OUR MEETING IS HELD ON NATIVE LAND

The Home operates programs on the unceded territories of the Munsee Lenape, the Wabanaki Confederacy, the Massachusett, and the Wampanoag Tribes

USDAC.US/NATIVELAND

WHY GIVE A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

A land acknowledgement is a small and impactful gesture, to start decolonizing our gathering spaces.

Naming place aligns with Native wisdom. Many Indigenous nations follow protocols before any gathering, opening with prayer and intentions that connect them to the world and cosmos.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

By recognizing Indigenous stewardship of the land, air, water we live and call home, we combat the invisibility and erasure faced by Native peoples.

At the root of acknowledgment is the truth you're grateful for Indigenous Nations continued stewardship of these places of power.

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Mindful Moment

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

There is a conversation that only the people in this room right now can have. Find it.
- aidrienne maree brown

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

THE HOME

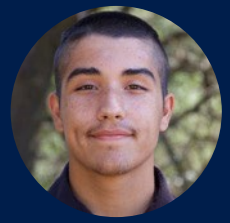
THE HOME

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

BETTER, BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR KIDS

THE HOME

THE HOME



The Transformative Power of Restorative Circles

March 2025 | ACRC

Romeissa Selmane, MS, OTR/L, she/her
Occupational Therapist

Naomi Ruth Thompson, J.D., she/her
Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Blanca Valentin, LMHC, she/ella
Trainer and Consultant, Workforce Learning and Development

Elizabeth Woodruff, LICSW, she/her
Senior Clinical Trainer, Workforce Learning and Development

Now Open!

ACRC's 69th Annual Conference

Intentional Practice: Aligning Innovation and Expertise to Meet the Holistic Needs of Children

March 24-27, 2025

VISION STATEMENT

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

To create an inclusive environment where everyone's identities, experiences, unique knowledge and perspectives are valued. Our hope is that learners leave trainings with increased confidence about who they are in the work and have further developed their voice and skills to support youth, families and each other.

Training Agreements

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I will:

1. Explore my own biases and identify my assumptions
2. Be a mindful listener, and listen to understand
3. Be present
4. Ask questions and stay curious
5. Pay attention to and use the pronouns shared by others
6. “Speak from I” - my own experience/perspective
7. Consider the intent vs. impact of my words on others and others on me
8. Assume best intentions
9. Go easy on myself, it’s okay to make mistakes
10. Take space / Make space
11. Take the lessons, leave the details

Plan for the day

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

Large group content

MORNING CIRCLE

Lunch

Large group content

AFTERNOON CIRCLE

Closing Ceremony

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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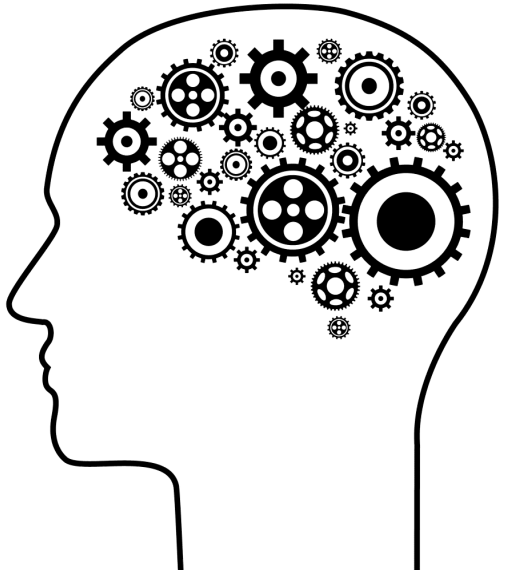
- Experience Circle practice and understand the Elements of Circle
- Discuss the different types of Power and how they relate to Circle Practice, Trauma-Informed Care, and Youth-driven practice
- Understand Circle as an anti-oppressive and transformative practice
- Discuss with colleagues how Circle practice might enrich, challenge, and grow your program



Origins Of Circle Practice

- **Deeply rooted in the traditional practices of indigenous people**
- **Recognizing and honoring this gift includes *Land Acknowledgment***
- **Talking Circles, Peacemaking Circles, Healing Circles**
- **Restorative & Transformative Circle Practice**

Elements of Circle

- Guardian/Circle Keeper
- ***Talking Piece***
- **Centerpiece**
- ***Agreements***
- ***Values***
- Welcome/Opening
- Check-In
- Discussion
- Check-out

Circle Practice includes:

Intentionally speaking

Attentively listening

Storytelling

Collective responsibility

Nurturing connections

Morning Circle

Please find the Circle with the color that corresponds to the number on your name tag.

As you transition to Circle, place your sticky note on the wall marked, “Hopes for the Training”

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Lunch:
is on your own

We'll see you back at 1pm – in the large group space!

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“The people closest to the pain, should be the closest to the power.”

– Ayanna Pressley

Please join us in the seats at the front of the room

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

About the Home for Little Wanderers

- The Home is the oldest child welfare organization in the country, founded in 1799
- In Massachusetts, New York, and New Hampshire
- A 1000-employee non-profit organization serving 15,000 youth from birth to 26 years old and their families
- Serves youth and families at multiple levels of care: Community Service Agencies, Family Resource Centers, Outpatient and School-based therapy, intensive home-based services, and Residential treatment
- Work with youth and families who are living with the effects of individual and systemic trauma
- *Began keeping Circles in various parts of the agency in the 2010s*

Circle Practice at the Home

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

- Began incorporating Circle practice in 2011
- Multiple programs within the Home keep Circles
  - within staffing teams to build community and mitigate burnout
  - with families to center the voice of parents and their children throughout the treatment process

Circle Practice with employees

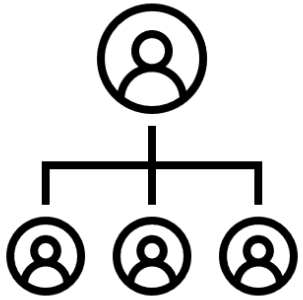
- The Home's Impact Corps
- Diversity Committee
- Restorative Practice Work Group
- Multi-day Circle Practice training
- Circles within Teams
- Agency-wide Circles

Power Literacy: Dimensions of Power

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

Power Over

- Linked to domination and force
- Enables one individual or a group to make the decisions that affect others, and to enforce control
- Either toxic or healthy based on: the intent of it, the impact, and who it benefits

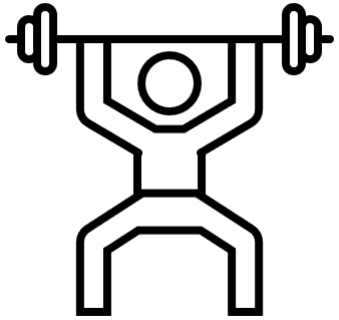


Power With

- Manifested in influence
- The ability to suggest and be listened to, to begin something and have others join in that action

Power-from-within

- Personal Power, our mastery of tasks and unfolding abilities
- The ability to make choices and take actions that positively affect our lives
- Can be attitudes and guiding beliefs



Types of Justice

Punitive: What rule or law was broken? How should we punish the person who broke it?

Restorative: Who was harmed and what do they need? How can the person who did the harm make things as right as possible?

Transformative: What are the conditions that allowed the harm to happen, and how do we change these conditions so that the harm is impossible in the future?

Responses to Harm

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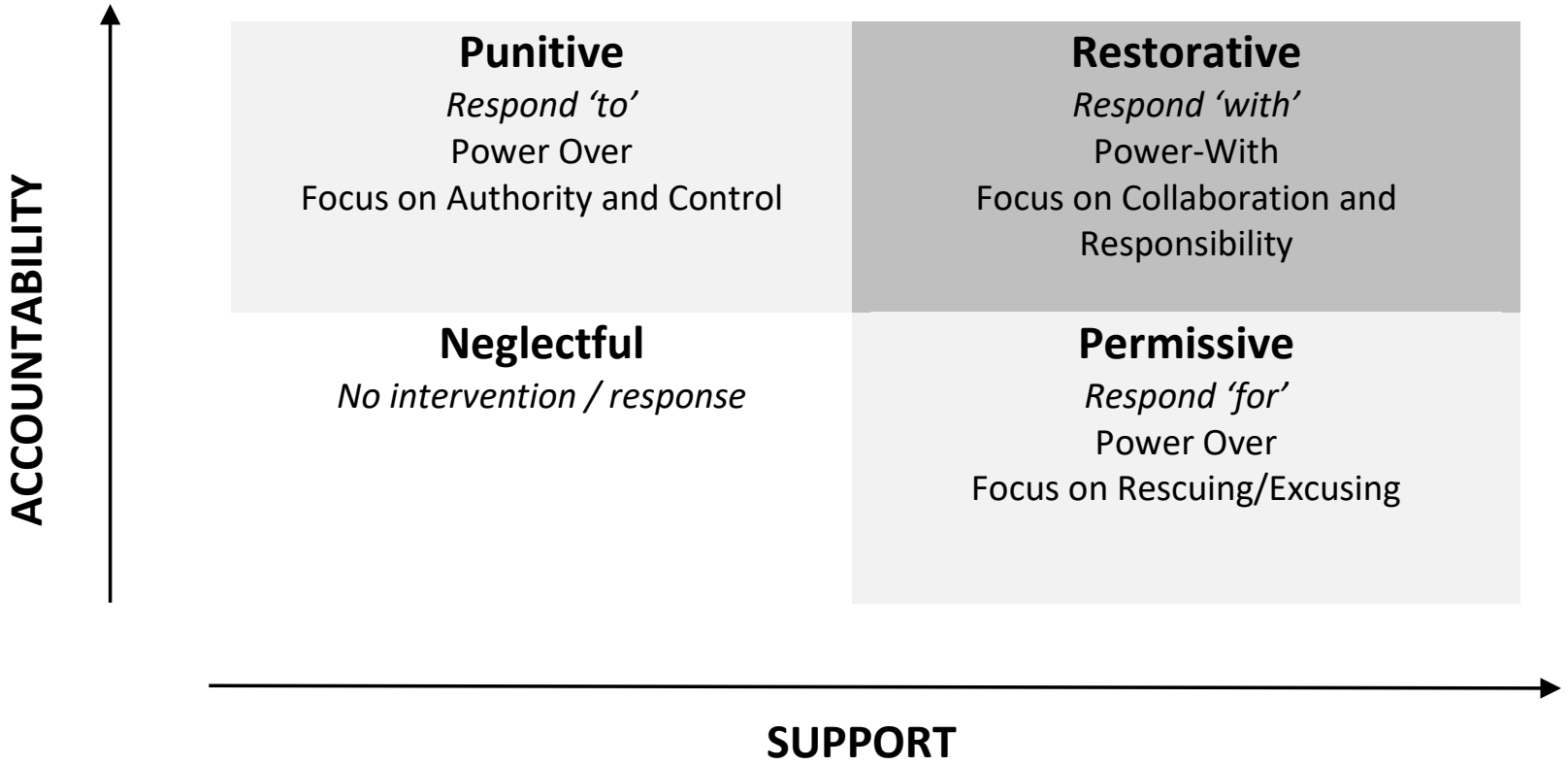

Transformative Response:

What are the conditions that allowed the harm to happen?

Individual Reflection

Think about a time when you experienced harm. What did you need in order to heal?

Think about a time when you cause harm. What supports did you need to make things as right as possible?

Circle

“Circle is different from out there. In Circle, everyone is equal. Whenever you have the talking piece, you get to say what you want and everyone else listens. It’s a place to be honest, if you need to cry you can cry. It’s powerful.”

- Youth Co-keeper

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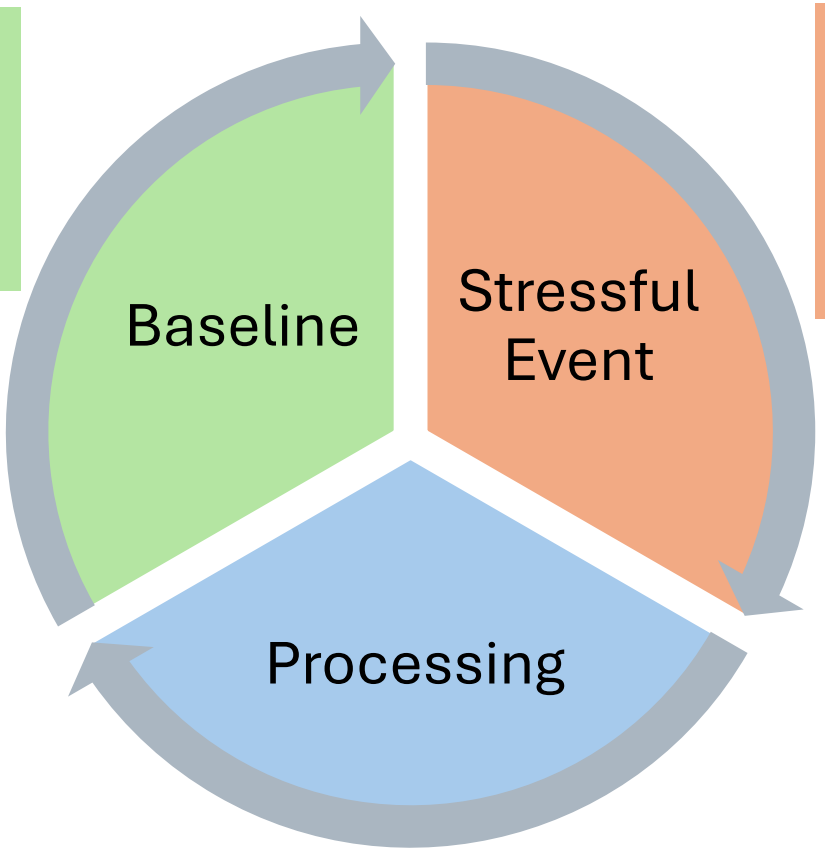
Storytelling in Community

- Builds empathy and strengthens relationships
- Allows us to see each other in our full humanity



- Decreases bias
- Increases my ability to interpret someone else's words and actions in a positive way, even under stress

- Having a voice to tell my story and be listened to helps heal the traumatic effects of a stressful incident
- Increases awareness that I am not alone

Listen, stories go in circles. They don’t go in straight lines. So, it helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and stories between stories and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. And part of the finding is the getting lost. And when you’re lost, you really start to open up and listen.

– Coming from a great distance by Fischer, Albert Greenberg, and Naomi Newman

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Q and A

"One thing I like about Circle is that it's even – it's a form where everyone's ideas, thoughts, and beliefs are respected, it's a nonjudgmental space… when you feel that, when you see that people are actually listening to everything you're saying, you feel that one-ness with people. Even if they don't agree, you know that they're there with you… Anyone, all ages, all genders, the diversity… everyone comes together and shares, finds commonalities, finds that their thoughts are valued."

- Direct Care Counselor, participant

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

I believe that with time it must become an incredible pleasure to be able to be honest, expect to be whole, and to know that we are in a community that will hold us accountable and change with us.

- aidrienne maree brown

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

Thank you!

Please be in touch!

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