

Appendix 1

Sample Prompting Questions/Topics for Circles

Exploring values:

- What value would you like to offer for our space together?
- What value do you think would help us have this conversation in a way that causes no further harm?
- When you are being human, at your best, what are you? (in a word or short phrase)
- Imagine you are in conflict with a person who is important in your life. What values do you want to guide your conduct as you try to work out that conflict?
- What is your passion?
- What do you keep returning to in your life?
- What touches your heart?
- What gives you hope?
- What demonstrates respect?

Establishing guidelines:

- What agreements would you like for our circle to feel that you can speak honestly and respectfully?

Getting acquainted:

- What brought you to this job?
- How long have you worked at the DOC and where?
- What do you do to release stress from the job?
- Share a funny story from your work.
- What do you appreciate about your work?
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What would you not want to change about your life?
- If you had an unexpected free day, what would you like to do?
- What is your cultural heritage and what role does it play in your life?

Storytelling from our lives to share who we are and what has shaped us (to build understanding of one another and to increase empathy)

Invite participants to share:

- A time when you had to let go of control.
- A time when you were outside your comfort zone.
- An experience in your life when you “made lemonade out of lemons.”
- An experience of transformation when, out of a crisis or difficulty, you discovered a gift in your life.
- A time when you had to hear something very difficult from someone and afterward were grateful that it happened.
- An experience of causing harm to someone and then dealing with it in a way you felt good about.
- An experience of letting go of anger or resentment.

- A time when you acted on your core values even though others were not.
- An experience where you discovered that someone was very different from the negative assumptions you first made about that person.
- An experience of feeling that you did not fit in.
- A time in your life when you experienced justice.
- An embarrassing moment that you can laugh at now.

Exploring issues or concerns:

- How have you been affected by this situation?
- How do you feel about this situation?
- What's been the hardest part of this situation for you?
- How have you been affected mentally, physically and emotionally by this situation?

Taking responsibility:

- How have we each contributed to this situation, and how can each of us, by taking responsibility, act differently now?
- What needs to happen now to create a healthy workplace?
- Does anyone have anything to clear up with someone else in the circle?
- What is unspoken in the group that blocks good relationships or possible success?
- What do we need to do now to repair the harm that happened and to make sure it doesn't happen again?
- What change would you like to see in your work group? What can you do to promote that change?
- In your experience what supports healing?

Clarifying expectations about the future:

- What do you expect to do differently as a result of this circle?
- What do you expect to be different (in your work unit or in this work relationship) after this circle?
- How will you know if things are better?
- What follow-up do you want to make sure that the understandings we have reached are working?

Toward the end of a circle:

- Is there anything you came with that you would like to leave behind?
- What are you taking from this circle that supports your healing?
- Where do you see yourself moving forward?
- What have you learned?
- What can you take away that is useful to you?
- How will these insights help you in the next two weeks?

Source: Pranis, Kay. *Circle Keeper's Handbook*. <https://ardhs.sharepointsite.net/> Accessed 9/11/2015.