

Native Support Circles - 0- Intro

Cancer Support Circles in Indian Country

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Continuing the Circle

Curriculum originally developed through
funding from the California Community
Foundation 2000-2002


Subsequently supported by:
Mayo Clinic's "Spirit of E.A.G.L.E.S."
#U01 CA86098 (P.I. Kaur)

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Key Staff

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Based on concept developed by
Zora Brown, African-American Support
Program, Washington, DC

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Objectives


By the end of this workshop, the participant will be able to:

1. Describe how your Support Circle may be organized to be acceptable to your local community.
2. Identify which resources are already in existence and are likely to be included within your local Circle.

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Objectives continued

3. Describe recruitment strategies specific to your local Circle.
4. Identify which topics are likely to be included as "sessions" within your local Circle.

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Definition of a Support Circle

A "Circle" is:

- * a group of people sharing an interest, activity, or achievement; giving support to each other to accomplish goals.
- * a sphere, a center of influence for the common good
- * the "drop in the water" that sends ripples into infinity

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Definition of a "Resource"

- An organization, literature, videos, media, etc. that one can acquire for use to learn about healthy life-skills, quality of care & end of life care information for physical and emotional support
- An organization that one can refer a client to
- An individual one can refer clients to

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Pre-workshop Questions

(Please make up a fun code name)

1. For the "East" why would you want "Personal Contracts" in your community Circle?
2. For the "South" if the Circle is closed to new members, how would you support that new client?

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Brief Overview

- * This is an excerpt of a 12-week support program developed and pre-tested with intertribal groups in So California
- * Several parts (components) of the California program will be relevant to your Circles
- * But, other parts (components) will need to be modified for your Circles

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What Are Some of the Ways That the Circles Are Unique?



12 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 hour weekly sessions

Tailored for Native cultures


Spirituality incorporated within

One of the few support programs that have been evaluated for effectiveness (both nationwide & multi-racial)

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Components (parts) of the Circle

1. Facilitators' Checklist
2. Facilitators' Outline
3. Ground Rules
4. Circle Prayer
5. Personal Inventory List
6. Topics Relevant to your Circle

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Components (parts) of the Circle

7. Keynote Speakers
8. Literature
9. Arts & Crafts
10. Interactions through games or tribal stories
11. Journaling with Natural Mediums (e.g. stones, beads, etc)
12. Advertising / Recruitment

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Developing the Circle

* Set your Circle Ground Rules

Question: What is the definition of a "ground rule?"

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Definition of a "Ground Rule"



A "Ground Rule" is:

a set direction for conduct and protocol

"Ground rules" refer to how participants behave with one another during and after our Circle gatherings

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Short Interaction

1. Please pair up and review the "ground rules" from the handout.
2. For your community, which of these ground rules do you think you would like to keep for your Circle?
3. For your community, what is an example of a "ground rule" you would like to add for your Circle?

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Examples of Cedar Circle's Ground Rules

- Every session begins with the same Circle spiritual blessing or prayer.
- Show respect for others...allow them to tell their story without interruptions.
- Family members and loved ones are welcomed to the group
- Positive supportive comments should take place while arts & crafts are being worked on (i.e., no negativity toward others or ourselves; spiritual pain could feed into our and others= artwork).

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Examples of Cedar Circle's Ground Rules

5. No Smoking in the building or during the Circles.
6. Nutritious foods & beverages only (i.e., fruits, vegetables, juices, occasionally sandwiches and other healthy snacks to promote health, healing and good tastes. Please do not bring sodas, burgers, fast-foods, etc. (Remind diabetics to watch their exchanges)
7. Circle participants, or their Adesignee,@ determine whether or not to invite a speaker to stay for the rest of the Circle.

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Developing the Circles

*** Create a prayer or a spiritual opening that is respectful to your local community**

Circle participants compose or write thoughts, feelings and drawings, or what they would want included in a prayer

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Excerpt from the Cedar Circle's Prayer

Creator...thank you for bringing the women and men of the Circle back once more. Special prayers for all who were not able to make it here. Keep them safe in their travels and strong in heart.

Special prayers that we remain in good heart and good mind throughout the session.

Special prayers for the People of this land that they may continue in their quest to bring back their culture, their heritage, their traditions.

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Excerpt from the Cedar Circle's Prayer

Special prayers that we can clear our minds, calm our hearts, strengthen our determination to work for the health of ourselves, Mother Earth and all of Her inhabitants.

And, Creator, special prayers for patience to stop and listen to others; for the wisdom to understand them both inside and outside of our situations; for eyes to see around us the beauty and ugliness...and to take from that experience information to pass onto the next Circle.

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Excerpt from the Cedar Circle's Prayer

Special prayers that we have the strength to accept the stories of experiences shared by the women or men here; strength to accept the reality of a situation...both real or imagined; and ears to listen to the stories and to hear the joy or sadness in them.

Thank you, Creator, for each breath we take; for the air; the water; the rain; the sun; the win; all that are on Mother Earth; all that is Above and all that is Below. Thank you for another day of living.

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Developing the Circles

2. Choose topics relevant to your Circle

Please read through the list of topics from the California Circles handouts

In groups (same setting as a Circle), please discuss which of these topics you think your local community may want to have included

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Examples of Session Topics Interactive Activity

- * Dietary Concerns
- * Benefits of Breast/Body Self-exams
- * Chemotherapy
- * Radiation Therapy
- * Hormonal Therapy
- * Surgery



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Examples of Session Topics
continued

- * Pain Control
- * Economic Issues
- * Benefits of Physical Therapy
- * Intimacy and Sexuality
- * Outlook on Life




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Examples of Session Topics
continued

- * Emotional Purging
- * Follow-up Care
- * Managing Home & Family During Care
- * Incorporating Traditional Healing with Modern Medicine
- * Closing Ceremony & Celebration



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Organizing the Circles for
Southern California:

The first (2) sessions are open for anyone to attend.

Session #3 and beyond is closed to new participants

- * *Newly diagnosed people are referred to one-on-one telephone counseling until the next Circle begins to insure bonding between the current Circle participants*



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Benefits/Drawbacks to Including New People Each Circle Session

Some communities feel uneasy with not allowing "new" people into the Circle after Session #2.

Question: Why do you think this may have been important to the Circle participants to do this?





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Benefits/Drawbacks to Including New People Each Circle Session

Question: What do you think may happen if new people joined the Circle each Session?

Based on discussion with women in your local Circles, you will need to decide whether or not you should allow new people to join in each week ... especially in smaller communities





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Benefits/Drawbacks to Including New People Each Circle Session

Question: If your Circle participants want to keep the Circle "private" after the 2nd session, how can your community provide support to someone who is newly diagnosed?

Question: Will your Circle participants be willing to do this?




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Facilitators' Check List


Materials to bring to each session:

- ___ Matches
- ___ Cedar, Sage and/or Corn Pollen
- ___ Abalone Shell and a holder for the shell
- ___ Healthy Foods and Drinks (e.g. fruits, vegetables, juices)
- ___ Water
- ___ Cups
- ___ Small Plates

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Facilitators' Check List


Materials to bring to each session continued:

- ___ Napkins
- ___ Eating Utensils (if applicable)
- ___ Name Tents or Badges
- ___ Tissue/Kleenex
- ___ Arts & Crafts Supplies and Accessories
- ___ Pens, Pencils, Notebook Paper
- ___ Facilitator's Notebook
- ___ Medicine Wheel Forms
- ___ Personal Contracts

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Facilitator's Checklist

Materials to bring to each session continued:

- ☐ Journal Paper (*My Circle Journey*)
- ☐ Copies of 3-hole punched Handouts for each participant for next session
- ☐ Referral Form for the National Native American Cancer Survivors' Network
- ☐ Business Cards with Business Card Holder
- ☐ Additional items requested by participants

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Personal Inventory List for My Loved Ones

- ☐ Birth Certificate
- ☐ Driver's License
- ☐ Social Security Card
- ☐ Tribal Card/Roll #
- ☐ Military Papers/Military
- ☐ Doctor Name/Phone
- ☐ Medicine Person
- ☐ Herbalist

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Personal Inventory List for My Loved Ones continued



- ☐ List of Prescriptions and dosage
- ☐ Hospital Name/Location
- ☐ Spiritual Advisor/Clergy

******Other Important Information******

- ☐ Vehicle Registration and Ownership Slip
- ☐ Medical Insurance/Card

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Personal Inventory List For My Loved Ones continued

- ☐ Life and Accident Insurance/Card
- ☐ Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care & Living Will
- ☐ Credit Cards
- ☐ Real Estate or Rental Papers
- ☐ Burial Papers

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Facilitator Outline ~ Session #1

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants can briefly share their personal experience with cancer
2. Participants can identify unique characteristics of cancer in Native Americans
3. Participants can start the Circle opening prayer

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Facilitator Outline ~ Continued

B. MATERIALS FACILITATOR needs to bring to this lesson, in addition to normal meeting supplies:

1. Notebook for each participant
2. Video tape machine and monitor
3. Video #1, #2, #6

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Facilitator Outline continued

4. Handouts:

- a) Seascape Referral Form & Consent Form
- b) Introduction to Native American Cancer Survivors / Thrivers Support Circles
- c) Circle Ground Rules

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Facilitator Outline continued


- d) Personal Inventory List for Family & Other Loved Ones
- e) Personal Contract
- f) Circle Journal Paper
- g) Session Topics Ranking
- h) Medicine Wheel Evaluation Answer Sheet
- i) Blank paper and a pen or pencil for each participant (for note taking)

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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

C. AGENDA:


1. **Blessing**
2. **Self-Introductions**, including information such as
 - a) Tribal Affiliation
 - b) Are you a *Survivor/Thrifer*, or are you a *Loved One* of a cancer patient
 - c) Type of cancer & when diagnosed

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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

- d) What you want to get from the Circles

3. The Native Survivors' Support Circles...[Distribute Notebooks with Intro Section included]

- a) Introduction (see program hand-out)

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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

b) Review Topics

- 1) Topic Survey is for participants to rank the *Topics of Interest*
- 2) Participants may write in additional *Topics of Interest*
- 3) The first two (2) sessions of the Circle are open to anyone, but will be closed from Session #3 on





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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

c) Review the format for each session (see handout)

d) Review the Circle "Ground Rules." Ask for revisions and/or other changes. (see handout)





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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

4. Ranking of Discussion Topics
(ask the participants to complete the ranking of Topics of Interest to them and remind them they can add new items to the list). Collect those forms at the end of the session. New items added to the list will be shared with all participants of the group to determine if they are topics of high interest



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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

5. **Sharing Stories** (ask for volunteer/s who is/are willing to share his/her experiences) *Keep this time approx 1 hour*
 6. **"Personal Contract"** for next session
- ~ Each participant identifies at least one thing s/he will do between tonight and the next session that is focused to **HER/HIS needs**.
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Facilitator Outline ~ continued

7. Distribute Handouts for next session: which will be "*Dietary Concerns*" [you will finish *Dietary Concerns* ~ Traditional Food Session 10]
8. Evaluation ~ Using the *Medicine Wheel Answer Sheet*, ask participants to respond to questions
9. Closing Prayer

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Example of the Typical Agenda

- * Opening Prayer and Welcome
- * Pre-session learning
- * Topic or Guest Speaker
- * Personal stories/progress since last week
- * Sharing healthy snacks... laughter... tears... affection and support

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Example of the Typical Agenda continued

- * Support for one another in the Circle
- * Personal Goals / Contracts
- * Journaling
- * Post-Session Learning
- * Closing Prayer

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Organizing the Circle Agenda for Southern California:

- ☐ Typically one (3-hour) session per week
- ☐ Topic Discussion (20-45 minutes)
- ☐ Healthy snacks & beverages on table
- ☐ Sharing personal stories of grief, joy, humor and information (1 to 1- 1/2 hours)
- ☐ Evaluations, contract, journaling (1/2 hour)

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My Circle Journey Interactive Activity

- * Write thoughts, feelings, poems...
- * Draw, cut or paste pictures
- * Compose a song
- * Group art using stones, shells, beads


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Personal Health Contract (Weekly Activity)

- * Focus on his / her needs at least 15 minutes per week
- * American Indian people always take care of their community / family before themselves
- * Contract is between the participant and his or her God / Creator
- * Contract is a weekly commitment


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Weaving a Healthy Life Survivors' Contract

I, _____,
do hereby promise my God/Creator
that I will take 15 minutes
strictly for myself this next week; I will
take a few minutes to watch a butterfly
dance or listen to the beautiful songs of
a bird, or look up and see the stars
looking down on me.

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Advertising & Recruitment

How would you let people know about
your upcoming Circles?

Question: What tribal or Health Board
approvals do you need to have in place
before you advertise or recruit to your
Circles?

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Advertising the California Circle: An example

- * Fliers posted in the market
- * Exhibit booth during Pow Wows and Health fairs
- * Information in community newsletter
- * Visit elder's weekly "craft" gatherings to share information

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"Recruitment" of Survivors

- * NACR Website
<http://NatAmCancer.org>
- * Native Wellness Conferences
- * Community News
- * Medical Center/Doctor/Clinic/I.H.S.
- * Word of Mouth ("Moccasin Telegraph")
- * Telephone

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How Might You Recruit?

As a group please brain storm an additional survivors' recruitment strategy that would be acceptable to your community.

Now, identify an additional way to advertise the existence of these Circles.

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Local Artists Donate Artwork

- * A superb way you can acknowledge your local talent is to seek artists from your community that will donate their artwork to your Circles
- * Remember to list your artists in your print materials

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Evaluation

- * Medicine Wheel evaluations (pre and post-session questions used during development of the Circles)
- * Overall session evaluations (every 4 sessions) Recommend these still be used ...

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Available Resources

- * Native American Cancer Research (NACR) and the Network 303-838-9359
- * Terrie Restivo, Survivors' Circles Project Director: 714-895-5778
- * National Native Cancer Survivors' Network: 1-800-537-8295
- * Mayo Clinic's "Spirit of E.A.G.L.E.S." and Native C.I.R.C.L.E.: 1-877-372-1617
- * National Cancer Institute, Cancer Information Service 1-800-4-CANCER

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Facilitator Qualifications

- * Compassion
- * Integrity
- * Commitment
- * Want to work with Cancer Survivors / Thrivers and their Loved Ones

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Conclusion

The hardest work in holding Support Circles is that they are hard to keep *Continuing the Circle*"

Question: If or when you have this challenge, what are 3 things you can do to increase the likelihood of the group succeeding?

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Do you want more training?

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