

## The Me2B Rules of Engagement: Our Ethical Foundation

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#EthicalTech #RespectfulTech

### IN A NUTSHELL

The Me2B Rules of Engagement translate the attributes of healthy interpersonal relationships into the types of respectful and ethical behavior that technology can and should embody. Our eight Rules of Engagement are the product of years of discussion and analysis. They reflect how people like to be treated and serve as the core principles underlying the Me2B Respectful Tech Specification.

In forming the Me2B Alliance, our very first step was to identify an ethical foundation - a concrete set of root principles to which each test in the Respectful Tech Specification traces back.

Me2B Alliance's ethical north star, the Me2B Rules of Engagement, originally came out of two years of thinking and evaluation of a range of ethical frameworks. The conversation began at the [Internet Identity Workshop](#) in 2019, where the Me2B Alliance leadership had the first of several discussions around a “new social contract,”<sup>1</sup> and existing ethical frameworks. Given the depth of the field of ethics, we definitely didn't want to recreate the wheel. We also knew that *privacy* was too narrow a lens—that respectful behavior entailed more than privacy. In our analysis, we considered several frameworks over the span of many months, including:

- [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Article 12](#)
- [4th Amendment, US Constitution](#)
- [Consumer Rights](#)
- [Moral Foundations Theory](#)
- [Privacy as Contextual Integrity](#)
- [Communication Privacy Management Theory](#)
- [WEF Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- Social norms in the physical world

At the heart of our thinking was the idea that connected services are no longer just tools at our service. Instead, people are now having ongoing two-way dialogues—relationships—with connected technology. Because of this realization, we pivoted to looking toward inter-personal psychology, and specifically, the *attributes of healthy interpersonal relationships*. These attributes, we found, can be readily translated into behaviors that technology can and should embody.

Our resultant list is called the **Me2B Rules of Engagement**, and it should feel natural and intuitive, since the principles reflect how we generally like to be treated.

## The Me2B Rules of Engagement

1. **Freedom** | We agree not to coerce or manipulate each other.
2. **Respect of Boundaries** | We agree to respect each other's personal boundaries.
3. **Respectful Defaults** | In the absence of stated preferences, we default to the most conservative behavior.
4. **Fairness & Non-exploitation** | We agree to treat each other fairly and not exploit things that are shared.
5. **Good Communication** | We agree to be forthright, honest and clear in our communication.
6. **Promise-Keeping** | We keep our promises.
7. **Non-Harming** | We agree not to willfully harm one another.
8. **Respectful Dispute Resolution** | We agree to respectful, collaborative and fair dispute resolution methods.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://github.com/windley/IIW\\_homepage/raw/gh-pages/assets/proceedings/IWXXVIII\\_Book\\_of\\_Proceedings\\_2019A.pdf](https://github.com/windley/IIW_homepage/raw/gh-pages/assets/proceedings/IWXXVIII_Book_of_Proceedings_2019A.pdf)