

# Healing Circle Script by Lauren Fardig-Diop and Belinda Dulin

## 1. Norms/Agreements

- a. Take some time to go over community agreements or norms at the beginning of each circle. Repetition of these helps new community members understand.
- b. Some common norms are: everyone sits in circle, respect the talking piece (one mic), be present (technology away), pass if you don't want to share, etc.

## 2. Opening Ceremony & Land Recognition

- a. It is important to recognize that the land we're on is stolen land. We do this by honoring the indigenous people from which restorative practices have been learned. They are generous to share their culture with us.
- b. **From Lauren's Restorative Justice Introductory training notes in January 2020:** *Before we begin our circle today, we must honor the land upon which we live, and the tribes who gave up land so that Ann Arbor could expand West. The Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox and Anishinaabe (uh-NISH-ih-NAH-bay) originally inhabited this land, and as we are using restorative practices, which are rooted in Native traditions, we must honor the First Nations people in our area.*
- c. Allow a moment of silence for our Indigenous brothers and sisters, who have given up so much, but keep fighting for justice.

## 3. Round 1: Temperature Check

- a. The purpose of this round is to get a sense of how each participant is doing. As a circle keeper, I may change my plans based on what my participants need.
- b. *How is everyone doing today?* You can do this by asking folks to give a one-word answer about what they're feeling at this moment, or asking them about their "interior weather" (putting emotions into weather words), or picking a song title to describe their emotions.

## 4. Round 2: What has been keeping you up at night?

- a. The purpose of this round is to listen and show empathy. You could also ask:
  - What have you been thinking about lately?
  - What's been toughest for you about this situation?

## 5. Round 3: What silver linings have made it better?

- a. As the last round may have been heavy, following up with this can help bring balance to the conversation.
- b. What has kept you strong? What has helped you cope during this time?

## 6. Round 4: What action steps should we begin from here forward?

- a. As a way to close, setting some action steps helps participants feel like this session has been productive (or if not productive, then meaningful).

## 7. Closing Ceremony

- a. I often close with a quote, poem, song lyric, or asking participants to share one word about how they are feeling now.