

Project I4 Summer Learning Exchange Curriculum PROTOCOL

INNER CIRCLE OUTER CIRCLE (ICOC)

Other protocols available on iel.org/protocols

Note: All protocols have multiple origins. The strength of a protocol is in the ability of facilitators or planners to adjust/revise for use in your context.

<http://www.nsrfharmony.org> is a good source of multiple protocols for school.

The INNER CIRCLE OUTER CIRCLE (ICOC) process can be used in a LEARNING EXCHANGE for either learning stories about others or for academic/learning purposes – using ICOC for academic and social-emotional outcomes. The ICOC responds to learning theory in several ways: according to Vygotsky, this provides time for intersubjectivity or talking to one another and listening carefully to a peer; in its academic format, it is kinesthetic offering multiple modes of representation (movement and visual + interpersonal). Finally, it offers a solid way for equitable discourse – for SEL or academic purposes – as all persons are active speakers and listeners.

Today, we will have 5 circles of 18 persons each (9 persons in IC and 8-9 persons in OC). We have marked the circles on the floor with masking tape. We are passing out a small piece of paper with your designation and there will be a facilitator at each circle.

- Full Group Facilitator: LYNDA
- Facilitators are: Ken, Janette, Wil, Larry, and Annice
- These persons who will participate in ICOC circles: Lisa, Lisa, Jim, Steve, Paul, Natalie, Gloria, Jessica, Charity, and Shawn
- Kwesi, Helen, Matt, and Maenette will choose a circle to listen to and collect evidence.

STEP ONE: Typically, no more than 10-12 people stand or are seated in ***inner circle***. Then 10-12 persons are seated or stand in the ***outer circle***, facing a person in the inner circle. These pairs may have been designated prior to ICOC and had conversations OR this may be the first time they are talking to each other.

IF YOU HAVE MORE PEOPLE, MAKE SEVERAL CIRCLES. If possible, the facilitator can use masking tape to design the IC and OC on the floor of the space you are using.

For this ICOC, we are using the same question for both IC and OC; the OC persons do NOT move. In other forms of the ICOC, the outer circle persons may move and respond to IC questions that are different for each IC person.

Designate the **prompt** for participants based on the purpose and/or the overall content of the LE. The facilitator models a response to the prompt for the inner circle. The **prompt** for BOTH PERSONS IS:

_____. The facilitator keeps time and rings a chime when the time is up and shifts the group to second person. See script below

SCRIPT

Facilitator: *"In this ICOC process, we are focusing on _____ because _____. I am going to explain the process and then _____ and I will model the process for you. There are two key things you can pay attention to: how the listener holds space for the other person, not commenting, but perhaps using nonverbals and exhibiting empathy and how the person in the telling the story constructs his/her narrative.*

If sitting, please sit knee to knee and eye to eye (Note: amend this direction depending on cultural norms of space and looking people in the eye). If standing stand looking at each other.

*Each person has two minutes to respond to the prompt and we use the appreciative or constructivist listening process. The person listening does not interrupt or ask questions but can respond empathetically with nod or nonverbals. If the storyteller/speaker is silent, both are silent. Usually that means the speaker is thinking. The listener is **holding space** for the other person to tell a story. Then the second person has two minutes. Then you will have two minutes of conversation. At the end, the inner circle person represents the stories of both self and partner to the group and the outer circle person sits closely to the IC person to again hold space for that person. I will give more directions for that after we finish the first part. "*

The norms we will follow for the storytelling are listen with empathy and observe double confidentiality – do not repeat your partner’s story to someone else or ask your partner about it unless he/she brings it up. While we will share stories, we are sharing general themes of the stories, not the details.

Round One: Start with inner circle story.

Round Two: For Round Two, when the outer circle person tells the story, the inner circle person listens with an ear toward remembering as the inner circle person will represent the story of the outer circle person as well as his or her own after the story.

STEP TWO:

Facilitator: *“The inner circle person is now responsible for representing both stories to the larger circle group. Inner circle person, you have 30 seconds to clarify anything they need to about the outer circle story.*

Inner circle persons, please turn your chairs around and form an inner circle facing in. Outer circle, huddle near and hold space for your partner so you can hear the stories. We do this because we are often in our work called on to represent a story of someone else or have our story represented. This gives us an experience in doing that and understanding what that feels like from both sides”.

Directions to inner circle: *You have one minute to generally represent your story and the story of your partner. You should report the stories in general – what was the same or different? What themes were a part of both stories?*

STEP THREE (OPTIONAL): Group discusses what they heard that is significant. Everyone does not have to respond. You can do a more formal analysis of stories after, but not necessary.

STEP FOUR: Debrief the process.

- *“Outer circle, what was it like to have your story represented?”*
- *“Inner circle, what was it like to represent your and someone else’s story?”*

Finish by saying: *“Assume double confidentiality in the stories you told. Do not tell your partner’s story to anyone else and only talk to your partner about the story if the partner brings it up again with you”.*

