

Peace Circles Pronto

Basic guide for facilitating a peace circle

- Time frame: one hour, which can be expanded by group choice.
- Materials (nice, but not required): candle, peace quote or poem, talking piece, center piece cloth
- Numbers: The circles work best with 4-10 people (men, women, children). Your group can choose frequency and duration of the group. We suggest a cycle of six weeks. At the end of that time there is a completion and celebration, then an opening for entrance and exit of peacemakers in the circle.
- Circle Guidelines and Roles—see page 3
- Peaceful Ways—see page 4

You are welcome to lead the circle using this information. You are also invited to register your circle. Peacemakers are invited to register individually. By gathering in peace circles to identify what peace means to you and to translate your vision of peace in to action, you and your circle become a realization of the vision of a world community whose women men and children are actively living in peace. Thank you.

❖ **Begin: Informal gathering and networking**

❖ **Opening:** Peacemakers honor their inner peace with candle, silence, poem, prayer, song. (as the circle chooses). If you circle is meeting for the first time, you may want to consider the circle guidelines and peaceful ways. (pages 3-4)

❖ **Read Circles of Ten Vision and Mission:**

- **Vision:** We see a world community whose women, men and children are actively living in peace.
- **Mission:** To make visible the worldwide culture of peace by gathering in circles to identify what peace means to us and to translate that vision into acts of courageous peacemaking in our personal lives, our communities and our world.

❖ **Circles of Ten Peace Process:**

Step 1 is about awareness: Take a few seconds to call to mind and heart an image or feeling, from everyday life that makes you feel peaceful (e.g., beautiful scene, a hug, etc.). Focus on what *already* feels peaceful to you. Complete this statement, "I feel peaceful when _____. I am a peacemaker." The facilitator starts. Others respond with "Thank you, _____, you are a peacemaker." Pass the talking piece to your left. Each person completes the statement in turn (or you can do it in random order). (10 minutes)

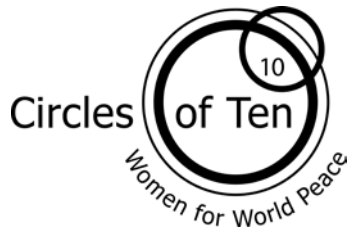
Peace Stories: In an ongoing group, each one will share a short story about the peace commitment she made last week. What intention did you set out with, what happened and which Peaceful Ways did you use? What did you learn? This can be done at any point in the circle the group chooses, often between step one and step two. (15 minutes total).

Step 2 is about Awareness: Take a deep breath and connect to your own experience of what is NOT peaceful, and complete the statement “I don’t feel peaceful when_____”. Each speaker continues to step three.

Step 3 is about vision. This speaks of your vision of peace at any level—personal, community or the world. Consider what would make the situation you have just described more peaceful for yourself and others. Now imagine the peaceful world you would like to see and complete this sentence. “Peace for me would be _____”. I am a peacemaker.” Each peacemaker completes steps 2 and three, then passes the talking piece to their left. Each peacemaker completes the two statements in turn (or you can do it in random order). (10-20 minutes)

Step 4 is about taking action. Please complete this statement with a VERY specific single sentence of one action you are willing to take this week in the name of peace. It is usually related to the vision you had in Step 3. Complete this statement, “In the name of peace I will _____”. I am a peacemaker.” Each person completes the statement in turn (or you can do it in random order). (10 minutes)

- ❖ **Announcements:** This is a time to make announcements and about any business that relates to the circle. Some circles periodically have a “business meeting” to discuss questions and concerns that relate to the circle, to give feedback about how the process is working and to plan group activities.
- ❖ **Closing:** Circle may choose their closing, such as silence, poem, prayer, song, hug. (about 3 minutes)
- ❖ **Informal networking and goodbyes.**



Circle Guidelines and Roles

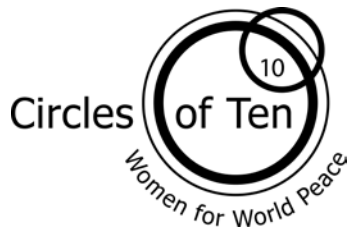
When we participate in a circle, we:

- Listen for compassion and wisdom
- Speak from your heart and from your experience
- Invite silence and reflection, when needed, in the circle
- Speak only when you have the talking piece
- Hold personal information about others in confidence
- If you're uncomfortable speaking, just say you pass
- Make decisions, if needed, by consensus

Circle Roles: As part of “shared leadership,” participants may take on various roles and responsibilities in a circle. Each role should be designated at the beginning of the circle meeting, if you want to use them. They can be rotated at subsequent meetings.

- **Circle Facilitator:** reviews circle principles and starts the conversation, modeling laser-like speech, holding the “talking piece” and passing it to the person on their left.
- **Guardian:** gently reminds others to honor circle principles when they are not being followed.
- **Time Keeper:** gently reminds participants to share talking time so the group can end on time.
- **Scribe:** may take brief notes about the actions peacemakers commit to. Peacemakers may take notes individually as well.

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Peaceful Ways of being in the world

1. **Internal peacemaking**— Finding ways to stay peaceful inside, such as prayer, meditation, feeling and releasing emotions, long walks, journaling. **Be** love.
2. **Compassionate, soulful listening**— Giving 100% attention to the speaker, to what they are saying and how they are saying it, to their body language and voice inflections; observe their feelings and reflect back to them what you hear. **Hear** with love.
3. **Mindfulness of speech**— Paying attention to what you say and how you say it, the words you use, your intent toward the listeners. **Speak** love.
4. **Dealing constructively with anger**— Noticing what form of anger you are feeling (irritation, frustration, rage), releasing it in safe ways such as exercise, art work or yelling privately, defining the core issue of the anger, taking a stand, setting limits and making changes. **Connect** with love.
5. **Reaching out**— Noting places in your life where problems exist and you feel moved to help, asking for help yourself, connecting with others, especially those who are different, with an attitude of respect. **Act** with love.
6. **Forgiveness/ reconciliation**— Resolving discord by admitting our part in the problem, by offering to make amends, by being open to forgive others, by using dialogue to find common ground with others. **Interact** with love.