

Transformative Justice Practice Circle Agendas

Radical simply means 'grasping something at the roots'. Angela Davis

All things are possible if we address a problem with our collective experiences, wisdom, creativity and the willingness to grasp the roots of the issues. If we center freedom and abolition, we will not give up on each other so quickly, we will create the necessary steps to help each other get to the next best version of ourselves. It is okay to make a mistake, accept responsibility and move on. Perfection is a product of colonization that must be eradicated on every level, beginning in the classroom/family/community. 90% of transformative justice happens in building the community that can support conflict when it arises.

Community Building / Healing Circles (for students, teachers, organizations):

Storytelling circles – funniest memory as a child, your best friend, proudest moment, obstacle you have overcome, greatest strength, favorite subject, favorite ice cream flavor and why, favorite song and why, share favorite videos and why, write a letter to future self and then share out loud. Use your creativity, skies the limit! Also, ask your students what they want to know about each other, have them write it down and put it in a bowl and have someone pick one piece of paper out everyday for the group to answer.

Challenging event debrief: Round of “how do you feel?” and Round of “what can you do about this or to prevent this from happening again?”. The second question can be used to create a community action project that can help to uplift the issue and help folks engage in a healing and/or justice process.

Fear Circle, including fear of death and losing a student, parent, friend, etc.

People write their fears on a piece of paper anonymously and we open one of the papers at a time and have the group answer how to address, what wisdom to bring in to address or to find best way to deal with the situation.

Healing and Justice Workshop

Flower Petals identity opening activity

Social Justice Framework (what the world is like)

Culture you want to create (the world you want to create together)

What is showing up for the group that is most important to address at this time?

What do you need?

What does the group need to create a more just culture in the classroom, school?

What do you appreciate about what is happening in your own growth and development? In the classroom? In the school? How can you appreciate all that you are doing (without the urgency of doing it all or trying to control things that are not in your control)?

Transformative Justice Circle Agenda (add a question that helps to get to the roots):

- Introduce the use of Transformative Justice Circle process.

- Community Agreements – what do you need to make sure this is a productive conversation for you?

-Name, (another identifier if needed, ex: position or gender pronoun) what you would like out of the circle?

- What happened? (people closest to the issue first, witnesses second, observers third)

-What harm did you experience?

-What is yours to own regarding accountability?

-What do you need to move forward?

-What are you willing to do?

-Come to a community agreement. If someone breaks the agreement, what will be the next steps? Do we want to check in about this in a month?

-Closing with appreciations

If it is a fight between 2 young women, ask a question that centers sexism or internalized sexism. If it's a conflict between 2 people of color, ask a question that helps to center racism or internalized racism, if there is a power differential, ask how power or powerlessness is playing out.

Sample Organizing Leader Accountability Circle:

Day 1 and Day 2:

Collective Goals for Circle:

Safety (physical, mental and emotional) for all participants, identify issues, acknowledge hurt (especially by Person Who Caused Harm (Brother X)), Solutions, Next Steps, Make sure people are clear about next steps, Truth at the Center, Loving Accountability, especially of our justice leaders.

Agenda:

1. Create a sacred space for community - altar in the center (please bring something to add to the altar that would be significant and grounding for folks)
 2. Opening - honoring space, place and ancestors
 3. Appreciation for the Space we used and a little bit about the space from our host
 4. Introductions of Facilitators and why we showed up
 5. Community Agreements (with core values, set up TJ verses Street & Court Justice (to be referred back to during the session if needed) and introduce "mic")
 6. Introduction of members of the circle - name, gender pronouns, what are important parts of YOU that you want the group to know
 7. Why did you show up today?
 8. Concerns with Brother X's action, behavior, leadership
 9. Brother X - what are you hearing from others? What are you acknowledging?
 10. Opportunity for Brother X to share and additional questions for the group to get clear what the core issues are
 11. What does accountability look like? How can Brother X repair the harm?
 12. What can we agree on now?
 13. What should follow up be for folks who weren't able to make it but had posted concerns?
- Next Steps?

14. Closing

In case Brother X is defensive, resistant to reconciliation - possible questions:

What have you thought about after these incidences?

What patterns have you noticed about what people are sharing about you?

What is unspoken in the circle that is blocking progress?

If you were able to imagine the people who have shared holding up a mirror to you - what picture of yourself as a leader are you seeing?

DAY 3

Goals for Circle: Next steps on how to hold the space moving forward, Healing element / loving up on each other

Agenda:

1. Making cleansing agua and cleaning our energy
2. Opening question/reflection: names, gender pronouns and how has this process impacted your thinking, behavior?
3. Dyads (2 mins for response) Dyad questions:
 - Who are you?
 - What touches your heart?
 - What do you appreciate about the person in front of you?

Popcorn Debrief: How did that feel?

4. How did we do with the follow up steps from last time?
5. What is next for the group?
6. Closing: pouring of the water

DAY 4

Goals for Circle: Next steps on how to hold the space moving forward, Healing element / loving up on each other

Agenda:

1. Opening Meditation and tools for mind, body, spirit alignment and empowerment
2. Opening question/reflection: names and gender pronouns, what you hope to get out of today's session?
3. Dyads (2 mins for response) Dyad questions:
 - What's a personal story that compels you to the movement?
 - How do you want to grow your leadership?
 - What leadership quality do you see in your partner that the movement needs?

Popcorn Debrief: How did that feel?

4. Strategic Planning: 6 Month Buckets: Financials/fundraising, Internal Relationships, Community relations, Admin (accountability, job descriptions, infrastructure), Program, Campaigns/Outside Work

5. What will Brother X's transition look like, and how will group hold Brother X accountable to their transition?
6. What are the next steps for the group? Group Agreement moving forward, write and sign for all participants
7. Closing Circle - commitments to moving TJ forward - where? How? With whom?

My favorite visionary tool for Transformative Justice:

<https://www.slideshare.net/KimZilla/know-justice-know-peace-part-3>

My favorite practical tool for Restorative Justice:

<http://rjoyoakland.org/wp-content/uploads/OUSTRJOY-Implementation-Guide.pdf>

All the material shared in this workshop is a collaborative effort with my transformative justice family of practitioners and educators. Much gratitude to them and all the ancestors who helped pass it down to us. Please pass it on. Give credit where credit is due.