

LEARNING CIRCLE

GROUP COMMUNICATION TOOL

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Anyone can lead a learning circle with the right support and guidance.
- Avoid sitting around a conference table; a physical barrier can set up a psychological barrier.
- Begin with a question that is open, without blame or judgment, and is not leading the team to a prescribed solution.
- Have a talking stick or other item to identify who has the floor to speak.
- If pressed for a time a one-word check-in or a brief stand up learning circle can be effective.

SAMPLE LEARNING CIRCLE QUESTIONS

- What's your favorite time of the day and why?
- "I know it's going to be a good day when I get to work and..."
- What is teamwork to you?
- What is one thing you could teach the rest of us?
- Share one idea for how the elders can be involved in the care and life of the home?
- Describe the last time you had a great shift report huddle.
- What does "real home" mean to you?
- Share a story about the last time you felt empowered.
- In one-word or one sentence describe what you are feeling about ____.

WHAT IS A LEARNING CIRCLE?

- A structured time of group sharing led by a facilitator.
- Opportunity for quieter people to speak and for more talkative people to listen.
- Safe space to share ideas, problem solve, and enhance relationships.

WHY USE A LEARNING CIRCLE?

Learning Circles help to...

- Develop relationships
- Create a sense of community within an organization
- Build trust among team members and between leadership and staff members
- Staff empowerment
- Problem solve
- Share information
- Emotional check-in
- Educate team members on a topic or as a follow up from an education session

HOW TO DO A LEARNING CIRCLE:

- Sit/stand in a circle.
- An open-ended curious question is posed to the group. Someone volunteers to be the first speaker.
- No interruptions when someone is talking – give your full attention to the speaker.
- Proceed to left or right of volunteer. Each person speaks in the order of the circle.
- Individuals may pass. Once the circle is completed, those who passed will again be invited to share.
- The circle is then open for cross-talk.