TALKING CIRCLES FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES
A Cross Cultural Model

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I. Honor Tradition 10-15% of allotted time
A. Greet elders, leaders, and all participants according to traditional practices
B. Open the gathering with a prayer offered by traditional leader, in the indigenous language
C. Acknowledge cultural and racial differences and speak appreciation for the invitation to be present and share time together

II. Invite Inclusion 15-20% of allotted time
A. Introduce activity that establishes equality
B. Create the circle as sacred space
C. Bring forth the talking piece
E. Establish shared agreements

III. Present Didactic Materials 10% of allotted time
A. Present information orally
B. Encourage dialogue
C. Relate stories
D. Distribute handouts at the end of session

IV. Experience the Circle 55-65% of allotted time
A. Speak directions
B. Establish number of rounds
C. Model behavior
D. Move questions from low to higher risk taking and self disclosure
E. Conclude with
   1) questions and answers;
   2) self-assessment sharing;
   3) process evaluation;
   4) other: whatever has come into awareness through the process
F. Close the circle with ritual, prayer

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR CIRCLE ROUNDS:
SAMPLE QUESTIONS, SET 1:
Round 1: who do you remember yourself to be as a child?
Round 2: how does your vision of yourself as a child play out in your adult life?
Round 3: what are your greatest accomplishments in your work/family/community? and, what are your greatest challenges in these areas?
Round 4: what do you wish to accomplish in your remaining time on earth? and, what assistance do you need from those in this circle/community?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS, SET 2:
Round 1: what is something in your community/organization that you are proud of?
Round 2: what is a challenge your organization/community faces?
Round 3: what are solutions to address this challenge?
Round 4: what legacy do you wish to leave behind in regards to the organization/community?