Circle Opening & Closing Rituals

It’s important to create rituals to open and close your Respect Circle. Rituals help make the circle feel safe and build trust. Do your opening ritual before you start an activity or journal card. End your circle with your closing ritual. We find it’s best to design these rituals together with your circle.

●●OPENING●●

Creating an Opening Ritual (3 minutes)

Tell your circle that together you need to create a ritual that you will consistently use to open your sessions. Here are some ideas:

- Say, “Circle up!” and once everyone is quiet, read your Respect Pact.
- Recite a mantra, poem, cheer or chant that means something to your circle.
- Do a breathing exercise or meditation, or have a moment of silence.
- Go around the circle and have all participants say one word about their intention for their time in the circle today.
- Ring a bell and read aloud the purpose of your Respect Circle. (Example: *We are all here to learn how to respect ourselves, create respect in our relationships and spread more respect in our world. Let’s begin.*)
Creating a Closing Ritual (2 minutes)
Tell your circle that together you need to create a ritual that you will consistently use to close your sessions. Many of the suggestions for opening rituals can also be used as closing rituals. Here are some additional ideas:

- Have each person in the circle share one feeling they are having at the moment.
- Have each person share one thing they learned.
- Ring a bell and say, “We are complete.”
- Ask each person to share what Respect Basic he/she will practice until you meet again.