



Three Ideas for Starting and Maintaining a Circle

by Justine Toms

Invariably when I tell someone that I've been meeting in a circle with the same people for more than three decades, they ask, "How can I have that in my life?" They are infected by my enthusiasm and are eager to hear my stories of the many ways circle has supported and changed my life for the better. Often, people who are new to this energetic feel overwhelmed about how to start a circle of their own. Taking those first steps are the biggest steps. But in truth, they are really baby steps. I find it is always the best to go for what is close to you.

Three-step advice:

1. Make the commitment to yourself and write it down
2. Put out the call
3. Be consistent

Step One: Set forth a clear intention.

Years ago I learned from Rev. Mary Manin Morrissey that everything is born twice. First it is born in the imagination and then it is manifested into the world. In the beginning one must be very clear about the intention of starting a circle. You will not know all the details, but you need to be clear in the overall intention of meeting regularly and grow into what I call, "friends of the heart." Instead of saying, "Having a circle in my life is a good idea." or "Yes, I'm going to create a circle in my life," say, "It's as good as done, I'm going to make it so no matter what." This is the kind of initiating energy you must create. It isn't hard work; it is having a powerful expectation that your life will be well served for you to meet regularly with others who are willing to be in their fullness and authenticity. Write it down! This anchors it into the world of manifestation.

Step Two: Put out the call.

After you have made the inner commitment you need to put up your sail and catch the wind, tune into other people who want to travel this breeze with you. It doesn't take a lot of people to begin with. In fact one or two others will be fine. There is no complex magic about it. Talk to a friend about this idea. You may feel awkward at first because you haven't done it; be assured that there is a field of energy holding you. As humans we have been circling since the dawn of history. Check out books and web resources that describe what sitting in circle is all about. If people turn you down to begin with, do not be discouraged. Trust that the perfect people will begin to show up. Remember even two people can make a circle. It is my experience that if two people meet on a regular basis, using circle principles, it acts as an attractor for others.

Step Three: Meet on a consistent basis.

Put your circle time in your calendar as an important event. Keep this commitment to yourself, just as you would a doctor's or dental appointment. Show up even if you are the only one. When someone wants to make an appointment with you and you look in your calendar and see that it will conflict with your circle time, say, "No, I'm sorry, I can't make it at that time, can you select another time?" There will be times when you feel too tired to go. Go anyway. Push through. Afterwards, you'll be truly delighted you went. As you respect this sacred time, it will respect you and bring you many gifts. Being sporadic in your meeting time will create a leaky container. Meeting consistently builds a powerful and vitalizing bond.

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