



This month's circle tale is by our island neighbor, Paula Pugh. A friend and colleague, she explains her work in the story below. Thank you, Paula, for sharing this tale especially in this summer season when many people are looking for ways to create meaningful moments with their families and friends.

Circle Tale #51, June-July 2004 Sound Wisdom Retreats and Circle

In 1997 I experienced my first circle training with Christina and Ann. At that time I was starting a business called Sound Wisdom Retreats, LLC, where I offer classes and retreats for women to explore health issues and re-establish balance in their lives.

The power of living the circle for five days had a life changing effect on me. I kept saying to myself, "This is the way we need to live everyday!" As a result my classes and retreats are all offered with Peerspirit Principles.

From my experience in these classes I found that women (as I work primarily with women), are yearning for a safe, confidential and sacred place where they are honored, respected and heard without judgment. Thanks to the circle the groups move easily and comfortably into a deep space. Healing and connecting happen with total strangers because this process is so effective.

When I realized that the setting and space meant as much or more than the material of my classes, I was determined to figure out a way for women and men to make situations for themselves where they could feel connected at a heart level without needing to take a class from me.

During the years after my first circle class I have been attempting to design gatherings in my life with friends and family where we can move beyond a superficial level. In some cases I need to be sneaky because the concept is new and strange. I have also educated our family in circle practices and they are no longer afraid or mystified by this new way of being together. In fact I catch them occasionally talking about some gatherings we have shared and even trying some circles for themselves.

I started to collect stories of what others and I have done in our lives to make meaningful moments. I noticed they showed up in annual events like birthdays, anniversaries and holidays as well as life transitions like divorce, graduations, serious illness, weddings and death. This collection of stories wanted to wriggle into the world. I am but a vehicle to share these remarkable examples of what people did and continue to do to give added heart and meaning to their lives. The material is being gathered into a book project, yet it squirmed to get out quicker. I found a wonderful web site designer and www.mark-the-moment.com was born.

The website is but a taste of the project. Stories are offered for inspiration. If you are familiar with circle practices you will recognize the structure is in place. Stories of simple and happy times begin the journey. When the techniques are comfortable and in place, people are ready to use circle connection in tougher times in their lives and the possibilities of healing can begin. Meaningful moments come many times in our lives, not always the joyful celebrations, but also when tears, change and grief are shared, acknowledged and honored.

I am grateful to Ann and Christina for putting forth their work and allowing others to take the concepts into the world where they need to go. As many of us already know, moving into life of circle space will change the world.

Paula Pugh. Sound Wisdom Retreats, LLC, <http://www.mark-the-moment.com>

If you have a tale to tell, contact the PeerSpirit office and we'll help you share it.

*For more information on many applications of circle, visit our web site at www.peerspirit.com and subscribe to our monthly Circle Tale newsletter using the subscription mechanism at the top right of the page. Your e-mail address will **not** be shared or used by anyone other than PeerSpirit, and you can unsubscribe yourself at any time.*