

# 1. Center Community & Healing: Circle Outlines

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This circle outline is a part of a larger facilitation guide and community conversations toolkit from On Our Terms. Check out the full toolkit on [onourterms.nyc](https://onourterms.nyc) if you want more background and guidance on how to use this tool.

## GROUND AND CONNECT

1. Share the following quote from the On Our Terms project:  
*"...most people, when they show up to a place where they feel welcome, they show up more as themselves, even if they're not sure who that is yet. And I'm not just talking about kids, I'm talking about staff too.... it's all these different root connections happening at once, in all these different directions, and the hierarchy starts to peel away. Definitely power dynamics still exist, but we're able to act more as members of the community, instead of just roles in the community."*
2. If you could glow a color at all times, which color would you glow and why?

## COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

1. What are agreements that you want to hold yourself and each other to? When we think of these agreements, we can think not only about agreements for this space, but the kinds of things you would like to see from the world behind you? Below are some starting agreements to kick us off (Note: If you are in a space that meets regularly and has agreements already established, feel free to you use those, and ask each participant to pick one to focus on that they are really strong at supporting the group through, and one they would like to tend to improving).
  - a. One mic, and speak from a place of "I"/our own experience
  - b. Active listening
  - c. Confidentiality, or the stories stay here but the lessons leave
  - d. If you say something that you think might have hurt somebody, say "Oops" and we can pause to address it; If you say something that you have been hurt by, say "Ouch," and we can pause to address it
  - e. Passing is always an option

## CRITICAL QUESTIONS

### Peer-to-peer circle

1. **EXPLORE.** What messaging have you received about who needs to heal, or how that healing might happen?
2. **SHARE EXPERIENCES.** Can you share a time when you had a sense of belonging with others? How did it feel for you?
3. **ENVISION.** Describe your dream community. What does it look like and feel like? What are friendships and relationships like there?

## Intergenerational circle

1. **EXPLORE.** What does healing mean to you?
2. **SHARE EXPERIENCES.** Can you think of a time when you felt yourself experiencing healing? Who was with you, and what role did they play? What did you need during that time?
3. **ENVISION.** What would your community look like if it was equipped with what people needed to heal?

## CLOSING

1. Read the following recommendations around centering community and healing in schools:
  - a. Integrate restorative circles and other opportunities for relationship building, sharing personal experiences, and reflection throughout school life, including in classrooms, advisory, staff meetings, and community-wide events.
  - b. Create community-wide gatherings for reflection and celebration with students, their families, and staff, such as town halls, rallies, and family nights, with an emphasis on strengthening intergenerational bonds, storytelling, and sharing hopes and ideas for the future of the school.
  - c. Ensure administrators support staff through regular meetings that focus on the changing needs of teaching and support staff. If an administration is able to hold the needs of their staff, it increases capacity for staff to hold the needs of their students.
2. After hearing these ideas, close out by writing down a place you would like to focus on making stronger relationships within. If there is a physical map of the community available, you can have people check out by marking where their space is on the map, and if not, simply sharing out.