

A Circle Training Workshop

with Jennifer Ball
January 2nd to January 5th, 2014
at Fourfold Farm

Background

Circle process is a powerful tool for creating space to hear diverse voices, sustain relationships, and work together to build communities. Circle process is rooted in the tradition of Talking Circles that indigenous peoples in North America have used for millenia. It is a structured, spacious form of conversation in which everyone is deemed equal, has voice, and may contribute to the collective wisdom.

The function of Circles is to help build organizations, businesses & communities, nurturing the development of capacities to provide support, generate mutual understanding, strengthen relationships & create spaces for healing and transformation through shared stories and experiences. In powerful ways, the use of Circles can help people solve complex, emotionally charged, and often otherwise intractable problems in any domain, offering a structured, safe and supportive environment in which to encourage honest communication, relationship development, & community building - all components of conflict management.

In overview, this provides a way to practice genuine citizen democracy and participation. In organizations and businesses, the Circle opens space for both the introverted and extroverted voices to be heard, allowing the quieter, often observant folk, to make important contributions.

About the Circle Training:

This workshop is designed to train those who have an interest in using Circle more intentionally in their own lives and professional practice. While providing ample intellectual grounding in Circle methodology, the focus of this training will be teaching participants how to facilitate various types of Circles for use in their organizations or practice, including farming.

The training includes:

- >foundational values & philosophy of Circle practice
- >understanding the structures, rituals, and applications of Circles
- >how to plan a Circle



Registration: \$300 per person (limited to 20 participants)

Snacks & beverages provided. Pot-luck & / or BYO lunch.

Fourfold is an organic / biodynamic farm; home to Sandra, Mark, Christopher, Michaela & Steve & a host of many other life forms.

Schedule:

Thursday Jan.2nd: 6pm to 9pm

Friday & Saturday, Jan.3rd & 4th: 9am to 5pm

Sunday, Jan.5th: 9am to 4pm.

To Register, contact Erin Nelson at (519) 803-0086 or by email at enelson@uoguelph.ca



About Dr. Jennifer Ball: Jennifer holds a Ph.D. in Rural Studies, with a focus on Sustainable Rural Communities from the University of Guelph. She has conducted research on issues of intercultural communication in professional planning, conflict management, rural land use planning and storytelling. In 2010, Jennifer collaborated with Kay Pranis and Wayne Caldwell to write "Doing Democracy with Circles: Engaging Communities in Public Planning."

Currently, Jennifer is an Adjunct Professor at U of Guelph and consults as a facilitator & Circle Trainer. She teaches courses on community engagement and on international and community development. Her facilitation and Circle training has taken her across North America, Australia, and East Africa. She's spent more than 13 years living and working in East & Southern Africa, involved in community development, microenterprise development, market research, and peacebuilding. Most recently, Jennifer was part of organizing the annual conference for Gather the Women, an international organization focused on the use of Circle with women for personal & global transformation.

'Circles shift the dynamics in groups, organizations, and institutions. People respond to each other differently. They see conflicts differently. And the effects of these shifts keep rippling out.'

~Jennifer Ball
'Doing Democracy with Circles'

'Circles work magic in families, schools, business, and communities, in other words, in meeting the challenges of everyday life ... the essence of Circles isn't new but tested over millenia and in different cultures.'

~Kay Pranis
'Peacemaking Circles'

'Circles are excellent at maximising human resources. The Circle brings people together in a way that their assets can compliment and support rather than compete with each other.'

~Jennifer Ball
'Doing Democracy with Circles'

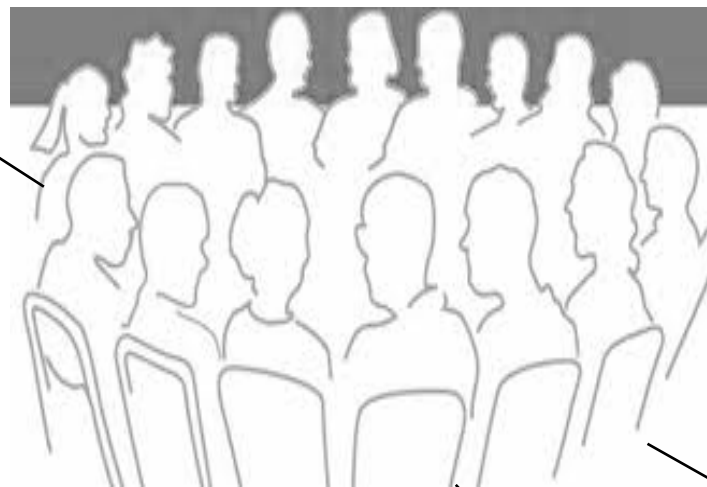
'What, after all, could be simpler than sitting in a circle and listening? What could be more profound than sitting in a circle with others who care as much as you do - about a question, an issue, a threat, or an opportunity - and then listening together as you try to explore what really matters, what really counts, what really can happen now? ... an approach, a social technology, a doable, understandable, non-threatening way that planners can learn along with concerned community members about issues that concern them.'

The 'Circle' approach provides more path than technique, more instructive and enlightening ritual than method, more a way to bridge understanding and action than a narrow problem solving gimmick - all because Circles encourage not just voice but listening, not just initial options but deeper insights, not just "what I want" but "what we can do together."

~Professor John Forester
Cornell University

'Whether it is in the family school, peer groups, social services, or courts, the peacemaking Circle opens up possibilities for figuring out together how to create better, more just relationships within society.'

~Dr. Carolyn Boyes-Watson
'Peacemaking Circles & Urban Youth'



'A strong community helps people develop a sense of true self, for only in community can the self exercise and fulfill its nature: giving and taking, listening and speaking, being and doing.'

~Parker Palmer
'A Hidden Wholeness'

'The Circle is neither a panacea nor a magic wand that makes social problems suddenly disappear. It is more like a form of social technology that enables us to tap capacities for wisdom, collective support, and creativity that lie dormant within us.'

~Dr. Carolyn Boyes-Watson
'Peacemaking Circles & Urban Youth'

'Today, we witness both the harm of disconnecting and the healing power of connecting. We need now more than ever before to find ways to connect with each other constructively, to understand and respect our differences, and to recognise the invaluable contribution each of us can make to creating community. Circles provide spaces where deeper connecting can happen.'

~Kay Pranis
'Peacemaking Circles'