



Circle Share

Make group decisions and resolve conflict.

**Delivery:****Group Size:****Time Needed:****Difficulty:**

In-person or Virtual

5-25

25-45 minutes

Advanced

Overview

Circles have been a sacred way for groups to gather, make decisions together, resolve conflicts and solve problems throughout human history. The circle is a way to share power and give everyone an equal voice and opportunity to participate together. In this method, participants are asked to listen deeply to each speaker.

Round 1: The 'Me' Round

All group members are invited into a circle to respond to a common question or issue raised by the facilitator. Each person is asked to respond, and everyone is given the same amount of time. The facilitator will keep track of time and will signal participants once that time is up.

Participants are asked to go in order around the circle. There is an option to pass. Anyone who is passed will be offered one additional chance to speak at the end of this round.

Depending on the question being addressed, the facilitator may end the circle share after this round, or they may choose to do an additional circle share to move from reflection to action. For round 2, see the next page

Time Considerations

- In a virtual setting, create a list to follow so everyone knows who will speak next.
- Modify the amount of time each person has to speak, depending on group size.
- Ask someone to serve as a timekeeper.
- Use a visual cue or chime to let people know when time is up or when they have 30 seconds left.



Circle Share Continued

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Round 2: The 'We' Round

After everyone has voiced their opinion or feelings about the topic at hand, you may progress towards more problem-solving strategies in a second round. The facilitator should ask participants to silently think about the groups feelings and thoughts on the issue and then how they would propose to solve the problem or move forward together. During this portion of the circle is done silently.

Once everyone has indicated to the facilitator that they are done reflecting, the facilitator moves to the second circle share. Everyone is asked to share what they came up with for how they would propose to solve the problem or move forward together. Facilitators may increase the sharing time if needed.

After everyone has shared their perspectives and their solutions, the facilitator opens up the circle for discussion, questions and action-planning. The facilitator may choose to transition to a different method at this point to help move the group towards a final decision.

Situations for Use

This method can be used at any time, and can be particularly helpful when the group has identified a conflict. The circle share allows the group to 'level set' and see if the conflict at hand is something that only one or two people are concerned with, or if there is wider disagreement among the group.

Additional Considerations

Having a *no interruptions rule* allows everyone space to talk and invites all others to listen deeply without worrying about how to respond. This allows space for emotions to regulate and for focus to reorient away from any members who are becoming dysregulated and bring attention back toward the group as a whole.