including Spirits) are not allowed. Any staff member who engages in such behavior will be asked to leave immediately and may not return to serve on staff at any youth camp or work with youth in any capacity at The Rowe Center.

CONCLUSIONS

If these agreements are unacceptable to the prospective campers or to their guardian(s), please contact the Director of Youth Programming to discuss concerns. There are other more routine rules about camp life that will be explained when campers arrive.

Violations to any of the community agreements are grounds for a camper being sent home. Campers may be sent home by the Co-Directors with the approval of the Director of Youth Programming. Furthermore, the Co-Directors will decide if a camper is allowed to return after being asked to leave camp with the approval of the Director of Youth Programming.

It is our intention to carefully consider each situation and all individuals concerned. Counseling before departure will be made available to all campers who are asked to leave camp, which may include a camper's guardian(s). Every Senior High camper and a guardian must sign the Community Agreements before coming to camp, acknowledging that these agreements are understood.

Please do not mistake this document to be a profile of the Rowe experience. Rowe is lifelong friendships, the unfolding of one's own identity, the testing of one's own capacities, an awareness of our connection with the Earth, and a real knowledge of what community means. It is fun, it is unique, it is a three-week summer camp that we hope will profoundly impact you. We think you will love it and that you will love yourself for coming here.