

CONCENTRIC CIRCLE CONVERSATIONS

While simply sitting down to talk about our experiences with intimate violence may seem obvious, it's actually pretty rare. Few accessible opportunities exist to deeply explore our experiences living with and surviving the traumatic events that occurred, and few spaces exist to do so in community. Hosted in partnership with local anti-violence community organizations, Consentric Circles are about collaboratively making meaning of our traumatic experiences in the context of our community. We co-explore the impacts of our trauma, identify patterns between our survival experiences, dismantle the myths & misunderstandings we've encountered, and reimagine the course of our healing with creative systemic solutions.

Held both in person and online, participants can include survivors, allies, family, partners, mentors, community stakeholders and first responders, and in some cases, coordinated to include persons who have committed harm. Scaffolded with learning resources, these deep group acknowledgement opportunities may take place over multiple or ongoing sessions, or be held all in one day. In addition to a Consentric Circle facilitator, conversations include a community partner facilitator and a well being advocate, in addition to follow up resources sent to participants for continued support, discussion and learning.

WELCOME AND SIGN IN

After completing a Consentric Circles registration form, participants will receive a Welcome Email containing this Overview of the conversation, Zoom link and confirmation of the dates and times for the conversation, including contact info for further questions. On the day, we will open up the Zoom Room 15 minutes early to allow folks to check-in and get set up, and if needed, receive support on troubleshooting tech issues.

IDENTITIES AND INTRODUCTIONS

It's important to know who's in the room creating this community and how we're showing up today. We'll have an opportunity to introduce ourselves, including our preferred pronouns and ways we identify. Depending on where we are in our healing, or simply that day, we may embody just one identity, or live at the intersection of many. This is an chance to identify whose voices will be centered in the conversation - the survivors - and get to know the other community members who've showed up for us that day. Nothing is mandatory; everything is by choice.

SURVIVOR : I identify as a survivor; I have experienced intimate harm firsthand; I am part of a community, and am a stakeholder in my own healing and justice

COMMUNITY MEMBER / ALLY: I have someone in my life or at a distance who has experienced intimate harm; I'm looking for the language and tools to support them

ADVOCATE: I work to support and elevate people who have suffered intimate harm; I'm looking to calibrate my support

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS: I am a member of this community, which makes me a stakeholder in healing harm; I may be able to influence the responses and systems survivors interact with

FACILITATORS: I am with the Consentric Circle team or the Community Partner Organization, here to facilitate a safe and constructive space for the survivors in the room

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CONVERSATION PRACTICES

EMBRACE VULNERABILITY AS A STRENGTH

Practice the courage to be yourself openly, honestly, and unapologetically; Vulnerability involves uncertainty, risk, or emotional exposure, and cultivates intimate, human connection through the sharing of truths

HONOR AUTHENTICITY IN YOURSELF & OTHERS

Practice being true to one's own personality, spirit, or character; Showing up with your whole self, physically, culturally, emotionally & mentally

ACKNOWLEDGE YOURSELF & OTHERS

Practice acceptance of experiential truth; the action of expressing or displaying appreciation for the complex lived experiences of yourself and others

SHOW & SHARE VALIDATION

Practice recognizing and affirming that a person and their feelings and opinions are valid, worthwhile and of value to yourself and your community

OWN OUR ACCOUNTABILITY

Practice recognizing that we all have the capacity to harm and be harmed. Willingly take initiative, accept responsibility and own our actions and their impact on others. If you have created harm address it, if you see harm being done, address it. No harm happens in a vacuum.

TYPICAL DISCUSSION TOPICS

The conversation incorporates reflective, written, verbal and experiential ways through which we can share, connect and better understand our experiences with intimate trauma and will involve some or all of the following questions. But the topics you'd like to address, based on your responses on the registration, will be the main driver for the questions we ultimately explore.

HEAD, HEART AND BODY

What symptoms did/do you experience?
What kind of support did you receive? What kind of support did you want?
What do you need now in your healing process?

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

How did your community respond? What did you need from those in your community?
What do you wish was said? What would you have your community do differently?
What did your community do or say that was helpful and healing?

JUSTICE AND HEALING

What did you face in navigating systems of justice and support?
If you could define it for yourself, what would justice look, sound & feel like?
What would you say to the person who harmed you?
What, if anything, would you want to hear from the person who harmed you?

ALLIES & COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

Who would you like to hear about your experience? What allies do you wish were here? How would it feel to invite them?
What community members would benefit from hearing this wisdom? Who could we invite?
What community collaborators and stakeholders do we wish could listen in?