



**iirp**

**Curriculum**

**Using Circles Effectively**

**[www.iirp.edu](http://www.iirp.edu)**

*Revised March 22, 2021*



## Using Circles Effectively Curriculum

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) Using Circles Effectively Curriculum is designed for one full day of learning (6 hours direct instruction), and it is recommended that it be delivered to the learner in this format.

If it isn't possible to deliver the content in person in one day, please see the Curriculum Maps and online tips for this event. You have the flexibility to modularize this event and deliver the material online.

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## Curriculum Map: Using Circles Effectively – In Person Events

### Using Circles Effectively Professional Development Outcomes (PDO)

Learners will be able to:

1. Describe the key concepts of restorative practices.
2. Reflect on how restorative practices may impact participants' professional and personal lives.
3. Apply the restorative practices continuum.

**Be sure that all of the Learning Objectives are being met over the course of the event.**

Using Circles Effectively Learning Objectives (LO)	PDO Alignment
1.1 Participants will explore the importance of community in their work.	2
1.2 Participants will identify the purpose of the circle process.	1
1.3 Participants will discuss the Social Discipline Window.	1
1.4 Participants will discuss the Restorative Practices Continuum.	1
1.5 Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.	3
1.6 Participants will identify how circles can be used in their settings.	1
1.7 Participants will identify situations to use circles in a particular setting.	1
1.8 Participants will design a circle lesson plan that applies to a particular setting.	3

Learning Activities	Format	Required Resources	O	PDO
Opening / Introductions Check In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequential Circle</li> <li>Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slides 1-3</li> <li><i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i></li> </ul>	1.1	2
Introduction of Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pair and Share</li> <li>Large Group Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slides 4-5</li> </ul>	1.1	2
Social Discipline Window / RP Continuum Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small and Large Group Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slides 6-7</li> <li><i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i></li> <li>Video: Story About a School (optional)</li> </ul>	1.3, 1.4	1
Facilitating Circles Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pair and Share</li> <li>Large Group Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture</li> <li><i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i>, p. 125</li> <li>Video clips</li> </ul>	1.1, 1.5	2, 3
Circle Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequential Circle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circle prompt</li> </ul>	1.5	3
Circle Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slides 8-17</li> <li><i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i></li> <li>Lecture</li> </ul>	1.2, 1.5, 1.6	1, 3
Circle Lesson Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion</li> <li>Small Circles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slide 18-20</li> <li><i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i></li> <li>Circle Lesson Plan Handout</li> </ul>	1.5, 1.7, 1.8	1, 3
Ritual Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small Circles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slide 21</li> </ul>	1.5	3

Learning Activities	Format	Required Resources	O	PDO
Serious Situation Circles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> <li>• Video: Baltimore Protest (optional)</li> </ul>	1.7	1
Teachers' Circles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> </ul>	1.6	1
Restorative Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishbowl Circle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slides 23-24</li> </ul>	1.5	3
Final Question and Answers Check Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Sequential Circle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slide 25</li> </ul>	1.1	2

## Tips for Delivering the Curriculum Online

This curriculum can be adapted to online learning. The IIRP has been using Zoom to deliver the live sessions, and the tips below are specific to Zoom. Some things to consider when delivering content online:

- Use a flipped classroom model. See *Preparation for the Online Session* of this Curriculum.
  - These documents provide videos and reflection questions for participants to consider.
  - These handouts, along with the book excerpts, will give the participant all of the content in advance of the live online portion.
  - You can use these handouts as a model and create your own videos and reflections or they can be used as is.
  - When meeting online, the time can be spent on the activities from the curriculum.
- It is recommended that when meeting online, 4.5 hours (4 hours of direct instruction and three 10-minute breaks) should be the maximum amount of time to be on Zoom (or other video conference app).
- The maximum number of participants for online sessions is 25 (including the trainer). Most computers allow 25 people to be visible on one screen during a Zoom session. This allows everyone to be seen simultaneously and helps to simulate a circle.
- The host can select *Follow Host* order in Zoom, which allows the participants to see all of the video thumbnails in the same order. Recommend participants have the most updated version of Zoom.
- When the curriculum suggests a pair and share or small groups, you can use breakout rooms in Zoom to have a similar experience.
- Be sure to post the directions for the breakout room in the chat before opening the rooms.
- Take advantage of the polls, screen share, annotation, emojis, and chat functions in Zoom to give the learner different experiences.

- When demonstrating a fishbowl circle during restorative problem solving online, you can use cameras on and off to simulate the inner and outer circle. For example, ask for volunteers who are willing to give feedback (inner circle) ask them to keep their cameras on. Ask everyone else (outer circle) to turn off their cameras; if a member of the outer circle wants to give feedback, they should turn their camera on to signify moving to a “chair” in the inner circle. It is also helpful if the instructor calls on participants to keep the processes moving.
- Use the chat as a “parking lot” to gather and share resources. The chat can also be used to share out and can be saved at the end of the session for participants to have a record of the event.

## Preparation for the Online Session of the Using Circles Effectively Curriculum

The following is a sample email that could be sent to participants in advance of an online event, specifying what work is expected to be completed prior to the live sessions.

Hello Everyone,

Before we start our online session, there are several key concepts below for you to review. Think of this as a flipped-classroom model where you will spend about 2 hours learning new information before we meet, then we will process that information during our live session together.

Please watch the videos listed below and read the book excerpts. Use the questions to guide your learning. These questions are provided simply to help you know where to focus your attention; answers will not be collected.

### Review from Introduction to Restorative Practices

Watch [Social Discipline and Continuum Review](#) (15:26) and read the attached excerpt, Review of Introduction to Restorative Practices, from *Restorative Circles in Schools*.

As you are watching and reading, consider the following questions:

- What are situations or stressors that may keep you out of the **with** box?
- When you are out of the **with** box, how can you move back there from **to**, **for**, or **not**?
- Is it possible to be restorative when the systems we work in are not restorative?
- What are ways you can use the informal part of the continuum in your daily life and practice?

Watch [A Story about RP in a School](#) (7:13).

As you are watching, consider the following questions:

- How was the informal end of the continuum used in the scenario?
- How was conflict handled differently than with traditional discipline?
- Do you think a suspension would still be warranted? If so, why?

### Circle Applications

Watch [Circle Applications](#) (11:18) and read the attached excerpt, Circle Applications, from *Restorative Circles in Schools*.

As you are watching and reading, consider the following questions:

- What are the benefits and drawbacks of using circles?
- How can I proactively use circles?
- What might a course content circle look like in my class?
- How could I use a circle to respond to an incident in my class?
- How can I use a circle to brainstorm new ideas?
- How can I use circles with my colleagues?

### Critical Issues in Using Circles

Watch three of the [circle clips](#) and read the attached excerpt, Critical Issues in Using Circles, from *Restorative Circles in Schools*.

As you are watching and reading, consider the following questions:

- What are the critical issues you notice in each clip?
- What was your reaction to the questions asked?
- What question(s) would you ask next?
- What situations do you want to plan circles for?

## Curriculum Map: Using Circles Effectively – Online Events

### Using Circles Effectively Professional Development Outcomes (PDO)

Learners will be able to:

1. Describe the key concepts of restorative practices.
2. Reflect on how restorative practices may impact participants’ professional and personal lives.
3. Apply the restorative practices continuum.

**Be sure that all of the Learning Objectives are being met over the course of the event.**

Using Circles Effectively Learning Objectives (LO)	PDO Alignment
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1.8 Participants will design a circle lesson plan that applies to a particular setting.	3

### Learning Activities for the Asynchronous (Preparation) Portion

Learning Activities	Format	Required Resources	LO	PDO
SDW and RP Continuum Review: Video and Reflection	Video and Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SDW/Continuum Review Video</li> <li>• <i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i>, pp 1-20</li> <li>• Video: Story about a School</li> <li>• Reflection Questions</li> </ul>	1.2, 1.3	1
Circle Applications: Video and Reflection	Video and Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video: Circles Applications</li> <li>• <i>Restorative Circles in Schools</i>, pp 21-96, 125</li> <li>• Circle Video Clips</li> <li>• Reflection Questions</li> </ul>	1.1, 1.6	1, 3
Circle Lesson Plan	Handout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handout: Circle Lesson Plan</li> </ul>	1.6	3

**Learning Activities Examples for the Synchronous (Live) Portion**

Learning Activities should be specific, e.g., Check In, Reflection, Social Discipline Window, Responding to Shame, 1<sup>st</sup> Role Play, etc.

Learning Activities	Format	Required Resources	LO	PDO
Reflection on Circles and Community	Zoom breakout rooms in pairs.  Rotate the breakout rooms 3-4 times so participants can connect with different people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quotes that demonstrate the importance of circles and community.</li> </ul>	1.1	2

## Full-Day Agenda

**8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Opening and Introductions

Introduction of Topic

Social Discipline Window / Restorative Practices Continuum

Video: Facilitating Circles

Break

Circle Applications

Circle Situations

Lunch

Energizer

Rituals

Circle Situations

Break

Serious Situation Circles

Staff Circles

Restorative Problem Solving Demonstrated as a Fishbowl

IIRP Services

Final Questions and Answers

Closing Circle

Before 8:00 a.m.

## Preparation for Registration and Event

### *Trainer Objectives:*

1. Decide use of classroom space.
2. Put materials and equipment in place.
3. Prepare for training.

### Registration checklist:

- ✓ Name Tags with Markers or Pens
- ✓ Registrant List (if applicable)
- ✓ Participant Agenda, Handouts, and Evaluation
- ✓ It is recommended but not required that each participant receive a copy of the book, *Restorative Circles in Schools*. If each participant does not have a copy of the book, be sure to distribute the relevant excerpts.
- ✓ Trash can at registration table to discard backing from name tags

### Checklist:

- ✓ Laptop computer with speakers and necessary cables; Adobe Reader installed
- ✓ Digital projector
- ✓ Copy of Curriculum
- ✓ Flipchart with markers or whiteboard
- ✓ Copy of *Restorative Circles in Schools* for reference
- ✓ Check locations of light switches, bathrooms, phones, water fountains, and temperature controls
- ✓ Have room set up in a circle with enough chairs for the number of people expected

### Preparation for event:

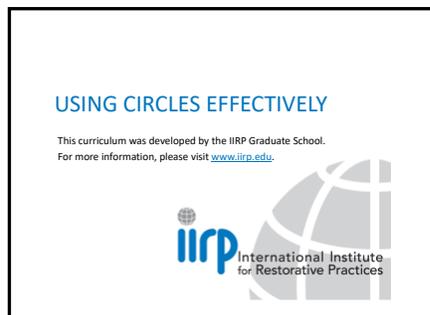
- ✓ Review the Curriculum and slides; be sure you are familiar with the content.
- ✓ Preview any videos you plan to show and be prepared to answer questions about the content.
- ✓ Read the book that corresponds with the training:

Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2019). *Restorative circles in schools: Building community and enhancing learning* (2nd ed). International Institute for Restorative Practices.

- ✓ **Review the reference list on the final page of this Curriculum.**  
This will help you to gain command of the material. The Curriculum alone will not give you enough information. The IIRP strongly suggests further exploration of restorative practices to ensure confidence in the subject matter.
- ✓ Include any other references that you plan to use in conjunction with this Curriculum. For example, if you are using PBIS in your setting, have references available for participants.

### Slide #1: Event Title Slide

- Display while people enter the room, until event begins.



8:00–8:30 a.m.

### Registration and Coffee

*Trainer Objectives:*

1. Welcome participants and provide materials.
2. Complete registration list.

- Welcome participants as they come in.
- If you are taking attendance, check names off list as participants arrive.
- Ask participants to sign in, if applicable.
- Ask participants to take a name tag.
- Give participants their agendas and books – or have the book excerpts readily available or sent in advance of the event.

8:30–9:00 a.m.

### Opening and Introductions

*Trainer Objectives:*

1. Continue to build connections with participants.
2. Assess the needs of the group.
3. Demonstrate use of a go around.
4. Introduce learning outcomes.

- Welcome participants and thank them for coming.
- Explain the format for Introductions.

**Note to Trainer** If doing this event on the day after Introduction to Restorative Practices Curriculum, let the group know that the opening go around may take a bit longer. In this case, the go around will be:

Do you have any questions left from yesterday's event, and what are you hoping to gain from today?

Let the group know you will not answer the questions now but will work them into the day. (Trainer should place the questions into the "parking lot.")

**OR**

What did you talk about when you left here yesterday?

- Use the following as a go around if the Introduction to Restorative Practices Curriculum was not conducted the previous day:
  - What is your name, where do you work, and what is one thing you would like to get from this event?
- OR**
  - What is your experience with restorative practices and circles?
- Trainer demonstrates by going first, introducing self and following the format.
- BE BRIEF and DO NOT add information at this point. Participants will follow your lead.
- Ask the person to your left or right to go next and continue around the circle.
- After the go around, process the circle.
  - Ask the group what they think the purpose of the circle was.
  - What does the trainer gain from spending this much time on a circle?
  - What does the group gain from the circle?

**Note to Trainer** After each circle you do with the group during this training day, spend a few moments to debrief Why. This will reinforce for participants that there is a reason and purpose behind every circle they do.

- Next, the trainers briefly introduce themselves and describe their initial involvement with their work with restorative practices. This is an opportunity for the trainer(s) to connect with the group.
- If you delivered the Introduction to Restorative Practices Curriculum yesterday, take this time to demonstrate Fair Process. (Trainer should have read the evaluation forms/index cards/sticky notes from the day before and collected the feedback.)
  - The evaluation forms/index cards/sticky notes are part of engagement.
  - Explain what changes can be made and what cannot be changed, then use expectation clarity to frame the remainder of the event.
- Discuss agreements, norms, expectations, and housekeeping issues.
- Discuss with the group their expectations for the day.
  - This can be done by highlighting a few of the earlier examples when people shared why they came and by asking a few others to share what they want to get out of attending.
  - Record on the flipchart (or other medium) a few specific expectations you have for the day, including attendance, timeliness, use of electronic devices, note taking, etc.
  - Set up a "parking lot" for questions that can be postponed for later discussion.
  - Point out location of restrooms.
  - Discuss lunch plans, whether on-site or off-site, and share that there is a scheduled break in the morning and another break in the afternoon.
  - If this training is being delivered online or has shorter time frames, be clear about expectations and the learner experience.
  - Explain that the materials and concepts you will explore today are in the book/book excerpts, and you will let the group know the page numbers as we go along.

➤ **While the title slide is still displayed, discuss the following:**

- The Curriculum we are using today was developed by The IIRP Graduate School. It is the world's first higher education institution wholly dedicated to restorative practices – the science of relationships and community.
- The IIRP provides education, consulting, and research that explores fundamental questions about human relationships and applies those insights to the world's most pressing social challenges. For more information, go to [www.iirp.edu](http://www.iirp.edu).

**Slide #2: Worldwide Influence**



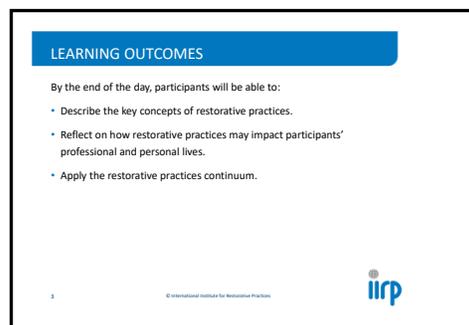
➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- Explain that all the ideas you are going to talk about today are concepts developed over time through experience. Some of the concepts have been influenced and inspired by Indigenous Communities throughout the world. For example, the Restorative Conference was inspired by the Maori People of New Zealand and much of the circle work that we will discuss comes from several Indigenous Communities throughout North America.
- The practice came before the theory, and we aim to apply ancient wisdom to 21<sup>st</sup> century issues that arise in our communities.
- Restorative practices is the science of relationships and community. We believe this event will be a meaningful learning process about how we build and sustain relationships, as well as how we restore relationships when things go wrong.

- The context of the work at the IIRP started when the founders, Susan and Ted Wachtel, both educators, were looking for more relational and participatory ways to work with youth who were at risk.
- They were using restorative practices long before it was called “restorative practices.”
- State that participants may relate to this, as many of them are doing the same.
- What they were doing was implicit rather than explicit.
- Over the years, restorative practices has evolved into an explicit framework, which we will explore today.

**Note to Trainer** You may wish to give some context around how you came to this work. If you were influenced by the work of Indigenous People, feel free to share. If you choose to do a Land Acknowledgement, please do so in a way that makes sense for the community you are working with.

### Slide #3: Learning Outcomes



The slide features a blue header with the text 'LEARNING OUTCOMES'. Below the header, it states 'By the end of the day, participants will be able to:' followed by three bullet points: 'Describe the key concepts of restorative practices.', 'Reflect on how restorative practices may impact participants' professional and personal lives.', and 'Apply the restorative practices continuum.'. At the bottom of the slide, there is a small number '3', the IIRP logo, and the text '© International Institute for Restorative Practices'.

➤ **Read aloud:** By the end of the day, participants will be able to:

- Describe the key concepts of restorative practices.
- Reflect on how restorative practices may impact participants’ professional and personal lives.
- Apply the restorative practices continuum.

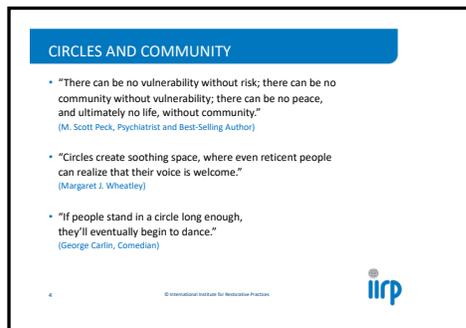
9:00–9:15

## Introduction of Topic

### *Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will explore the importance of community in their work.
2. Participants will identify the purpose of the circle process.

## Slide #4: Circles and Community – Quotes 1

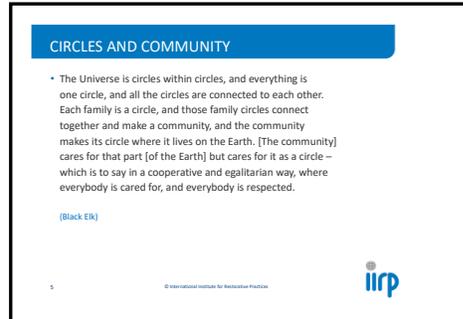


The slide features a blue header with the text "CIRCLES AND COMMUNITY". Below the header, there are three bullet points, each followed by a quote and the name of the speaker in parentheses. The quotes are: "There can be no vulnerability without risk; there can be no community without vulnerability; there can be no peace, and ultimately no life, without community." (M. Scott Peck, Psychiatrist and Best-Selling Author); "Circles create soothing space, where even reticent people can realize that their voice is welcome." (Margaret J. Wheatley); and "If people stand in a circle long enough, they'll eventually begin to dance." (George Carlin, Comedian). At the bottom of the slide, there is a small "iirp" logo and the text "© International Institute for Restorative Practices".

### ➤ Ask the group to read the statements on the screen.

- “There can be no vulnerability without risk; there can be no community without vulnerability; there can be no peace, and ultimately no life, without community.”  
– M. Scott Peck
- “Circles create soothing space, where even reticent people can realize that their voice is welcome.”  
– Margaret J. Wheatley
- “If people stand in a circle long enough, they'll eventually begin to dance.”  
– George Carlin

## Slide #5: Circles and Community – Quotes 2



- **Ask the group** to read the statement on the screen.
  - "The Universe is circles within circles, and everything is one circle, and all the circles are connected to each other. Each family is a circle, and those family circles connect together and make a community, and the community makes its circle where it lives on the Earth. [The community] cares for that part [of the Earth] but cares for it as a circle - which is to say in a cooperative and egalitarian way, where everybody is cared for, and everybody is respected." – Black Elk
- **Ask** which statement most appeals to them. If you are working with a large group, ask the group to share with a partner and then share out with the larger group.
- Allow participants to respond without much comment from facilitators. There are no "right" answers.
- Relate to one of the statements you heard, being personal and human to set a warm tone. Do not dominate the conversation.
- **Learn and deliver:**
  - We believe that people may be disconnected with their families and communities.
  - In the last several decades, we have become increasingly mobile and have stopped living in homogeneous communities.
  - One hundred years ago, it was very rare for people to leave the community where they were born. Now it is the norm.

- Most of you can remember growing up in neighborhoods where it was accepted – and even encouraged – for ANY adult to "parent" the children in the neighborhood.
- This has all changed, resulting in an unprecedented loss in social capital.
- We are more disconnected than we have ever been.
- Living, working, and being in community means something different today. What changes have you seen over time?
- Knowing people casually and being in community with people is different. You may want to refer back to Tomkins's blueprint and definition of community.

➤ **End by pointing out:**

- Circles are not new. Early humans sat in circles around fire. There are traditions of circles all over the world with Indigenous communities. Talking circles were most commonly used by the Indigenous communities in North America (Pranis, 2005).
- Circles in our context are about connections, building community, and allowing space for all to be heard.
- We believe it is connectedness that makes schools better places to learn. Circles give us the opportunity to build connections between students.
- They can be used to help students get to know one another, to respond to problem behavior, and to deliver course content.

9:15–9:45

## Social Discipline Window / RP Continuum

### *Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will discuss the Social Discipline Window.
2. Participants will discuss the Restorative Practices Continuum.

➤ As you review this section, be creative with the content. Teach it in a different way than you did the first time.

**Note to Trainer** If you have just completed Introduction to Restorative Practices Curriculum the day before, keep this section moving.

This series of activities reminds us that we need to be purposeful and intentional in our practice.

➤ Some suggestions:

- **Social Discipline Window: Activity**

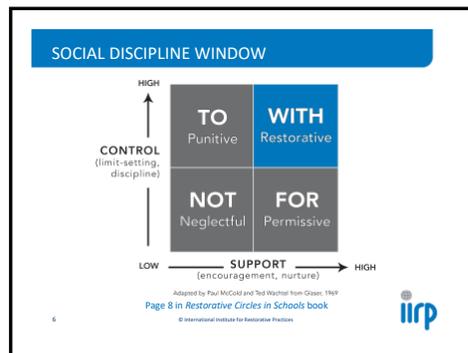
- Break the 4 corners of the room into the Social Discipline Window and give the group prompts for discussion.
- Ask participants to think of a time someone **treated them** in either the **TO, FOR, or NOT** box. Have them go to that corner and talk about the experience.
- Ask participants to think of a time they **treated someone** either from the **TO, FOR, or NOT** box. Have them go to that corner and talk about the experience.

- **Social Discipline Window: Activity**

- Ask the following questions and have them move from box to box, demonstrating that the Social Discipline Window is permeable, that we are not always in fixed positions and external/internal factors may impact how we respond.

- Where do you go when feeling stress?
  - Where do you go when you are feeling sympathy?
  - Where do you go when you are not feeling heard?
  - Where do you go when you are about to leave for vacation?
  - Where do you go when you are back from vacation?
- **Restorative Practices Continuum: Activity**
    - Ask participants to connect with people they work with and practice how they might explain the continuum to their colleagues when they go back to work.
  - **Restorative Practices Continuum: Activity**
    - Divide the participants into 5 groups.
    - Assign a point on the continuum to each group. Ask them to talk about how they might incorporate that part of the continuum in their setting.

## Slide #6: Full Social Discipline Window



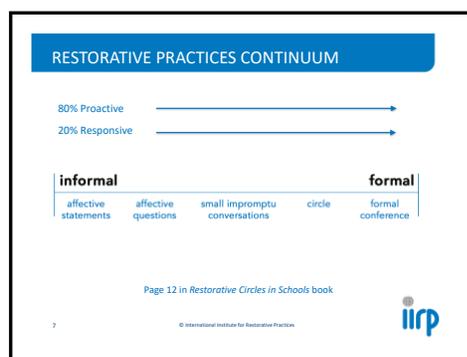
➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- If we placed control and support on two axes, each measured from low to high, we would have four basic options.
- High on control but low on support – we call "punitive" or "doing things **TO** people."
- High on support but low on control – we call "permissive" or "doing things **FOR** people."
- Low on both control and support – we call "neglectful" or "**NOT** doing anything."
- Another option: high on both control and support – we call that being "restorative" or "doing things **WITH** people." The people you respect most are probably in this box.

➤ **Point out:**

- This is not a new idea.
- The people you respect, good teachers, mentors, coaches and counselors have always treated people like this. But this simple framework is meant to give us a way to describe what we know works; it also gives us a way to teach other people to do it.
- We are not all naturally restorative.
- It is a way to do this **on purpose**, all of the time.
- This DOES NOT mean a decrease in the amount of control.

## Slide #7: Restorative Practices Continuum



- **State:** The Social Discipline Window is the cornerstone of everything we do.
- **Learn and deliver:**
  - If we believe that it is best to do things **WITH** people, then whenever possible we should use fair process, and our responses to behavior should involve strengthening relationships and repairing harm. Then the following restorative practices emerge. We call this the Restorative Practices Continuum.
- **Explain:**
  - People don't have the outlet, rituals, or process to live Tomkins's blueprint. Restorative practices allows for that to happen along the entire continuum of practices, both proactively and responsively.
  - The continuum we will explore demonstrates maximizing positive affect, minimizing negative affect, minimizing our inhibition of affect, and doing as much of all three as possible.
- Within the **WITH** box:
  - There is a range of responses, which we've organized from informal to formal. These practices are both proactive and responsive and should be used to build community.
- **Explain:** Today we will focus on circles, but we will also incorporate affective statements and questions as we go along.
- **Tell the group that** as you move from the informal to the formal, responses involve:
  - More people
  - More planning
  - More time
  - More structure
  - Are more complete

- As you move on the continuum from left to right, the range of practices are both proactive and responsive.
  - As you incorporate restorative practices into your daily interactions, work toward 80% proactive and 20% responsive experiences.
- **Explain** the Restorative Practices Continuum, providing an example of each practice listed.
- **Affective Statements**
  - These are brief statements about the impact of another person's behavior.
  - Usually done in the form of "I statements."
  - Affective statements encourage people to clearly verbalize how they are feeling in relation to another person's behavior.
  - Affective statements provide feedback, set boundaries, and teach empathy.
  - Affective statements can be proactive or responsive.
  - Affective statements can go beyond the "I statement" and do not just have to relate to another's behavior. The goal of the continuum is to live out Tomkins's blueprint. An affective statement can be a statement that maximizes positive affect or minimizes negative affect.
- **Distribute the Restorative Questions Cards**
- **Affective Questions**
  - There are two categories of questions: those to ask someone when they create harm intentionally or unintentionally, and those to ask someone when they have been harmed.

- When things go wrong and someone creates harm, the following questions are explored:
    1. What happened?
    2. What were you thinking at the time?
    3. Who was affected?
    4. How were they affected?
    5. What needs to happen to make things right?
  - For situations when someone is hurt, ask questions such as:
    1. What did you think when you realized what had happened?
    2. What impact has this incident had on you and others?
    3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
    4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
- **Explain that** the questions help people take responsibility and connect with how they are feeling.
- The questions address past, present, and future.
- **Make it clear that** people can use the questions to reinforce positive behaviors also (e.g., catching people doing the right thing).
- When a student has been making positive changes, you may ask the questions to help them see how the positive changes are impacting themselves and others.
- **You may ask the group** how the questions can help achieve fair process when people in authority are making decisions.
- **Be clear when making this point that** restorative questions won't always achieve Fair Process, and in order for the questions to achieve Fair Process, all three parts (engagement, explanation, and expectation clarity) need to be present. Fair Process is a management procedure that focuses on bringing change to an organization. While there are some connections to restorative questions, the two processes should not be conflated into one process.

- **An example of this** is around discipline or changing behavior. If a student breaks a rule, the "authority" could give a punishment without any engagement, explanation, or expectation clarity. By using the restorative questions, the "authority" is engaging the student, explanation happens on both sides, and expectation clarity happens when both parties answer what needs to happen to make this right. This same example could apply to a manager and someone they supervise. Rather than "You broke this rule, here is your sanction, and you can never do this again," there is opportunity for discussion and support around what needs to happen so this same behavior isn't repeated.
- **Ask the group** what question is missing. They will inevitably say "Why."
  - Take some comments from the group about why we don't ask why.
  - Reinforce that asking why always triggers defensive mechanisms, and that many times people (especially teenagers) will say "I don't know" when asked why.
- **Explain that** affective questions are not limited to the questions on the card. Any questions that help elicit affect are affective questions.
- **Explain that** affective statements and questions are the basis for a restorative conversation or dialogue.
- **Small Impromptu Conversations:** A few people talk about the incident, its impact, and what to do next.
  - Small Impromptu Conversations take place when the opportunity arises.
  - These conversations can happen quickly and shouldn't take too much time.
  - May also be used proactively.
  - Any impromptu small group interaction falls into the category. In fact, the small group work participants have been doing this morning includes examples of small impromptu conversations.
    - Participants have concentrated on a learning activity and most likely shared personal information after the activity was completed.

- **Circles:** Can be used both proactively and responsively.
  - **Explain again that** we want to stress using proactive circles 80% of the time when we conduct circles.
  - Circles help to build a community and get any group of people of any age connected.
  - **Let the group know that** today we will focus on the circle process.
  
- **Formal Conference**
  - There are two kinds of formal restorative conferences.
  - One is called the restorative conference and is usually held in response to a distinct incident of harm, misbehavior, or crime.
    - This process brings together the those harmed, those who created the harm, and their supporters.
    - Participants share how they have been affected and discuss how the harm might be repaired.
    - There is an IIRP Curriculum designed to address the use of Formal Conferences and during that experience participants will go deeper into how to prepare and facilitate a restorative conference.
  - The other type of formal conference empowers families to make important decisions or plans by engaging a wider circle of support.
    - This is called Family Group Decision Making or FGDM (sometimes Family Group Conference or FGC).
    - This process is used for care and protection plans regarding children and for other applications, such as truancy or ongoing school behavior issues.
    - A distinct feature of this process is "family alone time," during which professionals leave the room and families create the plan to help the child.

➤ **Explain the video (This video is optional):**

- This is a short video clip of a principal discussing a bullying situation between two students.
- The principal talks about using the Questions to work through the incident. He also pulls the two students together to process the event.
- The video demonstrates affective statements, affective questions, and an impromptu conversation. It reinforces the use of the continuum as you move from the informal to the more formal.

**Note to Trainer** This video is optional. If you choose to show it, you may want to introduce the idea of “Stealing Conflict” as described by Criminologist Nils Christie in his article *Conflict as Property*.

 **Video (8 minutes): [A Story about Restorative Practices in School](#) – produced by Donegal Mediation Network (optional)**

9:45–10:30

### Facilitating Circles Videos

*Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will identify the purpose of the circle process.
2. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

- **Ask participants** to refer to "Critical Issues in Using Circles" on page 125 in *Restorative Circles in Schools*.

- **Review the list and point out that** these are some of the issues that will be evident in the clips they are about to see.
  - Circles can be related to course content or interpersonal relationships.
  - Circles help people take responsibility.
  - Circles allow quiet voices to be heard.
  - Circles allow leaders to emerge.
  - Many people will say, "I don't know" or, "Can I pass?"
  - Make sure you have responses ready for these statements.
  - The shape of the circle is important.
  - Clear directions increase the likelihood of success.
  - Leaders should model appropriate participation.
  - Circles can help people explore issues on a deeper level.
  - Circles allow people to learn about each other and build relationships.
  - Circles encourage problem solving.
  
- **Explain that** after each video clip, you will stop and ask which issues they thought were apparent.

**Tip** As the clips are being shown, the instructor may want to chart the questions that are being asked in the clip. When the participants share with their partner, they should think about what questions could be asked next. This will give participants several examples of circle questions to be employed when they begin using circles.

- **Video Clips that Demonstrate Circles**
  - After each video clip, ask the group what issues they noticed. Participants may notice some that were on the list, or they may notice different issues. Show 2-3 videos before moving on.
  - Allow for discussion of different viewpoints.
  - Some possible issues are listed below, after each clip title.
  - If participants do not mention issues, you might mention these.
  - After each clip, participants should find a new partner.

 **Video Clip #1 (1 minute, 38 seconds): [Check-In Circle](#)**

- Oak Hill Middle School, Sabattus, Maine
- Possible issues:
  - Clear directions increase success
  - Leaders model participation
  - Circles can help people explore issues on a deeper level
  - Circles allow people to learn about each other and build relationships

 **Video Clip #2 (2 minutes, 50 seconds): [Course Content Circle](#)**

- National Academy Foundation School, Baltimore, Maryland
- Possible issues:
  - Shape of the circle
  - Leaders model participation
  - Allow leaders to emerge
  - Course content
  - Explore issues at a deeper level

 **Video Clip #3 (2 minutes, 7 seconds): [Definition of Success](#)**

- National Academy Foundation School, Baltimore, Maryland
- Possible issues:
  - Clear directions increase success
  - Leaders model participation
  - Help people take responsibility
  - Allow quiet voices to be heard

 **Video Clip #4 (3 minutes, 22 seconds): [Feedback Circle](#)**

- Freedom High School, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- Possible issues:
  - Leaders model participation
  - Circles can be related to course content or interpersonal

 **Video Clip #5 (1 minute, 7 seconds): [Get-to-Know-You Circle](#)**

- Freedom High School, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- Possible issues:
  - Leaders model participation
  - Circles can be related to course content or interpersonal relationships
  - Circles allow people to learn about each other and build relationships

10:30–10:45

### Break

Tell participants how long the break is and when it ends.

10:45–10:50

### Circle Demonstration

*Learning Objective:*

1. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

- Explain that we are going to do a go around and will use a "talking piece" for this circle.
  - A talking piece is anything that can be safely passed around the circle.
  - Whoever has the talking piece in their hand is the only one who is allowed to speak. It is then passed around the circle during the go around.
  - It's a way to reinforce the fact that one person talks at a time and they should have the group's attention.
  - A talking piece can also help give fidgety kids something tactile to do while speaking.
  - While this object can be something mundane, like an eraser or a box of pencils, you may want to pick something more symbolic to the group.
    - For instance, we will use an IIRP globe ball as our talking piece for this circle.
    - We chose a globe because our mission is to spread these practices worldwide.
    - You could choose something equally symbolic for your class or school – or better yet, let the students decide as a class.

## Activity

- Do a go around with the group.
  - If the group is large, have them stand in the circle; a small group can sit in chairs, if you prefer. Have participants share something fun and personal but low-risk, such as "What is your favorite place to go on vacation?" or "What is a vacation you would like to take?" or "What is your favorite book or story?"
    - The question should be something (nearly) anyone, anywhere on the planet, could answer.
    - Whatever question you decide, be sure that it can be answered in one or two words.
  - Ask for one-word answers so you can keep the activity moving.

- After the circle, process the experience.
  - Ask:
    - Why would you do a circle like that?
    - What is the benefit for the facilitator and participants?
    - Also note the time difference from the circle in the beginning of the day (opening go around).
  - Participants will usually say many of the things from the next slide.
  - Allow for some discussion, but keep the activity moving.

10:15–11:30

### Circle Applications

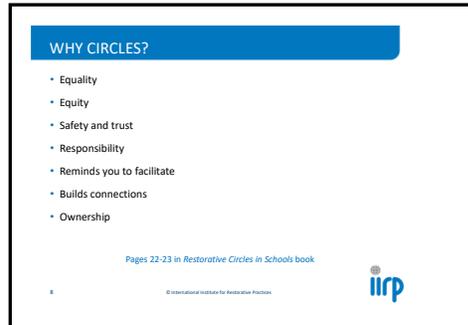
#### *Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will identify the purpose of the circle process.
2. Participants will identify how circles can be used in their setting.
3. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

- Ask participants the following questions to create some context for their own experience with circles:
  - What is your experience with circles?
  - Tell about a time in your life when you have been in circles.
  - What do you see as the benefits of circles?
  - What fears do you have?
  - What would an effective circle look like?

**Note to Trainer** This is the first time you will stress the importance of the 80/20 rule. Reiterate the critical nature of proactive/community-building restorative practices. Be sure participants leave the training understanding that restorative practices isn't just what to do when things go wrong.

## Slide #8: Why Circles?



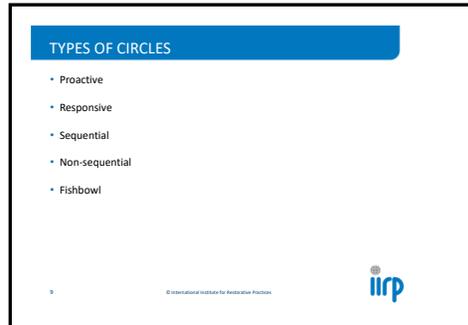
➤ **Point out:**

- Equality – everyone literally has equal seating.
- Equity – everyone has the same opportunity for speaking and having their voice heard.
- Safety and trust – you can see everyone else in the circle.
- Responsibility – everyone plays a role.
- Reminds you to facilitate – rather than lecture.
- Builds connections – everyone hears everyone else’s response.
- Ownership – shared sense of ownership felt by all participants.

➤ **Explain:** We need to do circles deliberately and thoughtfully with certain goals in mind.

- Use the two go arounds from today as examples.  
(The opening go around and the circle demonstration after the break.)

## Slide #9: Types of Circles

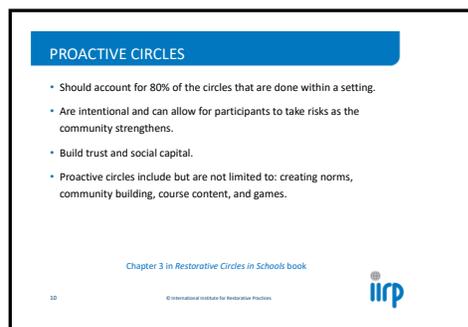


**Note to Trainer** Do not spend a lot of time on this slide.  
Each circle type will be expanded upon in subsequent slides.

### ➤ Point out:

- There are a few types of circles you can use.
  - Proactive
  - Responsive
  - Sequential – are the easiest and most controlled to run
  - Non-sequential – allow more freedom
  - Fishbowl – a different way of doing either one of those

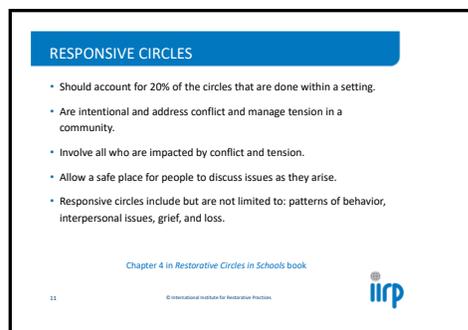
## Slide #10: Proactive Circles



➤ **Learn and deliver: Proactive Circles**

- Should account for 80% of the circles that are done within a setting.
- Are intentional and can allow for participants to take risks as the community strengthens.
- Build trust and social capital.
- Proactive circles include – but are not limited to – creating norms, community building, course content, and games.

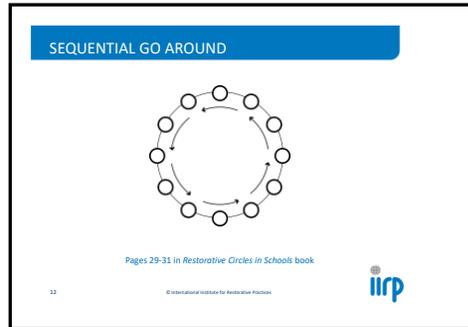
**Slide #11: Responsive Circles**



➤ **Learn and deliver: Responsive Circles**

- Should account for 20% of the circles that are done within a setting.
- Are intentional and address conflict and manage tension in a community.
- Involve all who are impacted by conflict and tension.
- Allow a safe place for people to discuss issues as they arise.
- Responsive circles include – but are not limited to – patterns of behavior, interpersonal issues, grief, and loss.

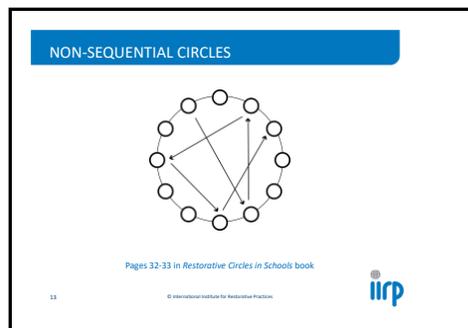
## Slide #12: Sequential Go Around



### ➤ Learn and deliver:

- In a sequential go around, there are typically specific questions that are answered in order around the circle.
- Participation is expected, although not always required.
- A “talking piece” can be used to help provide additional structure.

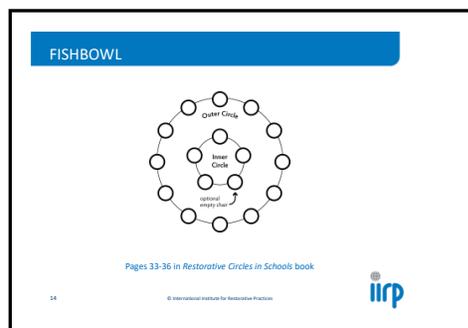
## Slide #13: Non-Sequential Circles



➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- Non-sequential circles can feel less controlled but have benefits in certain situations.
- Non-sequential circles can be:
  - Structured
  - Loosely structured
  - Unstructured
- There is no particular order for people speaking.
- Expectations for participation are more relaxed.
- A loosely structured circle would involve a more general question like:
  - “Does anyone want to share their reaction to the activity we just did?” or “Who needs help today to finish their project?”
- An unstructured circle will typically be more like a “group.”
  - They tend to be activities that allow participants to self-identify the topics they would like to discuss, although the facilitator may set parameters at the outset.
  - These circles require the facilitator to be highly aware of the “feel” of the discussion, so they can intervene when appropriate.

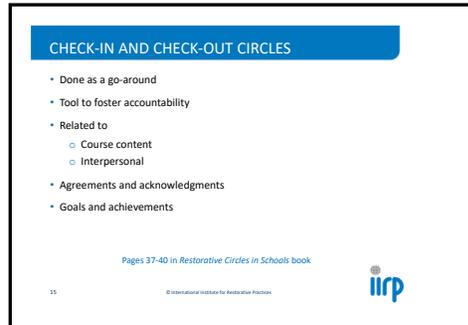
**Slide #14: Fishbowl**



➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- Fishbowls are an effective way to use circles with a larger number of participants.
  - The fishbowl allows certain participants – in the inner circle – to be active participants, while those in the outer circle act as observers.
  - It can be structured entirely for the observers’ benefit, so that they can watch a specific process or interaction.
  - It can also be used for the participants’ benefit by allowing the observers to share their feedback at the end of the activity.
  - The fishbowl can be designed to benefit both the observers and the participants.
  - A modification of the fishbowl is to include an empty chair in the inner circle.
    - Those in the outer circle are invited to leave their seat and sit in the empty chair to briefly participate in the discussion.
    - After they say what they want, they return to their original seat, leaving the empty chair available for anyone else who wishes to participate.
    - The empty chair is a helpful tool in fishbowls because even if members of the outer circle do not use the empty chair, they know they could – which helps them pay more attention to the activity.
    - This may be hard for some to visualize, but we will be doing a fishbowl exercise later in the day.
- Circles are not “special events.”
- They are a way of doing business, of accomplishing the things we need to get done in the classroom, whether that’s getting to know one another, discussing an academic topic, or addressing behavior.
- Like lecture, video, and small group discussions, circles are just another possible delivery mode for teachers.

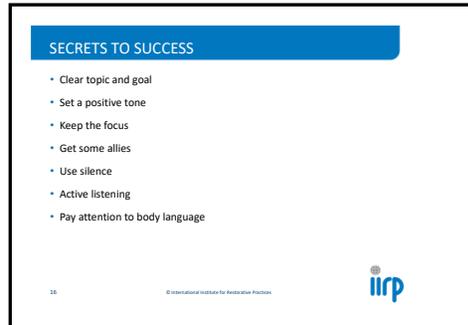
## Slide #15: Check-In and Check-Out Circles



### ➤ Learn and deliver:

- Check-in and check-out circles are very common circle applications.
- These are sequential go arounds that are conducted at the beginning and end of some period of time.
- This can be the beginning and end of a class, a day, a week, or any other logical time unit.
- They can be about the course content or about interpersonal relationships.
- They help build accountability on the part of participants.
- They are frequently about agreements that everyone makes regarding their behavior, goals, or achievements.
- These are powerful rituals that help students actively think about themselves and those around them.

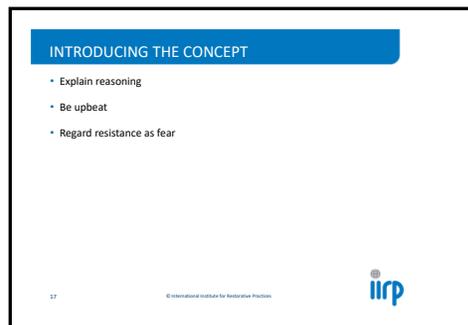
## Slide #16: Secrets to Success



### ➤ Learn and deliver:

- As you begin using circles, it will be helpful to keep several things in mind.
  - The clearer the topic and goal of the circle, the better participants will be able to respond appropriately.
  - As a facilitator, you should set a tone that circles are worthwhile and fun.
  - When participants stray from the topic, you should gently refocus them by repeating the topic or question at hand.
- When first starting to conduct circles, it may be helpful to pull a few participants aside beforehand to get their support and commitment to participate appropriately (if this is a concern of yours).
- Enlisting support prior to any challenging circle is always an option.

## Slide #17: Introducing the Concept



➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- Make sure that participants understand why you are doing circles. Remember that this will be new and uncomfortable for them. Understanding your rationale will help put them at ease.
- Be upbeat and positive about the circle and remember that any resistance you encounter is probably from participants' fear and discomfort rather than a desire to be defiant.

11:30–12:15

### Circle Lesson Planning

*Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will identify situations to use circles in a particular setting.
2. Participants will design a circle lesson plan that applies to a particular setting.
3. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

➤ **Explain:**

- The next activities will help you to brainstorm several situations you can use circles for, as well as develop specific questions you can ask in each situation.
- In this activity we will start in a large group, then move to small groups.

➤ With the large group, brainstorm everyday situations in which circles can be used.

**Tip** The trainer should use a flipchart to record the scenarios.

**Note to Trainer** This brainstorming is a **large group activity** and is key, as this exercise will set up the development of circle situations.

- Reinforce the importance of proactive 80% and responsive 20%.
  - Emphasize this in the example.
  - This will help participants realize that anything they do in their settings can be done in a circle format.
- Encourage participants to record the list or snap a picture so they can take these lists back to their workplaces.
- **They will use this list to choose situations for their small group work.**
- **Sample Chart:**

Students	Staff	Community/Parents
Academics	Team/Staff building	Getting parents involved
Field trips	Group projects	Neighborhood relationships
Norm setting	Standardized tests	Relationships with police
Students not getting along	Problem solving	Truancy
etc.	etc.	etc.

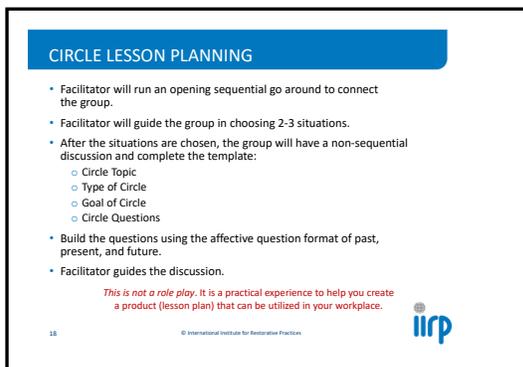
- **Some examples:**
  - **Students:** academics, field trips, norm setting, disruptive students, awards day, beginning of term, students not getting along, prom, bullying, fire/intruder drills, death of a peer, substitute teacher, establishing criteria for high-quality work, group projects, reflecting on a unit, feedback, theft in a classroom, problem solving, class pet, classroom or peer drama, standardized tests.
  - **Staff:** Team/staff building, conflict, group projects, time management, culture change, implementation of new programs, standardized tests, goal setting, information sharing, changes, tragic events, rights/responsibilities, problem solving, feedback, faculty meetings, goodbyes, welcoming new staff, expectations of the school year, parent/staff relationships, conflict, communication, celebrations.

- **Community/Parents:** Getting parents involved, tenants, neighborhood relationships, town hall meetings, school board, relationships with police, faith-based communities, PTO, higher education, vandalism, social work (how they work with families and community), truancy, parent/teacher conferences, back-to-school night.
- After the lists are brainstormed, help participants form affinity groups of no more than 8 people each.

**Tip** You may want to demonstrate a practice round. Pick a situation from the list and do the activity as a group, recording the brainstorm ideas on chart paper.

- Once the groups are formed, ask each to pick a facilitator.
- You may want to ask the facilitators to come to the front of the room so you can ensure they understand the directions and answer any questions they may have about facilitating.
- Give the following directions (on the next slide).

## Slide #18: Circle Lesson Planning



The slide contains the following text:

**CIRCLE LESSON PLANNING**

- Facilitator will run an opening sequential go around to connect the group.
- Facilitator will guide the group in choosing 2-3 situations.
- After the situations are chosen, the group will have a non-sequential discussion and complete the template:
  - Circle Topic
  - Type of Circle
  - Goal of Circle
  - Circle Questions
- Build the questions using the affective question format of past, present, and future.
- Facilitator guides the discussion.

*This is not a role play. It is a practical experience to help you create a product (lesson plan) that can be utilized in your workplace.*

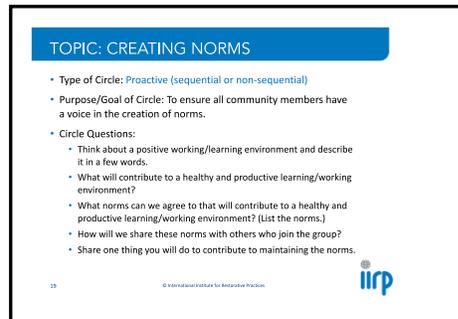
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- Refer participants to the handout, Circle Lesson Plan Template, to guide participants in the activity.

- Show the following two slides as examples of what the finished product will look like. Once the groups are ready to start the activity, put Slide #18 back on the screen.

### Slide #19: Creating Norms



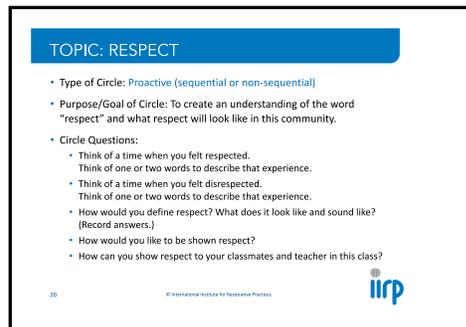
Slide #19: Creating Norms

TOPIC: CREATING NORMS

- Type of Circle: Proactive (sequential or non-sequential)
- Purpose/Goal of Circle: To ensure all community members have a voice in the creation of norms.
- Circle Questions:
  - Think about a positive working/learning environment and describe it in a few words.
  - What will contribute to a healthy and productive learning/working environment?
  - What norms can we agree to that will contribute to a healthy and productive learning/working environment? (List the norms.)
  - How will we share these norms with others who join the group?
  - Share one thing you will do to contribute to maintaining the norms.

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### Slide #20: Respect



Slide #20: Respect

TOPIC: RESPECT

- Type of Circle: Proactive (sequential or non-sequential)
- Purpose/Goal of Circle: To create an understanding of the word "respect" and what respect will look like in this community.
- Circle Questions:
  - Think of a time when you felt respected.
  - Think of one or two words to describe that experience.
  - Think of a time when you felt disrespected.
  - Think of one or two words to describe that experience.
  - How would you define respect? What does it look like and sound like? (Record answers.)
  - How would you like to be shown respect?
  - How can you show respect to your classmates and teacher in this class?

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## Activity

- The facilitator will run an opening sequential go around to connect the group.
- Facilitator will guide the group in choosing 2-3 situations from the list created by the large group.

- After the scenarios are chosen, the group will have a non-sequential discussion and complete the template:
  - Circle Topic
  - Type of Circle
  - Goal of Circle
  - Circle Questions
- Build the questions using the affective question format of past, present, and future.
- The facilitator guides the discussion.
- This is not a role play. It is a practical experience to help you create a product (lesson plan) that can be utilized in your workplace.
- They are to do the activity within 20-25 minutes and then report out to the larger group.
- Keep track of time and tell people when they should be moving on to the next scenario.
- Keep participants in their small groups while you ask each group for their thoughts on the activity. Not every group needs to share their ideas.

12:15–1:15

### **Lunch**

Tell participants how long lunch is and when it ends.

1:15 – 1:30

### **Energizer**

- Pick an energizer such as "I like people who" or "people-to-people" or any of your favorites to get the group up and moving. Play the game.

- Process briefly by asking: "What did you notice about the group?"
- **Point out that** this is another way you can use the circle format with your class, and there are many games you can play in this way. Look to books with energizers and other games, your imagination, the internet, etc. for game ideas.
- **Point out that** when playing games (especially those that are physical), it is important to be mindful of inclusion issues, any physical limitations of students, and that competition is kept within fun and reasonable bounds.

1:30–1:50

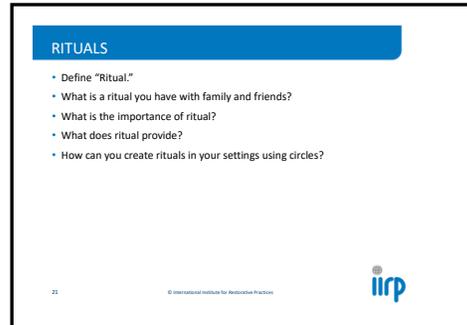
## Rituals

### *Learning Objective:*

1. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

- Have participants divide into groups of four. Let them know that they will have an opportunity to experience another circle and someone else can practice facilitating.
- Once in their groups, ask for a facilitator and explain that the group will discuss rituals and how that relates to circles.
- **Explain that** the facilitator will run the circle and address the questions in the following slide. Each small group will create a definition for "ritual."

## Slide #21: Rituals



- Define "ritual."
- What is a ritual you have with family members or friends?
- What is the importance of ritual?
- What does ritual provide?
- How can you create rituals in your settings using circles?
- **Summarize that** rituals provide safety, consistency, and a tangible bridge from one thing to the next.

1:50–2:20

### Circle Lesson Planning

#### *Learning Objectives:*

1. Participants will identify situations to use circles in a particular setting.
2. Participants will design a circle lesson plan that applies to a particular setting.
3. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

**Note to Trainer** In this section, you have three options for an activity.

1) You may do another round of circle lesson planning.

**OR**

2) Choose to do a circle activity to give the groups another example of and experience with running circles. There are sample activities with directions in this document. Have the participants form the same affinity groups as the morning and repeat the exercise. They should choose new scenarios in this second activity.

**OR**

3) Refer participants to the General Conflict Script in their packet of handouts. Review the handout, then brainstorm a list of typical conflicts that may arise in their setting. (Example: a misunderstanding between two people that escalates into an argument.) Have each group pick a situation and role play the circle using the script.

## Slide #22: Circle Lesson Planning

**CIRCLE LESSON PLANNING**

- Facilitator will run an opening sequential go around to connect the group.
- Facilitator will guide the group in choosing 2-3 situations.
- After the situations are chosen, the group will have a non-sequential discussion and complete the template:
  - Circle topic
  - Type of circle
  - Goal of Circle
  - Circle Questions
- Build the questions using the affective question format of past, present, and future.
- Facilitator guides the discussion.

*This is not a role play. It is a practical experience to help you create a product (lesson plan) that can be utilized in your workplace.*

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## Activity

- The facilitator will run an opening sequential go around to connect the group.
- The facilitator will guide the group in choosing 2-3 situations from the list created by the large group.
- After the scenarios are chosen, the group will have a non-sequential discussion and complete the template:
  - Circle Topic
  - Type of Circle
  - Goal of Circle
  - Circle Questions
- Build the questions using the affective question format of past, present, and future.
- The facilitator guides the discussion.
- This is not a role play. It is a practical experience to help you create a product (lesson plan) that can be utilized in your workplace.
- They are to do the activity within 20-25 minutes and share their experiences with the larger group.
- Keep track of time and tell people when they should be moving on to the next scenario.
- Keep participants in their small groups while you ask each group for their thoughts on the activity. Not every group needs to share their ideas.

2:20–2:35

## Break

Tell participants how long the break is and when it ends.

2:35–2:45

## Serious Situation Circles

### *Learning Objective:*

1. Participants will identify situations to use circles in a particular setting.

### ➤ **Explain:**

- For serious situations, it is usually a good idea to encourage people to speak only about their personal feelings and not how others “should” feel.
- People have a range of reactions to emotionally powerful events, and often experience (or become aware of) their feelings in different ways and at different times.

➤ **You might also want to say that** it's also okay to **not** feel particularly affected emotionally at the time of the circle.

➤ **In short, emphasize that** the circle is an opportunity to share your own emotions, not to judge the reactions of others in the circle. Reinforce this through thoughtful facilitation.

➤ Allow for a group discussion about using circles in school for serious scenarios.

➤ The lists from the first two rounds will have serious issues on them, so you do not have to take the time to list additional scenarios.

➤ **Explain that** these types of circles are **not** therapy sessions, and if a teacher feels out of their comfort zone with facilitating such discussion, they can refer the students to the appropriate professional or other adult.

### ➤ **Learn and deliver:**

- A good example of using circles for serious incidents is when teachers in Baltimore used circles in response to the unrest and protests following the death of Freddie Gray, whose injuries were sustained while in police custody.

- This article and video show how a district used restorative practices to respond to a crisis in their community.
- Note that the circle for kindergarteners gave the students an opportunity to talk about what they saw and what will keep them safe.
- The circle prompts allowed the students to discuss the protests from their perspective. [See the article and video on Restorative Works.](#)

 **Video (3 minutes):** [Baltimore Protest Video](#) (optional)

 **Article:** [Baltimore Students “Circle Up” to Cope with Unrest](#)

2:45–3:00

## Staff Circles

### *Learning Objective:*

1. Participants will identify how circles can be used in your setting.

- **Learn and deliver:** A frequently overlooked application of circles is their use as a support for educators and practitioners.
- **Ask members of the group to** share, with a partner, ways they could change their current practice to include circles.
- **Point out that** circles can be used for teachers to support and encourage each other.
- **Add that** almost any circle application that works with kids also works with adults (norm setting, go rounds, problem solving, etc.).

3:00–3:30

## Restorative Problem Solving Demonstrated as a Fishbowl

### *Learning Objective:*

1. Participants will learn the necessary skills to prepare and facilitate restorative circles.

**Note to Trainer** As the trainer, you will be facilitating this activity by standing outside the actual fishbowl.

### Slide #23: Setting Up a Fishbowl

**SETTING UP A FISHBOWL**

- Can be used with sequential or non-sequential circles
- **Optional** empty chair
- Feedback

Pages 33-36 in *Restorative Circles in Schools* book

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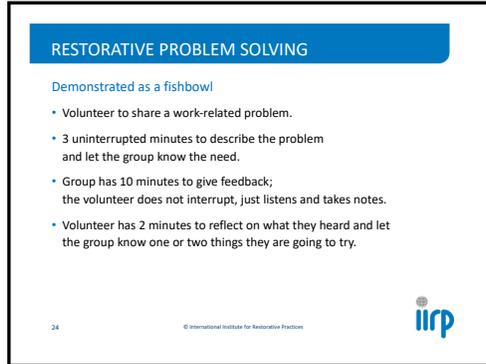
**iirp**

The diagram illustrates a fishbowl setup with two concentric circles of chairs. The inner circle is labeled 'Inner Circle' and the outer circle is labeled 'Outer Circle'. An arrow points to a chair between the two circles, labeled 'optional empty chair'. The slide also includes a list of bullet points and a reference to the 'Restorative Circles in Schools' book.

#### ➤ Learn and deliver:

- Can be used with sequential or non-sequential circles
- Optional empty chair
- Feedback

## Slide #24: Restorative Problem Solving



**RESTORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING**

Demonstrated as a fishbowl

- Volunteer to share a work-related problem.
- 3 uninterrupted minutes to describe the problem and let the group know the need.
- Group has 10 minutes to give feedback; the volunteer does not interrupt, just listens and takes notes.
- Volunteer has 2 minutes to reflect on what they heard and let the group know one or two things they are going to try.

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### Activity

- **Explain that** you are now going to do a type of fishbowl circle that you mentioned earlier.
- **Learn and deliver:**
  - There are different kinds of fishbowls that you can do. This is one example.
  - The fishbowl allows certain participants – those in the inner circle – to be active participants, while those in the outer circle act as observers.
  - The fishbowl we are going to do uses the "empty chair" option.
  - Give a few examples of other ways to use a fishbowl.
- **Explain:**
  - There is a great deal of structure in this exercise.
  - This structure is important because it eliminates some of the most common barriers to creative solutions.
- Arrange chairs in a circle of 10-12 chairs, with the additional chairs in an outside concentric circle around the inner circle. (In smaller groups, the outer circle and empty chair are not necessary.)

- People in the inner circle should be those who are willing to be of assistance by offering verbal suggestions to address an issue that will be offered up by another participant.
- Ask for volunteers to be in the inner circle.
- Leave one chair in the inner circle unoccupied.
  - **Explain that** this chair will be used as a rotating space for someone from the outer circle to step into and out of the inner circle during the exercise.
  - During the brainstorming, if someone has something they would like to contribute, they can move forward and sit in the empty chair, share their idea, and then return to their seat in the outer circle. (In smaller events, the outer circle and empty chair are not necessary.)
- **Explain the Restorative Problem-Solving Activity:**
  - After someone volunteers to share, that person will have up to three uninterrupted minutes to tell about the situation.
  - They can tell whatever they want about the situation, without any questions. They may include what they have already tried and be clear about what feedback they would like from the group.
  - If other participants have questions for clarification purposes, allow one or two, but do not allow any premature ideas for a solution. Be cautious about clarifying questions and preface by saying you can only ask a question if you don't feel you could give feedback without knowing the answer to the question.
  - After answering any clarifying questions, instruct the person offering up the problem that they are to remain silent while others provide feedback.
  - They may take notes or ask another participant to take notes for them.
  - Once the brainstorming of solutions is over, they will have a chance to read over all the suggestions and select one or two that they will commit to doing.
- The inside circle now has 10 minutes to brainstorm suggestions.

- Remind those in the outside circle (if there is one) that one person at a time can occupy the empty chair to offer a brainstorm.
- **To the whole group:**
  - **Ask:** What does good feedback sound like?
  - Ensure they are quick with their responses to allow all voices in the circle to be heard.
  - **Ask that** they avoid relating to the situation.
  - **Ask them to** share their brainstorm ideas in the form of declarative statements.
    - Instead of asking "Did you speak to the other person?" a suggestion should sound like: "Speak to the other person."
    - Acknowledge they could pose questions for the person to reflect upon.
- After the 10 minutes of brainstorming, the recorder of the suggestions will hand the list to the person who offered the problem.
- The person who presented the problem should now reflect on all of the suggestions and state one or two things that they will do within a specified time.
- They should avoid making evaluative comments about the brainstorms and not say what they will **not** do.
- At the end of the activity, ask the group to give a round of applause to the person who offered up the problem.
- **After the circle, process the experience.**
  - What was the experience like for the person who shared the problem?  
For the inner circle? For the outer circle?
  - Was this process different from the way we normally engage in problem solving? If so, how?
  - **Point out:** Restorative problem solving does not have to be done as a fishbowl. For a small number of participants, you would do a non-sequential circle.

3:30–4:10

### Final Questions and Answers

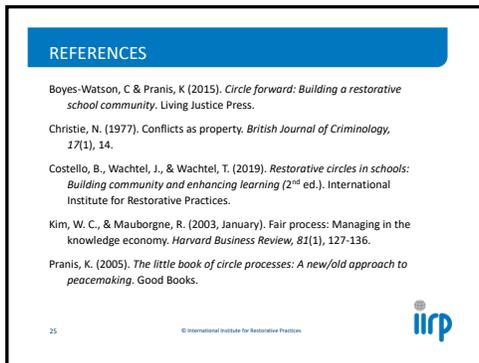
- Ask if there are any questions. Allow as much time as needed, but do not prolong this activity.

4:10–4:30

### Closing Circle and Evaluations

- Do a closing go around. Some options are:
  - Today, I learned, I realized, or I was surprised by...
  - Something that resonated with me personally was...
  - Feelings check.
- Ask for a volunteer to start and go around the circle.
- After the go around is complete, thank participants for their participation.
- Have participants complete an evaluation (If applicable).

### Slide #25: References



Slide #25: References

Boyes-Watson, C & Pranis, K (2015). *Circle forward: Building a restorative school community*. Living Justice Press.

Christie, N. (1977). Conflicts as property. *British Journal of Criminology*, 17(1), 14.

Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2019). *Restorative circles in schools: Building community and enhancing learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Kim, W. C., & Mauborgne, R. (2003, January). Fair process: Managing in the knowledge economy. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(1), 127-136.

Pranis, K. (2005). *The little book of circle processes: A new/old approach to peacemaking*. Good Books.

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- Have this slide showing at the end as participants are wrapping up.

## References

Boyes-Watson, C., & Pranis, K. (2015). *Circle forward: Building a restorative school community*. Living Justice Press.

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## Additional Circles Activities

Listed below are some alternative activities that can be used during the training in place of the second round of Circle Situations.

### Vacation

**Goal of Exercise:** Explore fantasies to heighten awareness of self and others.

**Directions:** Each participant receives the Vacation handout (see the Handout folder); pencils, markers, etc. are made available. They are then told that they are going to take an imaginary vacation.

On the form, they should indicate where they would like to go in the travel poster, whom they would take in the doorway, and what they would bring in the suitcase. Encourage group members to be creative. Participants are then asked to share their illustrations one at a time with the group.

### Process Questions

1. What characteristics make someone a desirable traveling companion?
2. Who could you relate to?
3. How has your perception of yourself as a group member changed, if at all, due to this exercise?

## What's in your wallet?

**Goal of Exercise:** Help participants get acquainted with each other and to prompt the beginning of self-disclosure.

**Directions:** Ask participants to go to their wallet and find 1-3 items (depending on the time you have for this exercise) that represent them. In circle format, have each person share how this item represents them.

### Process Questions

1. What was challenging about this exercise?
2. What did you learn about someone else? Yourself?

## Coat of Arms

**Goal of Exercise:** Promote self-disclosure and help group members build alliances.

**Directions:** Each participant receives the Coat of Arms handout (see the Handout folder, or you may choose to have participants make their own shields); pencils, pens, markers, etc. are made available. Participants are instructed to fill in each section of the shield as indicated at the bottom of the illustration. They are then asked to share their illustrations with the group.

### Process Questions

1. Which of the six sections was most difficult for you to complete?
2. Who could you relate to?
3. How does hearing others disclose personal information change your feelings toward the group?

## Gifts and Baggage

**Goal of Exercise:** Help participants work cooperatively toward cohesiveness by increasing self-disclosure.

**Directions:** Facilitators introduce the topic that “families have a powerful influence on the people who grow up in them.” They then ask the group to think about the gifts they carry from their families of origin – not material possessions, but values, beliefs, attitudes, etc., that they see as valuable assets to them today.

In addition, they are asked to think about the “baggage” they carry from their families of origin, e.g., stereotypes, beliefs, illnesses, or secrets that may be limiting them today. Encourage members to share some of the above. You may decide what you will ask them to share, e.g., one gift and one item of baggage. Introduce process questions as needed.

### Process Questions

1. How did it feel to share this information about you with the group?
2. Who could you relate to?
3. How has your perception of yourself as a group member changed, if at all, due to this exercise?

## Strength Bombardment

**Goal of Exercise:** Help participants to give and get strokes, look to the future, and celebrate growth.

**Directions:** The group sits in a circle. One member at a time volunteers to be “bombarded with strengths.” Someone else volunteers to record the strengths. For two minutes, group members (including the recorder) identify and call out the personal strengths that they see in this person. The bombarded person then reads the list of what was said about them and shares their feelings.

### Process Questions

1. How did it feel to receive positive feedback openly without denying it or apologizing for it?
2. What was it like to tell others what you like about them?
3. How did this experience affect your feelings toward the group or group members?
4. How did this affect your perception of your part in the group as a whole?
5. Who could you relate to?

## Sentence Stems & Go Arounds

I like...

Sometimes I wish...

I can't...

When I was younger...

Most people I know...

I need to know...

Whenever I enter a new group...

I regret...

My goal...

I'm afraid...

It makes me proud when I...

A good thing that happened recently...

Whenever I came to school...

Give a weather report of how you are feeling.

Rate your feelings since the last group (1-10).

What are your feelings?

What color is your mood right now?

Where would you like to take a vacation?

What animal do you most feel like today?

What is your favorite sport?

What one quality do you look for most in friends?

What is your favorite movie, song, etc.?

Something you are good at.

What is your favorite meal?

## Closing Go-Arounds

I realized...

I was surprised...

I learned...

I feel...

The type of weather I feel like is...