

# facilitating circles of support

a workbook for people who  
are interested in learning  
more about circles



## introduction

The National Resource Centre for Circles and Microboards was created to promote Circles of Support and Microboards (COSAMs) and provide accessible information and resources.

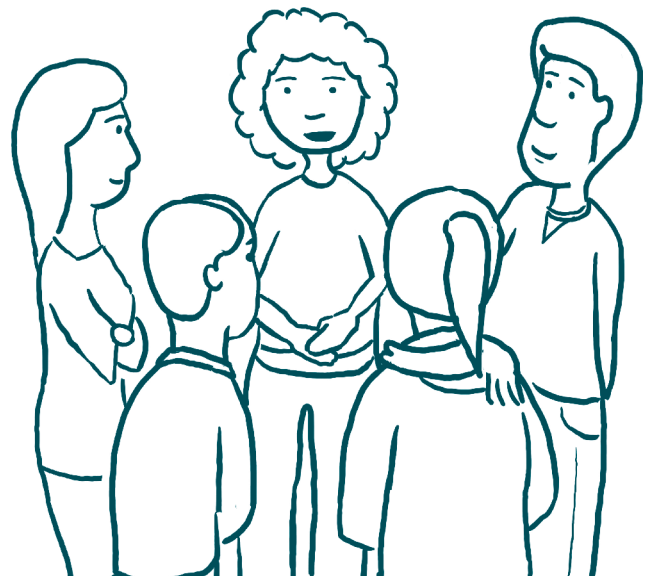
The National Resource Centre was funded by NDIS through an Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grant (ILC). We wish to acknowledge our partners who collaborated by providing their knowledge, skills and support to the COSAM project.

Circles function at their best when there is good leadership and an active, engaged membership. This workbook focusses on facilitation and provides further insight for people wanting to know more about the skills required to be a great facilitator.



Suggested citation:

Wilson, R., Hepburn, J., Despott, N. Facilitating Circles of Support. National Resource Centre for Circles of Support and Microboards & Inclusion Melbourne: Melbourne.



## how to use this workbook

The workbook is accompanied by the video; Circles of Support – Facilitators Discussion, factsheets and articles. The workbook is designed to lead the reader through a process of learning by watching the video, reading the factsheets and articles and working through a series of questions. This can be done by yourself or in a small group with others interested in circles.



We highly recommend broadening your learning experience by working in a small group and following the steps below to complete the workbook.

Watch the video at the COSAM web portal by clicking [here](#)



Make some notes in preparation for using the workbook



## read the articles and factsheets

There are many useful articles and factsheets that can be read or downloaded from COSAM. Here are a few that have been generously provided by our partners.

### What are Circles of Support?

### Attributes and skills of a facilitator

Predictors and indicators influencing the success of a Circle of Support: A collation of participant thoughts/comments from NRCCOSAM Forum, 1 December 2017, Melbourne.



Make some notes in preparation for using the workbook

## additional resources

The COSAM web portal has a number of additional resources including stories, articles and videos. There are also links to our partner websites, many of which have additional resources.



These partners have a large range of downloadable resources;  
[Resourcing Inclusive Communities](#)  
[Community Resource Unit](#) and  
[Belonging Matters](#)

Complete each question below after you have watched the facilitation video and read the articles. Allow yourself 3-5 minutes to answer each question. If you are in a group the questions can be effective in generating discussion. Note your responses below.

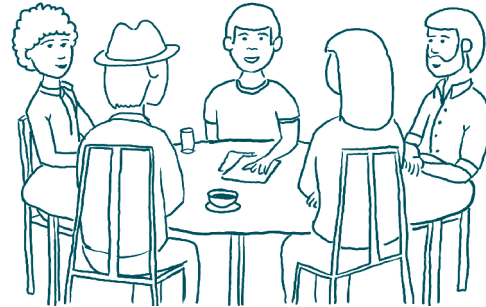
Describe what you believe are the main attributes and characteristics of a circles facilitator (List 5 -8 attributes)

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....



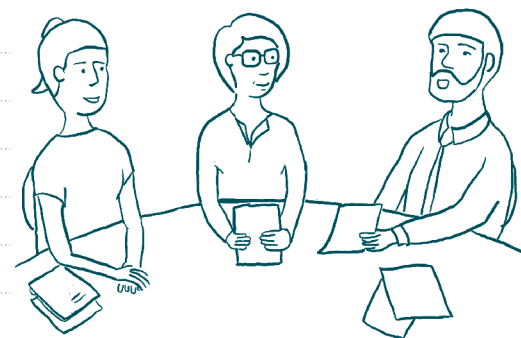
Describe the guiding values and principles that you believe underpin the work of a facilitator (list 5 key points)

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....



How would you go about describing a circle to (a) someone who has a disability and (b) a prospective circle member? (Process and key points)

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....





Describe the key steps involved in developing a circle. What would you do first?  
(List steps in order)



What are some of the things that a circle could achieve?  
(Think about someone who you know and what might be possible)



How would you support a person with a disability to connect to people in their circle?  
(Describe what you would do)



What measures would you take to sustain a circle so members continue to be focussed on the person and their vision for a good life? (Describe how you might go about this)



Circle Facilitator, Sarah Burrage defines a circle of support as, "... a group of people coming together to help formulate, promote and support the hopes and dreams and aspirations in the life of a person with disability. The Circle acts as a community of friendship and support around the person at the centre. It is a means of providing practical advice, solving problems and generating creative ideas to contribute positively to the person's life."  
(Circles Initiative, SA)

For more information about Circles of Support  
contact [www.cosam.org.au](http://www.cosam.org.au) or visit one of our partner organisation in your state.



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