

Staff Support

Circle Agenda



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Circle Topic		CR Section 1: Compassion in Action
Planning	<p>If the group has no experience with the circle process, you may want to have your first circle focus on the circle process and developing shared agreements (see agenda 1a).</p> <p>Send the introduction document from Section 1 in the online toolkit at least 4 days prior to the circle to all participants.</p>	
Purpose of Circle/ Learning Objectives	<p>Understanding the meaning of compassion, what it looks like in action and what is required of individuals to show compassion.</p>	
Materials/Preparation/Time	<p>Time: 45-50 minutes</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Circle kit <input type="checkbox"/> Values and shared agreements created in first session <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 copies of Shared Agreements and Compassionate Action Steps Visual to place in the circle <input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart with the quote printed on it to hang in the room <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the following for all participants: Steps to Compassionate Action - Scenarios for Discussion handout and if providing the bonus activity – An Invitation to Accept and Let Go of Resistance <p>Set-up: Up to 15 chairs arranged in a circle without furniture in the middle</p>	
Welcome/Check-In (10 minutes)	<p><i>"Our human compassion binds us the one to the other — not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learned how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future." — Nelson Mandela</i></p>	

Compassion in Action



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<p>Welcome/Check-In (10 minutes) <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>Welcome, introduce self, and the purpose of the work together — to support our ability to be the professional we want to be and experience joy on a daily basis. Review the use of circles for our gatherings (why, equanimity of voice, and how, talking piece, pass or speak, popcorn, centerpiece and agreements).</p> <p>(Talking piece) <u>Share your name, how you are doing on a scale of 0 (fist) - 5 and a personal value you bring to the group.</u></p>
<p>Grounding/Wellness Practice (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Today we are talking about compassion. To help us become present in the space we will take a moment to ground ourselves. Please place both feet on the floor, hands comfortably in your lap and take three slow and deep breaths. Think of one thing that you have on your mind that you'd be able to set aside in order to be present with us today.</p>
<p>Guiding Questions (25 minutes)</p>	<p>Explain: Compassion is defined in the toolkit as, "The awareness of someone else's pain coupled with the desire to help in alleviating it."</p> <p>1. (Paired conversation) Share an example of a time that you saw someone else's pain in the work environment and had the desire to alleviate it. Please focus on the example and your desire and not what you did or didn't do to alleviate it.</p> <p>Our focus today is on putting that desire into action.</p> <p>Review the six steps of compassionate action using the visual from the CR Toolkit (set in the middle of the circle as a visual reference).</p> <p>Select one of the scenarios from the toolkit activity Steps to Compassionate Action – Scenarios for Discussion, write one yourself or ask for an example from pair conversation. Read the scenario to the group and then ask to consider the questions on the handout silently. (Or do this without the handout and simply ask the questions related to each step.) Depending on the size of the group, facilitator could also break participants into smaller groups and each group could focus on one scenario.</p> <p>2. (Popcorn) <u>Share what you initially thought or felt when the scenario was read.</u> (Step 2 – Self-check)</p> <p>3. Explain that when we listen for understanding, we are listening for two key things: the feelings the person is experiencing and any signs of the person's strengths and/or ideas they already have for their next best steps. (Step 3 - Seek to Understand)</p>

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Guiding Questions (25 minutes) <i>(continued)</i>	<p>4. (Popcorn) <u>What is an example of a way you can relate to the feelings of the person in the scenario from your experience of that same feeling?</u> Remind the circle that empathy is not relating to the same situation, but to the same feeling. (Step 4 - Cultivate Empathy)</p> <p>5. (Talking piece) Avoiding giving advice is tough for most of us. Please answer one of these questions: <u>What have you found to be helpful when you want to support someone to find their own solutions or ask for what they need from you? What have you found to be barriers?</u> (Step 5 - Discern Best Action)</p> <p>6. (Talking piece) If you haven't already, distribute Moving from Establishing Empathy to Engaging the Person in Discerning Best Action handout (page 3 of Scenario handout). Give time to read and reflect. Ask: <u>Which tip offered a solution to one of our barriers or offers you a new approach?</u></p> <p>Remind participants that throughout our time together we will also be learning new ways to protect ourselves from the type of compassionate action that drains our well-being and how to maintain consistency in our compassion.</p>
Putting it into Practice (5 minutes)	<p>(Pair share) Reflecting back on the question at the beginning of the circle (share an example of a time that you saw someone else's pain in the work environment and had the desire to alleviate it), what steps of compassionate action did you use/not use when you acted on your desire to alleviate pain?</p>
Closing (5 minutes)	<p>The steps to compassionate action require a strong awareness of self and others. Throughout the toolkit we will look at practices that help us develop this awareness. Our initial grounding activity was a short introduction to one practice that allows us to be more present, which helps us to be more aware of ourselves and others.</p> <p>(Talking piece) <u>What is something you became aware of about yourself or others in this experience today?</u></p> <p>Bonus Activity: Handout for reflection between sessions An Invitation to Accept and Let Go of Resistance.</p>