

Seven Core Circle Guidelines

Speak with your heart: This means speaking for yourself, talking about what is true for you based on your own experiences. When we speak from the heart we are aiming for eloquence, for choosing words that accurately communicate what we hold to be important.

Listen with your heart: We are accustomed to judging other people, often without even knowing anything about them. These assumptions can keep us from really hearing what they have to say and what they have to say may be something important and/or helpful. Therefore, when we listen from the heart, we are trying to set aside any assumptions and/or judgments we may hold about the person. This opens up the possibility of making wonderful discoveries about each other.

Talking piece: Establish how your students will share while honoring one voice; one speaker at a time. (e.g., alphabetical order, person to your left/right/bottom/top of your screen, pick a friend, etc.).

Listen with respect: This means to listen to what is being said, without judgement. This also means to make sure that one's body reflects being respectful.

Speak with respect: This means to be mindful of the words that one uses when sharing their thoughts. Hurtful words should never be used. It is best to use affective statements ("I" statements) when speaking one's truths.

Remain in the circle: This means to be physically and mentally present when being in a circle. It is important to bring our attention back to the circle when our mind wanders.

Honor privacy: It is important to remind the participants that things shared in the circle should remain in the circle. Do however, disclose that you are a mandated reporter and will report suspicions of child abuse or neglect.