

Learning Circle Agreement

The Learning Circle Agreement lays the foundation for a healthy learning circle. It is designed to hold members mutually accountable to the Learning Circle's purpose and values and to help the Learning Circle stay on track. By agreeing to the following each member will support creating a safe environment where people are free to share their stories, their challenges and their triumphs.

Each member in our Learning Circle commits to:

1. **Confidentiality:** I agree to keep what is shared in the Learning Circle in the Learning Circle. I will not share other Learning Circle member's stories or experiences.
2. **Share my personal story:** In Learning Circle discussions, I will talk about the Learning Circle process as I experience it and will use "I" statements. I agree to listen and share with openness and honesty at whatever level I feel comfortable.
3. **Consider others:** I agree to speak with sensitivity and refrain from harsh language or graphic detail which might serve as "triggers" or be offensive to others. I will avoid debates over controversial topics that are outside the issues, yet I will not shy away from negative or difficult issues related to the topic. If something difficult occurs I will work to resolve it directly.
4. **Listen well:** I am committed to giving everyone an opportunity to speak and be heard. I will avoid talking when another Learning Circle member is sharing and will aim to give each person my undivided attention. I will also turn off my cell phone to avoid interruptions.
5. **Be genuine:** I agree that Learning Circles are a place where I can relax and just be myself. I will work to give honest and caring responses. I will trust each Learning Circle member to find their own answers and will not push them to give more answers or share more than they are ready to share. I will take down any walls or masks I may have hidden behind, such as performance, position or perfectionism.
6. **Avoid rescuing:** I will not interfere with a member's emotions or feelings by patting, hugging, and/or handing tissues. I agree to let the member sharing story have whatever feelings they experience while sharing. I am not here to solve other's problems. I will not interrogate, try to fix others, or tell members what they need to do. I will avoid minimizing, ignoring or explaining the harm..
7. **Avoid over-sharing:** I will practice the skill of silence when appropriate and will limit my sharing so others have a chance to share. I agree to avoid sharing my own story when responding to someone else's story.
8. **Take responsibility:** I will invest in and take care of myself physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. If I need assistance, I am aware that some of the resources available to me are my Learning Circle leader, Care Team and Behavioral Health Services. Southcentral Foundation employees also have access to the Employee Assistance Program.

9. **Limits of confidentiality:** I understand that my Learning Circle leaders agree to keep stories and information confidential. I also understand that my Learning Circle Leaders are mandatory reporters and have limitations to confidentiality.
- a. Learning Circle Leaders will have to report if:
 - i. There is reason to believe you are at imminent risk of harming yourself or someone else.
 - ii. There is reasonable suspicion of harm to a child and/ or reasonable belief of harm to a vulnerable adult, such as abandonment, exploitation, neglect, or physical or sexual abuse.
 - iii. A child is witnessing or experiencing domestic violence in the home.
 - iv. Otherwise required by law to release information.
10. **Availability and attendance:** I understand that being on time and having regular attendance shows respect for all Learning Circle members. If I cannot attend, I will let one of my Learning Circle Leaders know. I will tell the Learning Circle, should I decide to leave, the reasons for my departure in order to avoid misunderstanding. If I do not show up, I understand the Care Team may contact me to ensure my safety.
11. **Learning Circle agreement:** By my verbal acknowledgement, I am indicating that I understand these statements and am committed to following the guidelines. I will support my Learning Circle members to keep this agreement. I give permission to other Learning Circle Members to hold me accountable to this agreement.