

A Foreword...

We've seen the community evolve from just a handful of people who wanted to travel with friends into a global community that's come together and represents 62 different nationalities. But what truly keeps us, the team, going are all those moments of warmth, support, and care generously given from one member to another.

Over the years, we have witnessed so many of these moments.

There is no doubt; we are where we are because the members of this community live and breathe our values of camaraderie, respect, humility, and inclusion. Here's to continuing on this journey together and to the next decade of living life intentionally around amazing humans ♥

Online Community Guidelines

We want the online community to be a place where we can learn about the subjects, topics and activities that we're passionate about. Part of the joy is that nobody has all the answers and we all bring our unique experiences and viewpoints. With that said, there are going to be occasions where we'll have a conversation and we may say something that's rooted in bias, assumptions, or a lack of understanding, that could cause tension.

If someone makes us aware of that, our next move is very important. Do we want to defend our position for the sake of defending it, or are we willing to allow ourselves to go on a journey of growth and learning?

When we give a measured response we set a positive atmosphere for the conversation. If anything, it boosts people's confidence; if the conversation feels informative rather than inflammatory, it actually moves us closer to resolution. The other option is to be inflammatory but that tends to be circular, it shuts everybody down, and rarely ends well.

We don't want these guidelines to silence your voices or stop you sharing your opinions on a given topic. What these guidelines provide, is a framework for our sharing so that all of us can respectfully agree to disagree and not leave the interaction feeling victimized or singled out.

In our community we want to facilitate growth in a safe, positive environment. That leaves no room for trying to shame people into changing or coming around to a particular mindset. Remember that you are among friends here and there is room for you to make a reasonable judgement that people here care about each other.

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Update: Communicating During COVID

We're in a global health crisis that the world just wasn't prepared for. No matter how each of us is affected by the pandemic, one thing is certain: we're all impacted by it in one way or another. Whether that's financial or mental health-related; fear for family members and friends or even the loss of people we loved... All of this sorrow, fear, and uncertainty has heightened stress and anxiety for everyone.

As perpetual travellers, many of us are also suddenly experiencing an abrupt change to a way of living that felt like home for us and the feeling of being cut off from our own community of friends.

Right now, more than ever, **we need to apply an extra layer of empathy and thoughtfulness** in our communication with other people – especially our online communication, where messages can be received differently than intended.

And of course, it's our duty as global citizens to extend the same thoughtfulness to our actions and communication with local communities, as we choose to travel safely and respectfully.

A Quick Overview

Whenever we're communicating with one another, let's guide ourselves by these principles:

1. **Respect:** We treat everyone with dignity.
2. **Camaraderie:** We're there for one another.
3. **Inclusion:** We make everyone feel welcome.
4. **Positivity:** We create a positive environment.
5. **Humility:** We check our egos.
6. **Open-mindedness:** We seek to learn and accept.
7. **Thoughtfulness:** We treat this community with love and care.

In the rest of this document, you will find clarity on each of these seven principles, as well as some examples of negative behaviour that we don't tolerate.

How We Communicate: Start Discussions, Not Fires

Use this as a guide to living out the values of this community and to understand what we expect from everyone who wishes to be a part of it. When having conversations, we want them to be as

compassionate as they are challenging. We want them to be fun as well as factual. We also want them to align with our community values.

It might seem like a lot to take in at first, but you're in this community because you already care about these values – so we're confident that most of what we're sharing here will already come naturally to you.

Please read these guidelines carefully, and don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions. We will be more than happy to clarify or provide further examples.

With that, let's have a look at our values and how they impact our online communications with each other...

Respect: We treat *everyone* with dignity.

We've started this list with respect, because we believe that it is the most important baseline for all communication.

There is never a good enough reason to treat anyone without dignity or respect. Sometimes, disrespect is very obvious, but more frequently, the disrespect is more subtle. It's in a comment that praises one person, and yet implicitly shames or embarrasses someone else. It's in comments that invalidate someone's feelings, e.g. "you're overly sensitive." Or the disrespect is in making people feel like they have no voice with a comment that implies or states "That's not been my experience so therefore your view does not matter."

In all communication, it's not just the literal message that matters, but also the choice of words that are used, the underlying or implied message, and most importantly, the impact.

When we genuinely approach every conversation with the intent to **understand**, to be truly respectful, and to treat everyone with grace and dignity, we're most likely going to do the right thing. Let's be thoughtful and always aim to treat others the way we think *they* would want to be treated.

As WiFi Tribe members, respect is not a tit-for-tat thing. Regardless of whether we have been spoken to disrespectfully, these principles still apply. If someone is rude, it's our chance to do the right thing and not to fight fire with fire. Instead, let's choose to respond calmly and fairly. If that doesn't help and the abuse continues, then it's okay to bow out of the discussion and escalate the issue. But whatever we do, and whatever we say, let's look to be fair, authentic, and firm, but also always kind and respectful.

Camaraderie: We're there for one another.

Camaraderie is one of our core values; our favourite one, in fact. To us, it means supporting one another, cheering each other on, and finding honest, genuine joy in each others' successes. Let's jump on opportunities to help fellow Tribers, and when they say "thank you", just ask them to "pay it forward!"

For online communication, it means very much the same thing; to look out for each other and to choose our words so that we build one another up.

When we see that someone is struggling, it's our chance to reach out. A minute of our time might make all the difference to *their* day, just knowing that we care and that we're here to help.

Inclusion: We make *everyone* feel welcome.

When, in your life, have you felt that you truly belonged somewhere? Who was there with you? What did they do to make you feel that way? Let's use that as inspiration to give that same feeling of belonging to everyone we interact with in the community. Once the team has made the decision to bring someone into the community, it's on all of us – every single one of us – to be inclusive and make this person feel like a part of this global family.

WiFi Tribe is not a space for cliques, in-groups, or out-groups. We're one community.

Positivity: We create a positive environment.

Every day, we all have the opportunity to bring positivity into this environment that is our online home for the community. The choice for how we interact with each other is ours, every time. By choosing to interact positively with fellow Tribe members, we are adding to the overall positivity of our global community.

On the whole, the WiFi Tribe community is filled with people who are open and inclusive. That means that people are open to change and to new experiences. If something is said that is offensive or out of place, then a gentle nudge in a friendly tone is largely all that is needed to challenge somebody's thought process.

In instances where it's appropriate to be more frank, i.e. matters regarding race discrimination, gender discrimination, etc, let's address the point but not attack the person.

Humility: We check our egos.

Humility is about reminding ourselves that we all have something to learn from one another. It's about knowing that, no matter how skilled or knowledgeable we are at something, we are not better than anyone else. We are, in human value, the same. Period.

What does it look like in action? Treating others well. Having patience with one another. Listening. Accepting (constructive) feedback graciously. Taking ownership over our mistakes. Approaching every conversation with curiosity and a genuine desire to learn. Appreciating others for who they are, without imposing our expectations, views, or beliefs on them.

And when we feel that a discussion is becoming personal or heated, let's take a step back, and ask ourselves: "**Am I in it to *win*, or to *understand* and help others understand?**"

Open-mindedness: We seek to learn and accept.

We are a community for curious people who seek to grow and better understand each other and the world. Open-mindedness means accepting other people's beliefs and opinions, when we don't share them. It means going into every discussion with the intent to contribute positively with our perspective, but *not expecting* that anyone should have to adopt it.

When we interact with someone, let's make sure that our actions lead to more unity, empathy, and understanding, instead of creating division. It's always our choice. Every time we communicate with someone from a different culture, it's an experience; a chance to learn.

There are only a few things that we, as a team, expect everyone to be able to see eye-to-eye on, if they wish to be a part of this community:

- our core values
- and everything you see in the community guidelines you're reading right now.

WiFi Tribe does not take the stance of any single country. We aspire to be a truly global community and we shape our values and rules by what we believe to be right on a human level.

Thoughtfulness: We treat this community with care.

Here, we think before we write. As a member, each of us has decided that we want to be a part of this community, and with that, we all hold the responsibility to treat this community with care and respect. No one is expecting that everyone will get it right every time, but we do expect thoughtfulness in all communication.

We all love to be lighthearted and have fun with one another. Jokes are welcome here but not at the expense of someone else and their self esteem. If in doubt, don't wheel it out!

As you're reading this right now, you're already taking the most important step to being more thoughtful. Let's approach all our posts and discussions with *our* own best intentions, as well as the values of this community and these community guidelines always in mind.

Examples of Antagonising Behaviour

Below are some examples of the kind of behaviour that we will not tolerate in our community. This is not an exhaustive list, however, and any type of aggressive, inflammatory, or camaraderie-hurting behaviour will not be tolerated:

Antagonising Behaviour	Examples
<p>Name-calling/Labelling: Calling someone something as an insult. Also applies to stereotyping and generalising about someone based on certain characteristics like gender, race, culture, etc.</p>	<p>“It’s no wonder everyone says you’re a jerk.”</p> <p>“If you don’t support... you’re a xyz”</p> <p>“You’re just a privileged xyz....”</p> <p>“Those people from xyz are like xyz”</p>
<p>Condescension: An attitude or behaviour of patronizing superiority. Showing or suggesting that you believe you are more intelligent or better than someone else.</p>	<p>“Let me see if I can put this in simple terms that even you can understand.”</p> <p>“How are you not able to understand this?”</p> <p>“You don’t know what you’re talking about”</p> <p>“Go educate yourself”</p> <p>“You are humiliating yourself in public”</p> <p>Praising someone with sarcasm</p> <p>Rhetorical questions that belittle someone</p>
<p>Unconstructive Criticism: Weaponizing feedback to make the other person feel bad about themselves.</p>	<p>“You’re always upset about something, always playing the victim. That’s why nobody likes you.”</p>
<p>Blame: Citing external factors to explain inappropriate behaviour.</p>	<p>“I hate getting into fights, but you make me so mad!”</p> <p>“I have to act like this, because you’re so unreasonable!”</p>

<p>Discrimination: Jokes, offhand comments, or statements (intentional or unintentional) that weigh someone’s verbal or written contribution by certain attributes like age, sex, race, wealth, etc.</p>	<p>“You’re too young/old to understand how things work...”</p> <p>“You are saying this because you are from xyz background...”</p>
<p>Verbal Harassment: A form of behavior that includes threatening, yelling, insulting or cursing someone in a public channel or private message.</p>	<p>“You have no right to speak about...”</p> <p>“There’s no place here for your comments...”</p> <p>“If I were you, I’d stop...”</p> <p>“You’re a f**cking xyz”</p> <p>USING CAPITALS TO SUGGEST ANGRY COMMUNICATION</p>
<p>Slander / False Accusations: Passing unverified information with the scope of damaging someone else’s reputation or intimidating to gain advantage. Making statements without proof.</p>	<p>Saying anything that’s not true or verified</p> <p>“Did you know that xyz has been fired for xyz reason”</p> <p>“WiFi Tribe actively discriminates against xyz”</p> <p>“I saw the way you looked at them. You can’t tell me there’s nothing going on there.”</p> <p>“You’re friends with xyz, and that’s why you’re defending xyz”</p>

Resolving Conflicts and Issues

We all wish for the WiFi Tribe community to be a positive place where we build one another up and are able to explore without fear of judgment, so that we can learn and grow together.

We’ve created these guidelines to help all of us navigate the complexity of communicating online with people from all over the world. This next section is all about applying our guidelines and we’ve broken it down into three parts:

1. Avoiding issues
2. Empathetically addressing the issue
3. Escalating an issue

Avoiding Issues

The best way to avoid issues – *to start discussions, not fires* – is to be more conscious about how we communicate. WiFi Tribe has been built on a set of values, and the guidelines we shared above are a helpful resource to better understand what it means to live by those values.

If we keep the values and guidelines listed above in mind as we communicate online, we're going to be able to avoid most of the issues before they even become issues.

Empathetically Addressing the Issue

If you feel that you're finding yourself in a conflictive situation in our online community, please always choose to communicate your concern to the person with empathy and in a non-confrontational way. (Of course, if it is a matter of harassment, we encourage you to get in touch with the team as soon as possible using the form linked below).

Here are some guiding questions that might inspire a thoughtful approach:

- *How can I word my message so that it doesn't make the other person look like a bad person in front of others, but rather, a fellow human who made a mistake?*
- *How can I make it easy for the person to adjust or fix their mistake, without turning this interaction into a public shaming?*
- *How can I show them that I want to help, not hurt them?*
- *How can I assertively deliver the message clearly, but without unnecessary scorn or reprimand?*
- *How can I avoid belittling the other person? (See examples of condescending comments above)*

We recommend following these steps:

1. **Check the context:** As soon as you're concerned there may be conflict or that someone has communicated something inappropriate or disrespectful, check the context of the message to make sure you fully understand where they might be coming from
2. **Apply empathy:** As you write your response, try to spend more time thinking about their perspective. It will help you write a message that is much more likely to be received well, and therefore, more likely to lead to a positive outcome of mutual learning and understanding – which is, after all, your ultimate goal of engaging in this conversation in the first place.
3. **Explain how you feel:** Explain to the person how their words or actions made you feel, or how you felt that it was misaligned with our community guidelines. Talking about how you feel about something is much less likely to lead to escalating conflict than passing a judgement on a person (i.e. saying 'you are wrong' or 'you are a bad person').

4. **Seek to understand:** Allow the person to explain their perspective, and most importantly, truly seek to understand it, instead of seeking to find holes in their arguments. Discussions should never be about winning or losing – that’s what switches on our egos and makes things personal – but rather, about understanding, accepting, learning, and growing... On *both* sides. *No one* is perfect.
5. **Have the courage to apologise:** If you realise it was a misunderstanding, please don’t forget to apologise – it will go a long way to strengthening your relationships within the community.
6. **Accept freedom of opinion:** If you don’t get the answer you were expecting, nor the sense that this person wishes to continue this conversation, remind yourself that the person does not need to adopt your opinions or beliefs. So if you feel you have passed on the message, and said what you felt was important to say, then it may be best to leave the conversation here before it escalates. If the person specifically asks to end the conversation or to no longer engage with you on this topic, you must respect their request, or it may be perceived as harassment.
7. **If necessary, report a case:** If you feel that the person has not communicated in line with our guidelines, or that there is a more serious matter that needs to be addressed, we recommend using the form below to escalate the issue.

Escalating an Issue

We are a community of adults who love freedom. So, as a team, we aim to intervene as little as possible. We ask all members to strive to resolve conflict between themselves, as in any well-functioning society.

That being said, for the issues that cannot be resolved or addressed between members, the WiFi Tribe team will step in.

Similarly, if we feel that someone is repeatedly behaving contrary to our community guidelines, we will step in with a warning, or possibly the removal of the member from the community – depending on the severity of the wrongdoing.

Identifying Issues that Should be Reported

‘Issues’ can be defined as anything that looks like the following:

- Discrimination or racism
- Sexual offences however mild, be it verbal or physical
- Disrespectful comments or behaviour
- Bullying or cliques
- And any other behaviour that would be reasonably seen as disrespectful or not in line with our guidelines

The above list is not the full list so if you feel like you have been treated unfairly, and you've been unable to resolve it please don't hesitate to get in touch with us. This policy applies to members and team members alike.

The Online Community Reporting Form

This form allows WiFi Tribe to follow up on all incidents reported and take appropriate action. Completed forms are sent to a dedicated team who are trained to handle these situations.

- The reporting form can be found [here](#)
- These guidelines and the form will be present on our website as well in the near future

Formal Complaint Procedure

As a member of this community we encourage you to talk to one another to deal with interpersonal problems. However, when this isn't possible, you can file a formal complaint through the [Online Community Reporting Form](#), and steps will be taken to resolve the issue. The procedure is as follows:

1. A designated team member will receive the complaint and carry out an investigation based on the information and evidence provided to us.
2. A team member will reach out to you to confirm if you would like us to deal with the issue formally (i.e. talking to the people involved). We'll also give you the option to simply raise a concern, without wishing to pursue it further. **NOTE:** Depending on the gravity of the case, if you are reporting something you witnessed, we may reach out directly to the victim, as our primary objective is to protect the victim.
3. Should you wish to take things further, we may:
 - a. Reach out to the offending party to inform them that a complaint has been made against their behaviour
 - b. Ask the alleged offender for clarification or further information
 - c. Organize mediation procedures
 - d. Take actions to ensure the formal decision is adhered to
 - e. Communicate the formal decision to members involved

What to expect from us throughout this process:

- You will be kept informed throughout the process
- Accurate records of the incident will be kept
- Your identity will be safeguarded irrespective of the outcome
- If you report an incident to us in good faith and it turns out that it was a misunderstanding, there will be no consequences

Consequences of Breaching Community Guidelines

This will depend on many factors, including the incident itself and any previous reports against the person.

We operate on a “three strikes you're out” basis as illustrated below:

1. **First violation** – first official warning
2. **Second violation** – second official warning
3. **Third violation** – permanent removal from the community

Please note that this procedure only concerns smaller matters. We will always reserve the right to remove someone from the community at any point if we believe that the offense, or the combination of offences, is causing damage to the community as a whole or to individual members. While non-exhaustive, the following behaviours may be grounds for removal from the community:

- **Discrimination or racism:** Any comment directly or indirectly discriminating against someone's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, skin color, ethnicity, religion, origin, nationality, etc., may be grounds for removal.
- **Sexual offences:** Any inappropriate remarks about a person's body or choice of clothing, unwelcome advances, unwanted or inappropriate comments, or pressure for sexual activity may be grounds for removal.
- **Harassment:** Any aggressive bullying, teaming up, verbal abuse, besmirchment (slander), public humiliation, mischaracterisation of someone's character, or otherwise, may be grounds for accelerated removal.

Please note that removal from the community means just that; a ban from Slack, online and physical chapters. We will always reserve the right to use discretion when investigating, warning, or removing a member from the community and will always act in a way that is fair, just, and reasonable.

We all joined this community to be a part of something bigger: a group where we would feel welcome, included, and respected. Over the years, we've all worked hard to build a vibrant and engaged community together, and we're hoping these guidelines will be a stepping stone to continued growth and cohesiveness as people, friends, and a respectful and close-knit community.

This guide is a 'living document'. It will continue to evolve over time and we invite every member to contribute their ideas, suggestions, or feedback through [this form](#). As we review feedback, we will be making decisions to include or adapt the guide in line with the core values and principles that have guided us since day one.