

## Understanding Circles

Circles can be used for support, healing, problem solving, consensus building, community building, talking, sentencing and celebration.

Circles help people take responsibility.

Circles allow quiet voices to be heard.

Circles allow for shared leadership, learning and teaching.

Circles provide a container for anger, frustration, joy truth, conflict, fear, opinions, and strong feeling.

Circles make space for empathy, compassion and respectful dialogue.

The shape of the circle is important because it is symbolic of the shared responsibility to and for the circle.

Everyone in circle is equal and has equal opportunity to participate.

The circle process builds on the values of respect, honesty, listening, inclusivity, truth, sharing and healing.

Guidelines established by the participants based on shared values allow the community to work toward a common goal.

Circles provide an opportunity to explain and discuss the impact of the incident, dispute or conflict.

Circles can help people explore issues on a deeper level by making a safe place for participants to share their concerns, feelings, frustrations, needs, fears and hopes.

Circles allow people to learn about each other and gain a better understanding of one another's circumstances, experiences and challenges.

Circles allow people to reconcile and foster relationships in an authentic manner.

Circles are "simple but not easy"