

Survivors Support/Community Building Circle (around 3 hours)

Explain to participants: While, sharing, the focus of the circle will be on emotions and impact rather than details of trauma.

Intro to the Circle

Introductions + weather word check in

name, what you're feeling, pronouns

Discussion of Community Guidelines and trigger warnings, and the purpose of this space.

Community guidelines are placed on each chair

Establishing values:

What do you need today to create a trusting environment?

How can you create a trusting environment for others here today?

Write down one value on the card that, if we all practice it, will create a safe space for us to talk about these difficult subject. Share your value with the group.

Icebreaker/grounding exercise/breathing and stretching/Play doh

What is one thing that you're hopeful for in this space? What is one thing that you're worried about?

Backpack exercise

write something down on a piece of paper: what's something that you're carrying with you that feels like a weight on your shoulders?

everyone shares out.....now we'll put it all in the backpack

share out: what was that like?

Guiding Questions (Normalizing Trauma):

Write down something that has changed/that you've lost after your experiences.

Share with the group.

Others can raise their hands if they have also experienced this.

Debrief: what was it like to do that exercise?

What is it that you need/want/hope for to heal?

BREAK and Grounding/Breathing Exercise

Guiding Questions (Self Care):

What were some things that have helped you since your experience?

(Write these all down on a communal piece of paper).

Need to Know Exercise

People write down questions that they have about any aspect of their experience, crumple them up and throw them in the middle of the circle.

Build connection around each question within the group (rather than having a single person answer the question).

Guiding Questions (Repairing Harm/Journals):

Write down: what do you need from the person who harmed you?

Share out as you feel comfortable.

Write down: What do you need from the community?

Share out as you feel comfortable.

Guiding Questions (Community Building):

How do we come together as a community to tackle these issues?

What resources are we all aware of?

Closing

appreciations; ball of yarn web

Reflection: what are the strengths you saw in this room? is there anything that made you feel hopeful?

Materials needed:

big post it paper
markers
printed documents of guidelines
play doh
yarn
papers and pens for letters and questions
tissues
candle and centerpiece items
talking piece

Note:

Consider having multiple facilitators and people who can follow participants out of the circle if they need to leave the room.