



# Mentor Circles

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- This model of Mentor Circles™ is based on the book: *One Circle™ – Tapping the Power of Those Who Know You Best* and *Mission Possible™ – Creating a Mission for Work and Life*, both by Maureen F. Fitzgerald, Phd (copyright).
- **1. What are Mentor Circles?**

Mentor Circles are one of the most powerful learning tools available. They are the secret to sharing practical wisdom, ensuring continuous development and building social networks. Made up of about 6-8 individuals, these groups are designed to help each member achieve their goals, work through difficulties and obtain advice and support. Each Circle meets once or twice a month for an hour or so under the guidance of a Circle facilitator to share experiences, exchange ideas and provide feedback.
- **2. What is the purpose of a Mentor Circle?**

Mentor Circles are primarily for purposes of continuous learning. The Circle process is designed to access the synergy of a group to help each person creatively solve problems and reach his or her goals. Circles can be used by almost anyone.
- **3. What are the benefits of Mentor Circles?**

Mentor Circles are beneficial to individuals and organizations. Individuals are able to solve problems, gain wise advice, develop skills, continuously learn and obtain support and connection. Organizations develop social learning networks, access practical know-how and develop learning communities.
- **4. How do Mentor Circles work?**

Mentor Circles consist of facilitated discussions with clear ground rules. At every meeting each person has the opportunity to present a challenge and ask for specific feedback. These challenges are discussed and the conversation is concluded with action steps to take before the next meeting.
- **5. How long do Mentor Circles last?**

Circles are designed to last for 6 months but can last for years.
- **6. Who will be in my Circle?**

Circle members are matched on the basis of similar experiences and interests. Also considered are motivation to join and the shared purpose of the Circle.
- **7. What will I have to do in a Mentor Circle?**

You will need to show up for all meetings, participate and agree to the Mentor Circle process.
- **8. Who runs a Mentor Circle?**

A Mentor Circle is led by a Circle facilitator. Each facilitator has experience, knowledge and is committed to keeping the group meaningful to everyone. Although primarily responsible for keeping the group on track, the facilitator provides ongoing tips and insights.
- **9. How are Mentor Circles different?**

Unlike many other learning programs Mentor Circles are inexpensive and easy to set up. More importantly, they tap hidden wisdom and practical knowledge that can not be readily found in a seminar or book. Circles are based on proven theories of peer-mentoring and adult learning that show that people learn best in supportive context-specific environments when they are able to immediately apply their learning. In Circles, each person decides what he or she wants to learn and requests the specific feedback desired at that particular point in time. There is no wasted time or irrelevant learning. Each person learns from the others' experiences, tests out that learning and returns to the next meeting to report on how it worked. Mentor Circles also capitalize on the strength of relationships of trust and each person's personal desire to solve their immediate problems.
- **10. How do I join a Circle?**

CenterPoint Inc. convenes Mentor Circles. We set up each group, provide a brief orientation, schedule the dates and facilitate each meeting. See our website for upcoming groups or contact us at the information below.