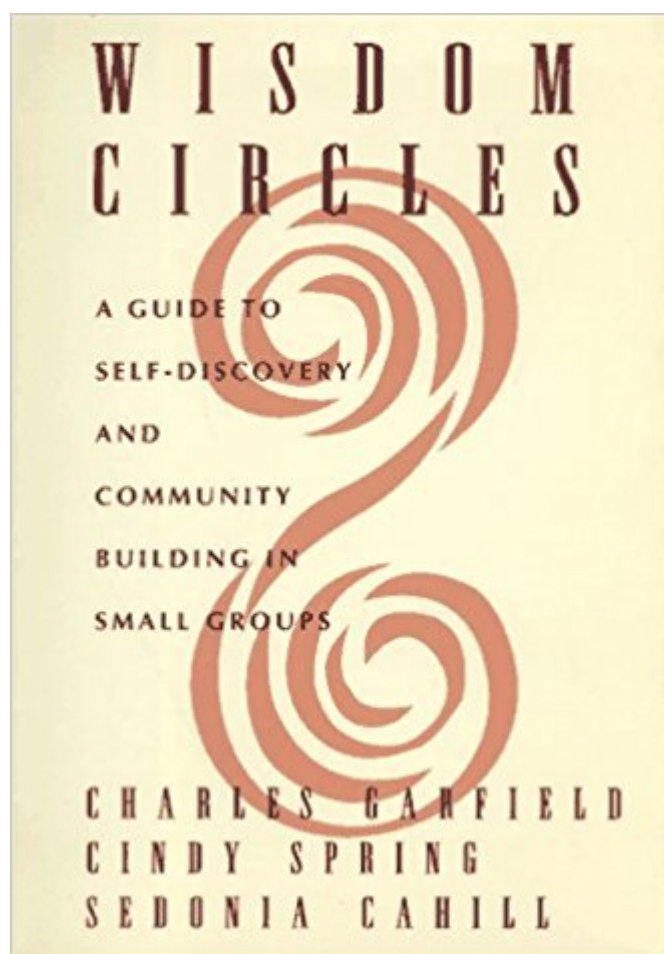


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# Wisdom Circles: A Guide To Self Discovery And Community Building In Small Groups



## Synopsis

Gathering in small group circles to heal, share, and celebrate has moved from new age workshops and 12-step programs into the mainstream. This practical, inspirational guide shows readers how to use the power of the circle to effect changes in their lives and in their communities Targeted print ads .

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

At a time of increasing loneliness and individualism, *Wisdom Circles* provides an outline for creating your own spiritual, social, and/or consciousness-raising group. The authors--Charles Garfield, psychologist and the author of *Peak Performers*; Sedonia Cahill, director of a group that helps people become more spiritual; and Cindy Spring, founder of the *Wisdom Circles* organization--describe a structured setting in which people can meet regularly for whatever purpose they choose: getting to know each other better, sharing personal and social concerns, or just offering mutual support and healing. You'll find guidelines to help participants create rituals to begin and end a session, agree on a goal or discussion subject for each meeting, create a safe and confidential environment, and allow each member to "co-facilitate" the gathering. There's also information on dealing with problematic members, such as those with psychological problems or those who are too narcissistic or rigid in their beliefs to participate in an open, wide-ranging dialogue. Whether you're looking for ways to improve an existing group or are considering starting your own gathering of supportive friends, *Wisdom Circles* will help you get started; the group itself

will tell you where to go from there.

The idea that a group is more than a sum of individuals is a social science axiom, and this book offers a New Age exploration of that premise. Rooted in gathering traditions, wisdom circles are discussion groups oriented to healing, sharing, celebrating, and other purposes. With his collaborators, Garfield (psychiatry, Univ. of California, San Francisco) outlines the "ten constants" that form the essence of wisdom circles. They provide guidance on how to start and sustain such groups, along with rich case study material on those involving AIDS patients, men, and corporate clients. Some readers might be put off by the book's jargon, e.g., talking stick, and no empirical evidence is presented to show that circles accomplish their lofty aims. However, the material is well organized and applies to diverse circumstances and groups. Inspirational yet practical, this book is highly recommended for public libraries and collections serving social service and other group leaders. Antoinette Brinkman, Southwest Indiana Mental Health Ctr., Evansville Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I was so pleased to get the Wisdom Circles book. We will be using the concept for some upcoming meetings. Now I have the information I was seeking. Evonne S.

This is a practical handbook about creating a compassionate and safe community where listening and authenticity happen in a gentle way. Whether you call this gathering a peacemaking circle, talking circle or restorative circle, you will find this to be a thoughtful and complete guidebook to circle keeping. Gathering in Circles is a practice of the ages, so updates to using a wisdom circle aren't as necessary as a comprehensive understanding of them. This book provides that.

Our UU church is starting Wisdom Circles in the fall, and I didn't know much about them until I read this book. The author lays out 10 "commandments" regarding how to do Wisdom Circles. They are an approach to small group ministry that would work for any denomination, including non-Christian groups. Wisdom Circles can also be created around any topic that a small group of people wish to explore deeply. This is a book I will keep and read again.

This book is really lovely. I have wanted to start a healing circle in my community for quite some time. My therapist gave me this book and then I bought a copy to have as an extra. Highly recommended.

Wisdom Circles is a practical and informative handbook about creating, facilitating, and sustaining community circles. I highly recommend this book.

Glad to get a copy in good shape of this reference book.

Delivery was fast and packaging was adequate. I am planning on taking it with me on my vacation this year to read, but just looking at the table of contents I was impressed.

Wisdom Circles was written, the authors say, to help people call a circle--"a safe space within which to be authentic, trusting, caring, and open to change" The book offers "Constants" for circle work. When we come to a circle, we honor its processes and purposes as if they are sacred; we create a "safe container" and a "collective center" (transforming "I" into "we"); we speak and listen from the heart, with gratitude; we invite silence; we commit to and empower one another through a continuing relationship. Wisdom Circles also helps us to improve our practice of circle work by offering ideas for opening and closing rituals, sustaining the process, and meeting challenges. If you are facilitating or working in a circle, you will find this book both helpful and inspiring. by Susan Wittig Albert for [...] reviewing books by, for, and about women

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