THE FULL VALUE CONTRACT

What is a Full Value Contract?

• The Full Value Contract is one of the most important elements of Natural Resources. It serves as a structure for creating behavioral guidelines that everyone in the group agrees to follow, and that everyone in the group agrees to work on maintaining throughout the life of the class. In essence, The Full Value Contract is a group behavioral contract.

Why is it important?

• Commitment to these values and norms establishes an atmosphere of caring, feeling connected, and feeling valued. This atmosphere is critical to being able to fully value one’s self and others while participating in the group process. This process allows each group member the opportunity to think about the group and about his or her own role and behavior within it.

6 COMPONENTS OF COMMITMENT

BE HERE
• Be involved in all activities and demonstrate commitment to the process.
• Be present mentally, physically, and emotionally.
• Play Hard! Play with intensity, seriousness, and spirit.
• Give 100%, with enthusiasm.
• Try your best.

PAY ATTENTION
• Listen to what others say and focus on their ideas.
• Minimize distractions.
• Avoid side conversations.

BE SAFE
• Create a level of safety, so that people are able to relax and feel comfortable.
• Avoid careless risk.
• Look out for others.
• Practice challenge by choice.
• Show an awareness of your own and other’s bodies and abilities.
• Play within the boundaries of physical and emotional safety.

BE HONEST
• Share your thoughts openly and honestly.
• Don’t hold back feedback that can help others grow.
• Avoid sarcasm.
• Adhere to rules.
• Play cooperatively and with respect for group members, yourself, and the process.
• Allow equal opportunities for all to participate.

BE OPEN TO OUTCOMES
• Set goals.
• Challenge yourself.
• Try not to prejudge what is happening.
• Recognize your preconceived notions about what you will learn or experience.
• Be aware of devaluing self and/or others, and make a conscious effort toward changing this behavior.
• Step out of your comfort zone.

LET GO AND MOVE ON
• Don’t stay angry.
• Vocalize emotions. Don’t hold them in.
• Confront issues openly.
• Avoid backchannels.

What is the role of the individual?

• Keeping in-line with all of these guidelines can be a very difficult. Some behaviors will be harder to recognize or to change than others. Your role as an individual in the group is to do your best to adhere to the guidelines of the Full Value Contract. It is also your role to encourage others to adhere to them. It is not the end of the world if you realize you are not following one of the values or norms. Coming to this realization happens in various ways, such as through self-reflection, as well as peer and facilitator feedback. Be open to this feedback. Once the realization has happened, it is your responsibility to work toward making those norms a part of your future conduct and behavior. Growth doesn’t happen overnight. Set small attainable goals to help yourself grow in these areas.

What is the role of the group?

• While it is your responsibility to reflect and to make positive changes to your own behavior, it is the responsibility of everyone in the group to hold each other accountable to the values and norms. When someone is seen not following the Full Value Contract, it is important for the whole group to make them aware of it. Sometimes hearing it from one of the group members is far more effective than hearing it from the facilitators. Be honest with each other. Don’t let the behavior of one or two individuals get in the way of accomplishing the group’s goals or allow them to make yourself or other group members feel uncomfortable.

What is the role of the facilitator(s)?

• The role of the facilitator is to not only follow and model the behaviors and norms in The Full Value Contract; it is to guide all members of the group toward individual growth. It is important for them to provide you with immediate honest feedback, so that you can realize the behavior as it may be occurring. Looking at the feedback as a “reprimand” will only cause it to feel like it is just that. The most important role of the facilitator is to make sure the group environment is physically and emotionally safe for all of the members. While you may feel is something that is “no big deal,” others in the group may feel like it is a very big deal. They may just feel too uncomfortable to share it with the group. Realize that through personal conversations with group members and reading your journals, the facilitators have more of an insight about what is going on for each member than is publicly known. Being told you behavior is “not full value” could be more about keeping another group member feeling emotionally safe than changing your behavior. If you feel like a facilitator may be “calling you out,” realize that they are because it is their responsibility and job to do so.