Green, Yellow, Red: a Shorthand Check-in for Mopco Improvisers and Students

“Everything green? Any yellow or red moments to debrief?” is to be asked at the end of all classes, rehearsals, and shows by the leader of that event. Green, Yellow and Red represent what the players felt/feel about their own or others physical, or emotional safety.

GREEN: Everything was fine by me: I felt safe and trusting, no problems.

YELLOW: There was a moment that felt iffy and I would like to talk about it.

RED: Full stop! I felt unsafe, my boundaries were crossed, I felt violated, etc.

LEADER’S JOB:
Before or at the start of event, run a check in on what feels safe for each member regarding physicality and touch. Remind everyone about the Green/Yellow Red question. If someone doesn’t know about this, explain. The question should be asked of the group as soon as possible after a performance is over, or as part of ending in the case of classes and rehearsals.

Green: If everyone agrees all green, great, no discussion necessary.

Yellow: need for a conversation. Leader should ask the person if they want to speak with the group, or perhaps talk with the other person involved, perhaps with the leader there for facilitation/support. If the person wants the group to discuss, sooner is much better than later--encourage everyone to stay for a few moments and hear what needs to be said. If not, the matter should be raised ASAP. “Yellow,” and perhaps even “Red” conversations may be very short-- example:

Betina:
George, during our scene, you cast me as a waitress, and implied my character was “easy.” Please, remember that I specifically asked that I not be cast or endowed that way--

George:
Betina, I am so sorry! I know you did, and as soon as I said it I wanted to grab the words back. I was dumb. Sorry.

Betina:
Thanks for hearing me!

Red: It may be that someone feels that all they can say in the moment is that something is "red." Fine, respect that, but make sure there is proper follow up. Or, they may want to discuss immediately--they may want to spell out every detail. Your job is to respectfully hear them. If it seems that the group should meet right away, leader should facilitate and keep things as calm as possible*. 
NOTE: Sometimes these things can be embarrassing or scary to bring up in front of the whole group. The unanimous spoken answer may be “Green,” but someone in the group may feel that the truth is Yellow or Red. Therefore, the leader should not be surprised at a delayed answer. Remind everyone that you can be approached offline, in person or by email or text, or, the person can talk to Michael, michaelburns@mopco.org Kat, kat@koppett.com or our unofficial ombudsman, Becky. mrsbgc@gmail.com Alex or Livia may also be talked to. The email hey@mopco.org gets to Kat, Michael, Alex, and Livia.

*GROUP LEADERS:
Your job is to ask the question and respect the answer. If someone reports a yellow or red moment or feeling, your job is to facilitate, and help that person and the group determine the appropriate course of action. You are not required to “solve the problem.”

Never discourage or minimize the matter, or try to “put things in perspective.” You aren’t the judge of that.

It may be that they do not want to talk to the offending party--that is their right, and you must support them in that! Have them contact one of the folks listed above, or get one of the folks above to contact them. You aren’t responsible for fixing it, but you are responsible for making sure communication happens. Under no circumstances should you just drop it.

To this end, part of the leader’s contract with the group should be to pledge confidentiality but not secrecy--if there is an issue, you need to get it to Michael, Kat, or Becky, to ensure the safety and well being of all.

It’s also important to note patterns. If George, above, has many of these yellow moments, that may well be a problem, and it should be dealt with as a serious matter.

Person to Person:
“Yellow” or “Red” may become a shorthand that doesn’t involve the leader as the concept becomes part of our culture.