



HEALING TOGETHER

TIPS FOR ORGANIZING AND FACILITATING MEN'S CIRCLES

When our relationships are safe and healthy, so are our children, families, and communities.

Take action to end intimate partner violence and organize a Men's Circle during the month of October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Men's circles are spaces where men can discuss healthy manhood and healing, as well as take steps to end partner violence in their family and community.

PLANNING THE CIRCLE

Line up the following:

- One or two facilitators
- 4 or more participants
- Location--select a space that feels both comfortable and quiet
- Set a date and time for the circle; plan for around 2-3 hours for the circle
- Invitation
 - Consider inviting folks to bring a "sacred object" to share with the circle that symbolizes or holds meaning to them as it relates to intimate partner violence.
 - Use a variety of methods to invite people: in person, by text, email, social media (FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
 - While the intention of the circle is to create a space for men to take steps to end partner violence, consider how the circle can welcome people of all genders. We've found that conversations about violence against women are stronger and have greater accountability when men, women, and people of all genders participate.
- Refreshments
 - If possible, plan to have snacks and refreshments available. If you can't provide these yourself, you can even ask people to bring these similar to a potluck style event.

FACILITATING THE CIRCLE

Introduction

The organizer(s) of the circle should introduce themselves, take a moment to honor the space, the land, and thank those who joined, and set an intention for the circle. Some facilitators offer participants an opportunity to share a prayer, a song, or reflection.

Agree Upon Ground Rules

The facilitator should offer ground rules for the group and ask for additions or modifications.

Potential ground rules:

- Hold all stories shared within the circle confidential
- Listen with compassion and curiosity
- Honor each other's unique ways of healing and do not try to advise or fix each other
- Be comfortable with silence
- Be mindful of the space we are taking up
- Participate with their whole selves, including mind, heart, and body
- Use "I" statements to speak about your experience and not generalizations



FACILITATING THE CIRCLE (CONT'D)

Potential Discussion Questions

The introductory questions (who are you, your intention) and answering prompt question should be based on the time available. We suggest for time-limited circles the introductions be focused on the participants name, intention, and a response to one prompt question. The facilitator should offer approximately how much time each person has to respond.

Opening

- *What's your name and what brings you to this circle?*
- *How does your sacred object represent who you are in the context of this circle?*
- *What is your intention for this circle?*

Issue-focused

- *What were you taught about women and girls growing up?*
- *In what ways has violence impacted your life or the lives of your loved ones?*
- *How do you think ideas about what it means to be a man influence the use of violence in relationships?*
- *What are some ways people can end violence in their relationship?*
- *What does healthy manhood mean to you?*
- *What is your role in preventing violence from occurring in your home, family, and community?*
- *How do we engage more men in work to end violence against women?*
- *What are you willing to risk to ensure all violence against women stops and we build safe and healthy relationships?*

Closing

- *What can I do to honor my relationships in a good way and uplift this message in my circles of influence?*

AFTER THE CIRCLE

1. Take a picture of the participants. Post it on social media and use the hashtags:
 - #DVAM2019
 - #HealingTogether
2. Follow-up and thank your participants -- see how they're doing, what more support do they need to create safe and healthy relationships? What progress have they made regarding action steps?