

A spiral notebook binding is visible on the left side of the page, with the metal spiral winding through a series of holes in the paper.

# A Beginner's Guide to Learning Circles

## Chapter 9b

More of what learning circle participants told us  
about why learning circles work.

available at [www.nald.ca/learningcircles/bg.htm](http://www.nald.ca/learningcircles/bg.htm)

by Tracey Mollins with notes from Janice Brant, Arthur Bull and Guy Ewing

Learning circles meet people where they are  
and support them to go where they want to go  
at their own pace

“I think in the circles you can grow. Without pressure. ...  
I was in an ordinary school. I did it for six months, and  
after, I decided to quit. Because I was pressured into  
doing things I never have done, and I was kind of scared, too.”



In learning circles, people are working towards collective and/or individual change, but are open to whatever form that change may take.

“they kind of developed a safe zone, where people could talk about themselves and talk about their experiences. And from there, they moved into action, into thinking what can we do.”





Written language is not treated as more important than other ways of communicating.

“I become, as a member of the circle I work with, become more and more aware of how you have to read body language and understand body language, and how important it is to communicate in that way.”





Learning circles create opportunities for people who do not have access to formal education or training.

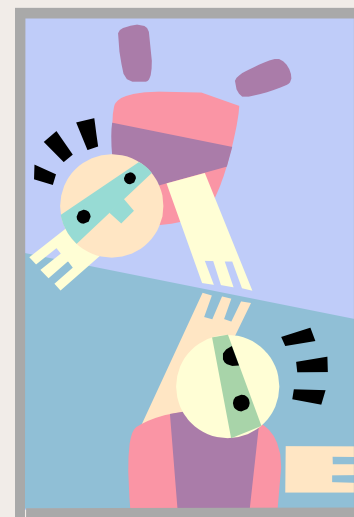
*“Everybody brings their life experiences. That’s what a learning circle, in my view, is, life experiences from everybody. Everybody’s a teacher and everybody’s a learner.”*



Academic knowledge is not treated as more important than other ways of knowing.



“Each member of a group brings something to that group. They’re talented in many ways. And so they bring their skills and talents to that group and someone in that group will learn from them and also reciprocate what they can bring to the group.”



“I never sat in a school bench,  
and today I was teaching a  
university class.”

