

Peer Reflection Circle Guide

Peer reflection circles create structured opportunities for individuals to reflect on experiences, discuss challenges, share perspectives, and support one another in a respectful and psychologically safe environment. Reflection circles can help strengthen connection, communication, wellbeing, and meaningful personal development across academic medicine.

Reflection circles may be used with:

- learners and trainees
- research groups
- faculty
- interprofessional teams
- leadership teams
- peer-support or mentorship groups

Before You Begin

Suggested Group Size: 4–8 participants

Suggested Timing: 30–60 minutes

Possible Formats:

- In-person or virtual
- One-time or recurring
- Peer-led or facilitated

Establishing Shared Expectations

Before beginning, encourage the group to discuss shared agreements such as:

- Respect confidentiality and privacy.
- Listen without judgment or interruption.
- Speak from personal experience.
- Avoid pressure to share beyond comfort level.
- Approach differing perspectives with curiosity and respect.
- Focus on reflection and support rather than “fixing” problems.

Check out [“Setting the Tone with Group Agreements”](#)

Opening Check-In

Begin with a brief check-in question:

- What has been taking most of your energy lately?
- What is one word that describes how you are arriving today?
- What is something that has supported your wellbeing recently?
- What is one challenge you have been navigating?

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Reflection Discussion Prompts

Reflection and Self-Awareness

- What experiences have shaped your growth recently?
- What helps you recognize when stress or workload is becoming difficult to manage?
- What hidden expectations or pressures exist within your environment?

Communication and Relationships

- What helps create psychologically safe and supportive team environments?
- How do people in your environment respond to mistakes, uncertainty, or vulnerability?
- What conversations are often difficult to have in medicine?

Meaning, Identity, and Growth

- What types of support have been most helpful during challenging experiences?
- What barriers make it difficult to seek support or ask for help?
- What changes could strengthen wellbeing or connection within your environment?

Closing Reflection

- What is one insight you are taking away from this discussion?
- What is one thing you would like to carry forward?
- What helped you feel supported or connected today?

Optional Facilitator Tips

- Allow silence and reflection time.
- Avoid pressuring participation.
- Redirect problem-solving if discussion becomes advice-heavy.
- Encourage balanced participation across the group.
- Be mindful of emotional distress and available supports if difficult experiences arise.
- Consider follow-up supports or resources when appropriate.

Adapting Reflection Circles

Reflection circles may focus on:

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| • transitions or milestones | • teamwork and culture |
| • emotionally challenging clinical experiences | • wellbeing and sustainable practice |
| • leadership development | • professional identity formation |
| • mentorship and career growth | • research and academic environments |