

Asian American Organizing Project Principles & Values



1. Our Humanity, Our Being

People are in themselves deserving of justice and worth fighting for regardless of: ability, sexual orientation, the knowledge they carry, the labor they can put out, etc.

2. Gender Justice

Third Wave defines Gender Justice as “a movement to end patriarchy, transphobia, homophobia, and toxic masculinity and to create a world free from misogyny.”

We practice gender justice through gender inclusivity by centering the most marginalized/impacted by patriarchy, transphobia, and homophobia. Femmes/womxn, queer and trans people, folks w/ disability and youth of color are at the forefront of our work. Part of how we practice gender justice is through healing. Femmes/womxn, queer and trans people, folks w/ disability, youth, and cis men need to heal from patriarchy, transphobia, homophobia, and toxic masculinity.

3. Racial Equity

The work itself needs to understand the impact of historical, cultural, and present context and how it relates to the needs of different racial identity.

4. Equity

We recognize that because of historical and cultural context, not everyone has the same opportunities or access to a thriving livelihood. We are actively working to create opportunities and access at an interpersonal and structural level.

5. Intersectionality

Intersectionality “takes into account people’s overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.” Understanding that system of oppression have different negative effect on people’s overlapping identities and experiences; our work needs to take these multi-layered experiences to better inform our work and reach co-liberation.

6. **Voices of Marginalized API's**

API identities are complex, diverse, and experience different levels of injustice within the API community and in the broader community. We want to ensure that the voices of those most impacted by those injustice are centered, uplifted, and lead our movement if we are to reach true API liberation.

7. **Youth & Young People-Led Movement**

Understanding that youth are innovative and powerful, there needs to be a structure in which the leadership opportunity is equally present in youth to balance the existing power dynamic.

8. **Restorative Justice**

We practice Restorative Justice by: centering who was harmed, what they need, and what needs to happen to repair and prevent harm.

To repair and prevent harm, we must:

- Acknowledge the harm by understanding the root causes that stems from system of oppression
- Create agreements and new commitments with the person who did harm; and
- Support everyone involved in the RJ process.

9. **Respect Autonomy:**

- Community level:
 - We need to respect the communities' self determination, so we need to work with (not for, to, or without) the community because they know themselves best. Because we must work with communities we must understand, respect and appreciate cultural nuances.
- Individual Level:
 - People know what's best for themselves; honor their choices. In a situation of decision making, everybody must have informed consent.

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10. Self Care

We prioritize taking steps to heal and prevent the exploitation of our beings as a form of self-preservation through food, art, writing, and love.

- Space Care: leave spaces better than how we found them

11. Accessibility

Our access to different spaces, trainings, etc. makes it our responsibility to share knowledge and resources to our community. We need to make this accessible by:

- Making spaces physically and linguistically accessible
- Making sure Information/knowledge is accessible to all learning styles, abilities, and languages

12. Everyone has a role

Everyone has their own strengths and talents and can contribute to the space. Everyone has a role even if it's not named. We must acknowledge roles that aren't named in traditional spaces.

- Example: someone who always brings a strong, positive energy that uplifts the entire team and motivates

13. Transparency

There needs to be a brave space for folks to voice/identify their needs, capacity, feelings and intention to move the work forward.

14. Transforming challenge

Every challenge should be treated as a potential for growth.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Brave space: environment that promotes self-initiated discomfort for growth

Co-liberation: collective liberation that connects your freedom to mine and mine to yours¹

Cultural nuances: recognize and understand the values of our communities. We as AAOP work with and in these values. Understanding the structures and systems of our communities

Exploitation: the action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit or profit from their work

Femmes: gender expression in which someone (female, male or other) has an awareness of cultural standards of femininity & actively embodies a feminine appearance, role, or archetype²

Homophobia: fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual³

Informed Consent: give people as much information as you can so they can make the best decision for themselves

Linguistically accessible: design of written or spoken information that is comprehensible to people with different cognitive and language abilities

Example: The information is not translated or fully comprehended.

Livelihood: means of living or of supporting life⁴

Marginalized: treated as insignificant or peripheral

¹ [Othering & Belonging](#)

² [Urban Dictionary, definition #2](#) by DySt

³ [Planned Parenthood](#)

⁴ [Collins English Dictionary](#)

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Patriarchy: system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it

Example: Father usually is a decision-maker.

Physically accessible: design that includes the needs of people whose physical, mental, or environmental conditions limit their performance in the perception of the information.

Example: the information should be simple/ flexible/ displayed.

Restorative Justice: an approach to achieve justice that involves those who have a stake in a specific harm to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations in order to heal. This approach relies on the idea that both the person who was harmed and the one who harmed are affected by internalized ideals in society today.

Self determination: a process of a person can controls their own life

Example: Community knows their best.

Self-preservation: the protection of oneself from harm or death, especially regarded as a basic instinct in human beings and animals

System of oppression: when laws, regulations, policies, etc create unequal treatment of a specific social identity group or groups that bar access to basic human rights

Toxic Masculinity: a narrow & repressive description of manhood, designating manhood as defined by violence, sex, status and aggression. It's the cultural ideal of manliness, where strength is everything while emotions are a weakness; where sex and brutality are yardsticks by which men are measured, while supposedly "feminine" traits—which can range from emotional vulnerability to simply not being hypersexual—are the means by which your status as "man" can be taken away⁵

⁵ [The Good Men Project](#)

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Transphobia: the fear, hatred, disbelief, or mistrust of people who are transgender, thought to be [transgender](#), or whose gender expression doesn't conform to traditional [gender roles](#)⁶

Womxn: recognizes that gender is nonbinary

⁶ [Planned Parenthood](#)