

**The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado**  
**Workplace Culture Principles**  
(For Staff, Board and Volunteers)

**Definitions and explanations:**

Workplace Culture - The “personality” of our organization, the sum of our assumptions, values, beliefs, traditions, behaviors, and interactions, the patterns of behavior that determine HOW things get done.

*NOTE: workplace culture exists whether we put intention into creating it or not. We believe that by putting intention into its creation and holding one another accountable to it we are more likely to have a HEALTHY workplace culture.*

*There are three types of workplace culture: the culture that our leadership thinks the organization has, the culture that actually exists, and the culture that we aspire to. It is important to understand all three of these types.*

Culture Principles - Statements of our shared commitments to one another (staff, board, volunteers, participants) describing the ways we work together to fulfill our mission, vision, and implement programs.

**Benefits of healthy workplace culture:**

*(See this power point about the [benefits of healthy workplace culture](#) from the NY State office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse, and this article about [why workplace culture is important](#).)*

Strengthen our ability to accomplish our mission and vision by:

- Aligning our personal values
- Guiding decisions into alignment with larger goals
- Forming the basis for acceptable behavior

It is only through practicing these values personally and organizationally that we believe we can help grow a healthier community.

**If our work is not grounded in these principals the manner in which we conduct our work will undermine the very purpose of our organization and programs.**

**Our Mission**

To grow a healthier community through garden programs, education, and access to local produce.

**We envision**

A community of healthy people eating from healthy land.

## **The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado Workplace Culture Principles**

### **We are guided by our mission**

We are grounded in the needs of our community and strategic about making an impact. We value the process, how we do the work we do, as an integral part of accomplishing our mission and vision.

### **We are dedicated, joyful professionals**

We believe our work is important, we approach it with care, consciousness, and humility. We view our role as servant leaders in our community. We represent The Garden Project with practicality and professionalism. At the same time, we cultivate fun and joy because it nourishes, energizes, and connects us.

### **We work collaboratively**

We believe everyone has a unique, valuable contribution to make. We believe that good leaders recognize and develop the power and skills of others. Every team member is able and encouraged to weigh in and contribute to ideas and decisions. The team respects decisions, regardless of initial personal views, and endeavors to implement them with excellence. Our community and volunteers are the backbone of our organization and we rely on their needs and ideas to guide us. We cultivate community partnerships because each of our distinct contributions are needed and builds to a greater collective impact.

### **We use open communication**

Respect is the basis for all interactions. We believe people and our communities are important so we exhibit care, concern, and consideration for their needs and feelings. We are transparent. We listen in order to understand and assume a generous interpretation of others' actions. Differing opinions and diverse perspectives are valued. We cultivate self awareness to communicate truthfully and kindly. We address conflict and discomfort openly to build greater understanding and cohesion.

### **We are all students / We are all teachers**

We embrace mistakes as essential to the learning process. We balance action with reflection. We learn by doing and teach by modeling. We cherish feedback and offer it responsibly and constructively.

### **We build each other up**

We respect the humanity, dignity, and power of each person. We show up to support each other, and ask for support when we need it. We recognize we are all whole people. We show appreciation for one another. We practice a healthy work/life balance, because we see that growing a healthier community starts with ourselves and our workplace.

### **We celebrate our interdependence**

We know that the health of individuals, our community, and the land are inextricably connected and we reflect that in our work. We value the wealth of resources that available through each unique individual's contribution to our community. The planet is precious and we consider the environmental impact of our actions using resources responsibly. These relationships, between people and with the natural world, are at the core of our strength.

### **We believe in strength through diversity**

We seek to create inclusive spaces, that reflect and celebrate the diversity of our community, for people of all backgrounds, lived experiences and abilities. We examine how traditional power dynamics impact experience and repress certain voices from being heard and from having power in decision making. We strive to offer culturally responsive programs and practices to ensure access for all people, especially those historically underserved by society.

*Gratefully adapted from: The Edible Schoolyard Project*