



Heart of Hope: A Guide for Using Peacemaking Circles to Develop Emotional Literacy, Promote Healing & Build Healthy Relationships

Carolyn Boyes-Watson, Kay Pranis

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Heart of Hope provides specific formats for conducting effective Circles around developing emotional literacy and building healthy relationships. The book is being used extensively in schools by teachers and administrators as well as in health care facilities and elder abuse programs.

"This resource guide is designed for practitioners who work with youth, young adults, and their families within social services, violence/pregnancy prevention, education, and positive youth development programs. It offers a flexible set of tools that can be applied to a range of settings and for a variety of purposes. We believe that any caring and responsible individual can learn to use these practices safely, creatively, and effectively:

- * the peacemaking circle;
- * the practice of mindfulness/meditation; and
- * exercises and concepts derived from Power Source, an emotional awareness/emotional literacy program for at-risk youth and young adults.

"The peacemaking circle is the core practice of the guide. In the Heart of Hope (HOH), the peacemaking circle provides the environment where participants develop emotional awareness and emotional literacy and learn to practice mindfulness. Users learn how to plan, create, and facilitate the peacemaking circle as a safe place for shared dialogue. The resource guide provides 50 step-by-step model circles. Each model circle offers activities for building and deepening relationships as well as for developing emotional awareness and emotional literacy. It also includes easy-to-use exercises in breathing, simple yoga, and meditation.

"As a foundational approach, the HOH has broad applications within adolescent services, child welfare, education and schools, and all kinds of prevention programs."

"The Heart of Hope approach described in this Guidebook is a wonderful resource for social workers striving to build relationships with adolescents. As a collection of tools for engagement, dialogue, and inquiry, the Heart of Hope Resource Guide is a direct practice approach to connecting with adolescents in ways that increase their emotional awareness, their understanding of healthy relationships, and empowers them to be leaders in their own lives."

- John M. Vogel, MSW, LCSW, Associate Director
Massachusetts Child Welfare Institute, Department of Children and Families

"Heart of Hope is like instant Circle: everything one needs to start the conversation is in that book except for a talking piece. And I suppose, in a pinch, one could use the book as a talking piece too! Carolyn and Kay provide whole Circles with openings, closings, check-in questions, discussion questions, art-infused activities, and explanations. The chapters provide a sequence of topics that would lead any community of young adults (or adults) through a process of inner and outer discovery, both as an individual and as a member of the community. This book is a gift."

- Nancy Riestenberg

Minnesota Department of Education and author of Circle in the Square

"Heart of Hope is a foundational guide for developing, transforming, and nurturing healthy relationships in families, classrooms, and communities. With the peacemaking circle process at its core, this resource provides a step-by-step guide to enhance and deepen emotional literacy, healing, and mindfulness. Through these practices, each of us deepens our relationship with our self and others. In doing so, we learn how to put our best self forward, particularly when life gets challenging. Heart of Hope will be a central guide for parents, teachers, and community leaders wanting to be the change they want to see in the world. They will be leading the way for the next generation, as heart and hope are the greatest gifts we can give our children."

Brenda Morrison, Director

Centre for Restorative Justice, Simon Fraser University and author of Restoring Safe School Communities.

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