Talking Circles

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Talking Circles

“The more that children are given the chance to exercise their imagination with respect and discipline, rather than rules and preconceived ideas, the more they will be able to embrace and accept themselves and thus begin to acknowledge the vast diversity of the world around themselves” (Simms 2009, p 8).
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Objectives:

- Methodology and Framework
- Application of the talking circles process
- Summary and Questions
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Methodology

“Talking Circles can be used to build relationships between adults and children and between children. They are based on thinking about learning as a process of self-awareness and community building, and providing opportunities for communicating with children about their ideas and perspectives.” (Cartmel & Casley, 2014, p.67)
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Through a guided conversational process children learn to look within themselves to see their inherent capabilities and current reality, hear from others so that barriers between self and others dissolve and new perspectives are understood, and make connections enabling them to make positive change for themselves and their community.
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The overall framework for the Talking Circles comes from the U-process a methodology for addressing highly complex challenges, solving complex problems and realising opportunities. (Scharmer, 2005)
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Scharmer, 2009

1. CO-INITIATING:
   Build Common Intent stop and listen to
   others and to what life calls you to do

2. CO-SENSING:
   Observe, Observe, Observe go to the
   places of most potential and listen with your
   mind and heart wide open

3. PRESENCING:
   Connect to the Source of Inspiration, and Will
   go to the place of silence and allow the inner knowing to emerge

4. CO-CREATING:
   Prototype the New in living examples to
   explore the future by doing

5. CO-EVOLVING:
   Embody the New in Ecosystems that
   facilitate seeing and acting from the whole
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The U-process was developed through intensive learning-by-doing in a range of settings around the world. The process is characterised by ancient wisdom and systems thinking where shared learning spaces for individuals are created in order for the group to build relationships and make the necessary connections to share what each other knows so that together they can act as a ‘whole’ to co-create new opportunities and innovative ideas that address their most complex challenges. (Scharmer, 2005)
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The foundational capacity of the U is LISTENING

- Listening to others
- Listening to oneself and;
- Listening to what emerges from the collective
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PHASE ONE
- Designed for each individual to have a deeper understanding of their own worldview and to have exposure to other ways of perceiving the world

PHASE TWO
- Designed to give individual’s a sense of belonging

PHASE THREE
- Designed to allow for opportunities to co-create change for themselves and their community
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This type of learning is also based on the idea that learning requires action where a cycle of reflection and action needs to take place for the group to create knowledge and act together out of their individual and common experiences.
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The Facilitator

- brings knowledge of the process and the framework
- assists in building the relationships
- complements the phases of the process with social and emotional skill development
- acts as a coach and mentor as the group creates its own energy and momentum
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Tools
- Art
- Stories
- Drama
- Video-taping
- Audio-recording
- Mind mapping
- Interviews
- Conversations
- Photographs
Guided Conversation

Why a Focused Conversation?

- is a natural way of processing life experiences, we observe what is going on around us, we react to it internally, we use past experience and cognitive ability to make meaning of it and we draw out the implications for action (Nelson cited in Stanfield, 2000)
Focused Conversation

How does it work?
The method uses four stages of awareness shifting the scope of the inquiry from individual reflection on life to a shared insight of a group.
Focused Conversation

The framework for designing the questions:

Objective – questions about the facts
Reflective – questions about feelings
Interpretive – questions about meaning
Decisional – questions to elicit resolution, decisions
Action/Reflection Model

- Who are we?
- What happened in the session? For the children/for yourself?
- Why did it happen?
- How do I feel about what happened?
- What will I do next as a result of what happened?
What did the children tell us?

- It’s calm
- I feel less stressed
- I have made more friends
- I don’t get into trouble anymore at school
- It’s ok to cry here
- We get to see people from a different perspective
- People like me here
- I can trust people here
- We can talk about our problems
- We can share our feelings
- Share about our families
- We can get tips when we are having hard times
What did the adults tell us?

- Children want to speak about important people in their lives
- The relationship between the children and us as adults grew stronger
- The relationships between the children grew stronger
- Children with various special needs benefited greatly from this environment
- Children who come to Talking Circles find it’s a safe place to talk about things that affect them
- It shows the children’s capability to listen, take notice of others, add their own thoughts and reply to others questions or statements
References


