



Sample Repairing the Harm Circle

1. Welcome

“Welcome everyone to the circle. Thank you for coming. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this repairing the harm circle. My name is _____, and I will be facilitating this circle.”

2. Purpose

“We are here to help repair the harm and find a resolution to make things as right as possible. We are here to talk about what happened and help figure out how to move forward in a positive way. I know this may be difficult for some of you, but your presence will help us move forward together. This is an opportunity for all of you to be involved in repairing the harm that has occurred. This is going to be a respectful process, where everyone’s voice is heard.”

3. Opening

(The opening is designed to help participants center themselves, be reminded of their core values, clear negative energies, encourage optimism and honor the presence of everyone. Lead the group in whatever opening you have chosen (quote, movement, breathing, song, poem, etc....))

“We will begin with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi... “Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your values, your values become your destiny.”

4. Explain the Centerpiece

(If you have a centerpiece, identify any items in the center and why they are there).

“Today for our centerpiece we have...”

5. Explain the Talking Piece

(Explain the significance of the talking piece selected and how the group will be using it. State aloud that it is okay to pass, but we encourage everyone to participate).

“For today’s talking piece, we will be using this...”

6. Guidelines

“Now we are going to go over the guidelines. The guidelines of the circle are the agreements that we make together to establish clear expectations and common ground to provide a safe place to speak, connect to others in a positive way, and ensure a space that is respectful to all.

The [seven core circle guidelines](#) are as follows: 1. Respect the Talking piece, 2. Speak from the Heart, 3. Listen with the Heart, 4. Speak with Respect, 5. Listen with Respect, 6. Remain in Circle, 7. Honor Privacy

(if a centerpiece is present, place the core guidelines within the centerpiece, visible to all).

These are our seven core circle guidelines. Does everyone agree to the guidelines? We are going to pass the talking piece around. Please state if you agree with these guidelines.”

7. Introduction/Check-In

(Have everyone in the circle introduce themselves and check-in. This helps gauge the readiness of each individual. You may ask everyone to provide one sentence answering:

“First, let’s check in with each other. I’d like each of us to share our name, and tell us how you are feeling right now at this moment. Is there anything you feel that is important for us to know about how you are currently feeling?”

8. Values

(Provide participants with a cut-out paper hand and marker)

In the palm of the cut-out paper hand, invite participants to write one value they feel is important to them, given the purpose here today.

“We will pass the talking piece and share the value that we are bringing today. Today I will bring _____, because I feel it’s important to _____.” *(pass the talking piece until all participants have shared).*

9. Building Trust Activity and/or Storytelling Round

It is crucial to take the time for participants to share stories from their own lives to increase understanding of one another and build empathy. The circle keeper will move the circle into a deeper level of sharing to increase the level of trust among members. This can include ice breakers, individual reflection, or storytelling.

“I would like to share a story with you all that relates to the purpose of why we are here. While I tell my story, I’d like for you to reflect on the feelings I was feeling, and what I was going through...” Share a story.

10. Exploring Issues

“In this part of our circle, we want to focus on what has gone wrong and what is hurting. Discuss what can be done to make things right, promote healing, and initiate positive change. Listening with your heart and seeking to understand is needed throughout this process. Participants have an opportunity to tell their story.”

Telling of the Incident: “At this moment we would like to explore the issue between ___ (harmed) and ___(harmer). What happened? Who was involved?”

What happened: Re-telling of the incident and important information (explain clarifying questions can be asked).

Order of speakers: Begin by asking the person harmed about their preference for speaker order. “So, ___ (harmed), would you like to speak first?”

What happened? (Harmed): What happened was... (Harmer): What happened was...

Impact: “How has the incident impacted you?” “How have you been harmed? (emotionally, financially, physically, etc.)”

Needs of person harmed: “What do you need as a result?”

Taking responsibility: “What part do you take responsibility for?”

11. Generating Plans for a Better Future

Pass the talking piece and ask participants what they think needs to be done to repair the harm.

- What is needed to reach a resolution?
- Do you need support in fulfilling the agreements?
- Are there underlying issues that we can help with?
- What is the time frame for fulfilling agreements?

State Agreements

- Do the agreements, when fulfilled, make the situation right?
- Is there anything you would like to state or address?
- Are there any questions?

Record Agreements

12. Agreements

Read all agreements and get approval from all participants.

13. Clarifying Expectations

Clarify the expectation of the agreements made.

14. Follow-up Meeting

A follow-up meeting can be held formally or informally, such as a quick check-in with participants to gauge how things are going.

15. Check-out Round



Invite participants to share a word or short phrase about how they are feeling.

16. Closing

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou