

# Women's Sanctuary Circle

## How to play?

The Women's Sanctuary Game can be played by any one group of women. It is a self-guiding game, which means that one of you can take up the role of facilitator, but is also actively participating.

Before you start inviting friends or colleagues, please take a moment to read about the guiding principles and some preparation tips and tricks.

## Preparation and materials

The game can be played anywhere and anytime, whenever you feel like it. That's the whole point! However, a little preparation can help you make the circle a even greater success. We gladly share some of our top tips below.

For a **location**, we recommend you pick a quiet space, where you can sit comfortably. We played the game outdoors on the beach, but you can also play it in a living room and even in a office space (but take some more time to set the stage, so that people can feel relaxed and free from work).

A comfortable **number of participants** varies between 4 women and a maximum of 12. This allows for every woman to participate actively and share her story and reflections.

The game can be easily created by you, with items that most of you will know where to find. This is our list:

- Paper, markers, colors, pens – to create the cards
- A few stones/pine cones/shells/feathers – just pick whatever is available in your surroundings
- A scarf or plaid or other materials to create a circle on the floor/ground in which you put down the cards and other items

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- **Circle centerpiece** (a candle, a couple of round stones, something that is meaningful to you) to put in the center of the circle
- *Optional:* talking piece to guide the conversation (we used a simply decorated stick)



## Getting started – instructions before you begin

1. Participants are invited to sit in a large circle (mark circle on ground with ribbon/crayon)
2. One of the participants takes a moment to share the guiding principles
3. The activity consists of an opening, circle activity and closing
4. After a short opening, in which you read an opening text and share the guidelines, the person on the left hand side of the facilitator picks a card and reads the text/question /quote/instruction to everyone.
5. After reading the text aloud, allow for a moment of silence.
6. Most cards are an invitation to share to the person who picks them. Some are an invitation to the group.
7. Green cards invite everyone to do a simple movement/exercise together
8. Participation and sharing is always voluntary and so you can always pass on a card and move on to the next one. Try to share in wholeness and not only from your mind.
9. Continue with the game by picking cards until either everyone had the chance to answer at least one card, you feel that you have played long enough or you reach a previously set time (allow 15 minutes for closing)

## The game contents

When we created the Women's Sanctuary Circle Game, we always envisioned distributing it freely around the world. The materials on this page allow you to get started with a basic circle.

The game consists of an opening and closing, and several categories of cards. On the following pages you will find a short selection of each, to get you started. Feel free to copy and use them. We only ask that you respect our copyright on the game, by sharing where you found it.

## Opening meditation

This mediation is the start of the game, right after the guiding principles have been shared.

*Dear sisters, we will now start with the Sanctuary Circle. Before we pick the first card, let us take a moment to feel comfortable in our bodies. If you feel comfortable, close our eyes. Take a few deep breaths and bring your attention to the present moment in this circle.*

*Dear sisters, we have come together for the Women's Sanctuary Circle.*

***This activity is for every woman who wants***

- *to celebrate her wholeness and feminine energy*
- *to find belonging and connection*
- *to feel nurtured and to come alive*
- *to step into her authentic power*
- *to honor her inner voice and collective wisdom*
- *to experience the magic of our sisterhood*
- *to follow her dreams and to show her true self to the world*

*The Women's Circle is an invitation. We invite you..*

- *to be present in wholeness*

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- *to slow down and to enjoy*
- *to be seen and to be heard*
- *to listen and to speak from the heart*
- *to be comfortable and to feel free to pass (voluntary)*
- *to honor confidentiality and to trust the process*



## Closing meditation

This closing text can be shared at the end of the game, after everyone has been given the opportunity to share a reflection on the experience.

*Dear Sisters, our time together has come to an end. As we return to our daily lives, may our experiences – like seeds – continue to grow and blossom.*

*Let us continue to celebrate our wholeness, our womanhood and our beloved community.*

*Let us feel embodied and deeply connected with the world. Let us be true to ourselves and gentle to each other.*

*Let us find the courage to be truly free and to believe in the power of our dreams.*

*Let us remember the magic of our sisterhood.*

*And let our lives be a blessing so that we may live up to the hopes of those who came before us.*

*May we pave the way for those who will follow in our footsteps.*

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*As we leave this circle, let us remember that we belong to each other and let us trust that we are ready to go out into the world and show our true selves.*



The game consists of cards in different categories: share & reflect cards, body-mind activities and questions about the seasons of life and generations.

Below you find enough of each to facilitate a Women's Sanctuary Circle. You can also buy an extension package on our website.

## Cards per category

### Feel & Share

- Is there anything you would like to share at this moment?
- Where do you show your authentic feminine power in the world?
- Pick up the shell: Which part of your beautiful self are you keeping from the world?
- What's your story? How do you share your story with the world?
- What makes you come alive?
- Pick up the cone: it's whole and perfect. Share three of your qualities that represent who you are.
- When do you hear your inner voice?

### Reflect & Share

- It's not what you shout out to the world that determines your life. It's what you whisper to yourself that has the most power - Adriane
- She remembered who she was and then the game changed - Lalah Deliah
- Help one another is part of the religion of sisterhood - Louisa May Alcott
- Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. Marianne Williamson
- If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be - Maya Angelou
- Whatever we do to ourselves, we do to the world. Terrarai Trent

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- Femininity is what you show to the world through your actions when you no longer feel like you are not enough - Renee Wade
- You can't fail at walking your own path. However, you can fail to honor it by trying to walk someone else's - Akira Dawn

#### Body-mind activity

- Community: stand in the middle of the circle. The other women make a protective roof with their arms above you.
- Sound bath: Be still, close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you.
- Time in: Where do you sense trust in your body?
- Pick up a shell/cone and notice how it feels in your hand.
- Take off your shoes and socks and feel the earth/sand/grass/floor under your feet.
- Go outside and take 10 deep breaths: How does this feel? What do you smell? What do you hear?

#### Seasons of life questions

- During which season of life did you raise your voice most clearly?
- Which lesson life has taught you so far?
- Are you aware of your monthly energy cycles?
- When did you experience your spring in life?
- When did you experience your summer in life?
- Which season are you in right now?
- Do you appreciate your current season of life?
- Has midlife been calling you?

#### Generations of life questions

- What would you like to tell your mother if she were here?
- What advice would you like to pass on to the next generation?
- What advice did your mother give you that you cherish most?
- How are you living up to the dreams of your ancestors?
- "You are the 5 people you spend most time with" by John Rohn.
- "If I have seen a little further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." by John Salisbury