

Rowe Community Work Philosophy

There are many intentional communities throughout the United States and abroad. Like people, they have different "personalities". Part of the challenge is finding the right place and program for you. Many communities were organized as intentional communities. They sometimes develop work to support their community. Rowe was not. Rowe was organized as a Camp and Conference Center. Part of its focus is to offer those who come here a sense of community, to create a space where the sacred can enter into the everyday, to be a part of the evolutionary transformation that is happening. Rowe is a mission driven organization. The community has developed around the work that is our vision.

Each staff person, including work-study interns, has a specific job to do and holds a specific piece of energy to keep the magic of Rowe alive and well. Each person will get a job description when they start work, will be given a one-week orientation, and will also receive training, which will vary in length of time, depending on the needs of the position.

The training period for a permanent staff will vary according to the position. Staff should be fully trained and know all aspects of the job within three to six months of being hired. Because of the seasonal aspects of the center and the changing needs from camp to conference center, a full training period would include both camp and conference center season. Work-study interns will receive a one week training and should be able to fully carry out the responsibilities of their position within 2 weeks of the date of arrival (4 weeks for office staff.) During the training period you will work with a supervisor who will guide you in decision making and work organization.

Rowe is a small community. For many positions, more often than not, you will be working on your own, as well as managing your work assignments. Our work philosophy is autonomy with accountability: We all have autonomy over our own work and are accountable for what we do or don't do. We hope we will each find our own inner authority and be responsible to ourselves and to the group. We will carry well the work we have agreed to do by freely accepting a position here.

Some staff people blossom in this kind of environment. They have an inner sense of freedom and responsibility. They hold themselves to high standards, and they love the respect and freedom they feel. Other people just aren't able to find that inner authority. Some folks confuse getting to be who you are with permission to act out. They mistake their behavior with the core qualities of who they are, or they think that freedom is all about doing what you want to do when you want to do it regardless of how it affects other people. We are interdependent and need to be aware that our behaviors affect everyone in the group.

Autonomy

Once trained it is expected that staff and interns will carry out their responsibilities autonomously and in a thorough and timely manner. All staff and interns should be able to manage their own time and get the work done in a competent fashion and with high standards of excellence. Our structure allows for more freedom and autonomy than most people are used to.

One of the fundamentals of Rowe is to treat people like mature adults. i.e. you are free and worthy of respect. At the same time, departmental managers are responsible for the overall coordination of the department, including work assignments and priorities. This may sound like a contradiction, though it need not be providing each person is working towards the same goal.

Rowe is not a collective and we don't make decisions by consensus. We follow more a partnership model of working together and do have a hierarchy around decision making. Power and authority to make decisions is directly connected to the level at which the responsibility for the issue lies. For example, departmental decisions will be made by the department and not by the group. Though decisions that effect the whole will be made in consultation with the group or the Director.

Accountability

We expect a lot from those who work here. When one person doesn't carry their load, it means someone else has to carry more than their share. That is why we need mature, skilled, and experienced people to fill our staff positions and flexible, hard-working interns for our work-study program. If one of us doesn't have good work habits or doesn't have the skills to carry out their responsibilities and so doesn't keep on the job in a reasonable way, it soon becomes obvious to everyone. That's the way it is in a small tightly knit group like ours. We believe in open, honest, and direct communication and provide feedback around work issues through a supervisory structure.

We want to give every person considering working and living at Rowe as clear and accurate an idea of what to expect when joining this community. Our philosophy of working with autonomy and accountability works well for us. We hope in providing this information you will be able to decide if it will work for you as well.