

YAK:

YOUTH ADVOCATING KINDNESS

WEEK 1

THEME: Intro to Circles & Community Building

1) OPENING

Physical calm: Start with a physical check-in

Explain the purpose of the circle: Long term goal is to build connectedness, community, and kindness advocates through listening to each other and to our own thoughts. There's a lot we can learn from each other!

Center object: Symbolize what we want this community to be

Opening quote: "We are all joined in a circle of stories,"-- Linda Joy Myers, *Journey of Memoir: The Three Stages of Memoir Writing*

2) GUIDELINES & AGREEMENTS

No intimidation, harassment, or discrimination of any kind.

Speak real:

- Talking about what is true to **you** based on your own experiences
- Your truth, your experiences, your perspectives
- You are always allowed to pass

Listen real:

- Acknowledge when your brain is starting to judge someone, and remind yourself that judgments and assumptions keep us from really knowing someone and listening to them
 - Consult the group: Pass the talking object around the circle. What is listening real? What isn't?
 - Giving advice/fixing
 - Pity/sympathy
 - Correcting
 - One-upping
 - Judging, criticizing

Say just enough:

- Don't feel rushed, and don't feel like you are required to say a monologue
- If we have a lot to discuss, we can split into smaller groups

Talking piece:

- Must have talking piece in order to speak
- Give those who have it your full attention
- When you are holding it, give your full attention to your truth

Consult the group: What agreements would make you feel more comfortable in this space?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Talking piece
- Sign for guidelines & agreements
- Center object

3) CHECK IN

What are two words to describe your day/week/month?

4) GUIDED CONVERSATION

Describe your name or nickname. What do you love about it? Do you have a story about it?

5) PERSONAL STORY/CONVERSATION

This can be a popcorn portion. The talking piece can rest in the middle until someone would like to share, then can be passed from teen to teen, out of circle order.

6) CIRCLE CLOSING

Check out round: Say two words that describe your experience today

7) CLOSING QUOTE

"I feel like I need to speak out, because if no one speaks out, if no one says, this is me, this is what I believe in, and this is why I'm different, and this is why that's okay, then what's the point? What's the point of living in this beautiful, great melting pot where everyone can dare be anything they want to be?"

— *When Dimple Met Rishi* by Sandhya Menon



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