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# Helpful Circle Tips

**A Few Suggestions for Healthy Circle**

By Ann Smith

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# Circle Tips

## A Few Ingredients for Healthy Circle

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*“If we can stay with the tension of opposites long enough -  
- sustain it, be true to it -  
We can sometimes become vessels  
within which the divine opposites come together  
and give birth to a new reality.”*

*--Marie-Louise von Franz, Jungian Scholar (1917-1998)*

### Tip #1 Silence

What I love about being in a sacred circle is not only the deep conversations but also those moments of silence. My world, like so many of us, has information overload. I love silence to open the circle. This is especially good when in a business setting. After you have introduced yourself and the purpose of the gathering, call for silence so that each person is given these precious moments to relax and become fully present. When the conversation becomes argumentative or two or more are talking at the same time, call for silence. I ring a soft bell before and after the silence so everyone knows when it starts and ends. It is also a great way to close the circle.

### Tip #2: Leave Your Ego Outside the Circle

My group process mentor taught me two important rules:

1. The most important people are the ones you are with right now.
2. Leave your ego outside the door.
3. I have added a third rule: Spirit is in charge.

When we give our full attention to facilitating a Circle process and put others first, the ego stays outside of the circle. This is done by: listening without judgment and standing in the shoes of another allowing for silences giving everyone the opportunity to speak and holding my own thoughts to myself until it is my turn fo-

ocusing on the common ground and honoring differences allowing for consensus trusting that what is meant to happen will happen.

Control of people, places and things is an illusion; it is ego interfering with reality. Spirit is in charge so let go and let Spirit. It is time for women to learn and model healthy communication and mutual respect.

### Tip #3: Shared Leadership

Instead of assigning tasks, list them and have the planning circle choose those that they want to accomplish. When we organize around what we like to do the energy stays positive and the tasks get done. The Canadian women's leadership circle did this in planning their Gather The Women event in Canada as well as the planning circle of Gather The Women of South Florida. It works!

### Tip #4 Opposing Comments

What is the optimum way to handle when there are two or more opposing comments from members of the circle?

When you have two or more opposing comments from members of the circle let them reside together in the center without taking sides.

The Circle is the place where opposites can meet. It is the place where we can come together and transform opposite positions and thoughts by allowing all thoughts offered by circle members to dwell without judgment.

When an opposing thought is brought into the circle call for silence. The center of the circle is a vast container of space and time that can hold opposites. When they are not debated and allowed to reside in silence the Oneness of our thoughts will unfold. You can move on to other topics while letting this stay in the center.

When we shift our perspective from dualistic thinking to knowing that all perspectives lead to a greater truth we live into the magic of Circle.

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*As a circle mentor, educator, consultant, professional speaker, and circle facilitator, Ann Smith is committed to the Circle Process. She has created circle leadership programs, BEING GREEN, and is a trainer of trainers. Ann is the author of [Stories from the Circle](#), [WomenPrints](#) & 'Dear Ann' Column for [Peace X Peace](#), co-editor of [Women's Uncommon20Prayers](#), and a life-long advocate for the empowerment of women*