

Mercy & Accountability, Part 1

- Welcome
 - *As people enter the space, welcome them. Invite them to do what they need in order to be fully present for the next hour to ninety minutes that they will be together.*
- Body Centering
 - *Have folks close their eyes if they feel comfortable. Have the group picture the face of someone that they know loves them. Have them imagine that person's many emotions - when they are proud of you, when they are disappointed in you, when you've hurt their feelings, when you've made them proud.*
- Introductions/Check-In: *Invite participants to introduce themselves. The circle keeper may decide to call on each person individually, choose to start with one person and ask them to pick the person who goes next, or provide a speaking order in the chat or on the screen.*
 - *Each person share your name, pronouns and who the person was that they visualized. Ask: which emotion could you see on their face most clearly?*
- Values - *Share the image of the "Common Circle Values from Living Justice Press. (see p. 17 of this toolkit). Ask participants:*
 - *Pick one value that is important to you and share how you will try to live into this value during circle.*
- Group Agreements - *Share the image of the Common Circle Guidelines from Living Justice Press (see p. 18 of this toolkit). Ask participants:*
 - *Do we feel good about using these guidelines? Any that we want to add or change?*
 - *Review the discussion of handling harm, bringing joy, and taking care of one another, developed during the Community Building circle.*
- Circle Purpose - *Share that the community is gathered today to discuss ideas of mercy and accountability.*
- Quote - *Read the following quote as grounding:*
 - *"The power of just mercy is that it belongs to the undeserving. It's when mercy is least expected that it's most potent - strong enough to break the cycle of victimization and victimhood, retribution and suffering. It has the power to heal the psychic harm and injuries that lead to aggression and violence, abuse of power, mass incarceration." - Bryan Stevenson*

Mercy & Accountability, Part 2

- Sharing Perspectives - On Accountability/Mercy. *Ask participants to answer:*

Part of the rationale for the legal system and court processes is so that the State intervenes to prevent individuals from taking justice or revenge into their own hands. Many criticize this process, however, because it removes the individuals who were harmed from the decision making process. Restorative practices, like the circle we're involved in now, offer a different path forward. One where individuals who create harm, who experience harm, and the broader community can all participate.

- **Round 1:** A big part of restorative practices is helping people to be accountable to one another. How do you think all of the events from last year would have been different if former officers Chauvin, Lane, Kueng, Thao, and/or the entire MPD would have come forward from the beginning, admitted guilt, and apologized? Would that be sufficient? Would that be accountability?
- **Round 2:** Do you think that you could sit in a restorative circle with Derek Chauvin? What would you ask of or say to him?
- **Round 3:** *Read the grounding quote again/drop it into the chat.* Have you ever shown mercy to someone or seen just mercy in action?
- **Round 4:** What do you think of the idea of mercy in this situation? Do you think you could give it to Derek Chauvin?
- **Round 5:** How do mercy and accountability work together or as opposites? Can we be merciful and still ask for accountability from people?
- **Round 6:** If we were to center our legal processes on ideas of just mercy or true justice, how would that be different than what we experienced in this trial?
- Closing Quote - *Read the following quote:*
 - “We can, each of us, do the impossible as long as we can convince ourselves that it has been done before.” - Octavia Butler
- Closing Breaths - *Invite participants to picture the person they called to mind from the opening meditation. Imagine that person proud of and impressed by them for their contribution to circle.*
 - Ask participants to share one thought they're taking away with them from circle.