



# THE INSTITUTE *for* RESTORATIVE JUSTICE *and* RESTORATIVE DIALOGUE

## Circle One Workshop

**“Circles use a highly structured process to create a safe space where people can share their stories, and experiences.”**

This introductory workshop is an excellent prerequisite for participants who want to develop a fundamental base for doing circle work. It provides the basic understanding of what circles are, how they work and how they are used.

Restorative Circle is a community process that seeks to address harm, needs, and obligations along with bringing people together to support one another. In order to understand the power of Restorative Circles, learners in this workshop will focus on participating in different types of circles, designing circles, and facilitating them.

Circles are rooted in Native American tribes including the Ojibwe and Lakota. Circles are values-driven and are built on Native American principles of interrelationships, respectful dialogue, and building relationships. They create a safe space with non-hierarchical influences which allow people to speak without interruption. Circles encourage respectful listening and speaking and provide the space for reflection.

In this workshop participants will become knowledgeable of the importance of Circles in building relationships. Participants will be introduced to experiential exercises for understanding the core elements and components of circle. They will design circles using the information they receive throughout the training day. Participants will view several videos that show circles in operation in a variety of settings.

Participants will describe the significance of sitting in circles and explain circle elements and components. They will identify and create opening and closings of circles. Restorative Circles are facilitated by circle-keepers. Participants will experience the role of the circle keeper and will role play as facilitator of their own unique circles that they create.

Participants will practice creating guiding questions for the dialogue process. Guiding questions used in circles allow trusting space for all to share openly. Participants will recognize that the circle process ends with consensus agreements that bring mutual understanding.

Today, the use of Circles are growing rapidly across America. This workshop is designed for all levels and all settings including justice, schools, community, faith community, mental health, business etc.