



# Working Out Loud Circle Guide

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## 12 weeks in 2 pages

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### What is a Working Out Loud circle?

It's a peer support group of 4-5 people, one that helps you make progress towards a goal by building relationships related to that goal. Groups meet for an hour a week for 12 weeks. By the end, you'll have developed a larger, more diverse network, as well as habits and a mindset you can apply towards any goal. Here's the objective and what to expect each week.

#### 1: Choose a simple goal & list people related to it

In your first week, you'll get to know your other circle members, pick a goal you care about, and take your first steps towards that goal by creating a relationship list. You may feel uncertain - about your goal or about sharing things. As a sense of trust develops among people in the group, you'll feel more encouraged and empowered.

#### 2: Offer your first contributions

In Week 2, you'll make simple contributions to people on your relationship list, deepening relationships in some small way. Just looking at the list will attune your attention to your goal, and the simple steps you take will feel empowering.

#### 3: Work your lists

In Week 3, you work on managing your time and on offering other simple gifts to people on your relationship list. You may well refine your goal or even change it. That's fine. The key is to keep practicing by doing the exercises each week. Each small step matters.

#### 4: Review your online presence

It's only Week 4 and you're still in the early stages of developing a new habit. So this week, you'll continue practicing ways to offer contributions while you do exercises to help you with managing time and reviewing your online presence.

#### 5: Broaden your range of contributions

After four weeks, you may need a boost. For some of you, the demands on your time and your environment may be luring you away from investing in yourself. Some of you may feel uncomfortable with some of the new things you're trying to do. Remember, all you're really

doing in your circle is working towards a goal you care about in a way that's meaningful and fulfilling. You deserve the chance to do that.

## **6: Expand your influence**

As your lists grow, you'll need to become more efficient and effective. The first exercise this week will help you expand your influence. The second will give you a simple system for managing the increasing number of relationships and contribution

## **7: Make it a habit**

The steps you've been taking week after week are gradually helping you turn working out loud into a sustainable habit. This week you'll explore things that will further reinforce that new habit, including a longer-term vision of what might be possible for you. For some people, the "Letter from your future self" exercise is particularly powerful.

## **8: Practice empathy & engagement**

How you offer something can sometimes make all the difference. This week, you'll practice empathy as you offer contributions so you can refine the way you write your messages and approach people in general. It's an important skill to develop. Just as the same gift can feel different whether it's beautifully wrapped or not wrapped at all, you can make your contributions feel more personal and valuable with a little practice.

## **9: Explore more original contributions**

The last 4 weeks of your circle are designed to help you consider other possibilities. This week you'll further expand your range of contributions to include making your original ideas, work in progress, and finished work visible. This may be new to some of you or make you uncomfortable, so think of it as simply an option instead of a responsibility.

## **10: Become more systematic**

By Week 10, it's becoming more natural to think of your goal in terms of people and contributions. Yet you're still working on making it a habit and mindset. It's natural, for example, to struggle with finding the time or with remembering to follow up with people. The exercises this week will help make offering contributions more systematic and habitual, so it takes less effort and thinking to do it and it feels increasingly natural.

## **11: Imagine the possibilities**

So far, the focus has been on contributions and connections. Now it's time for expanding your sense of what's possible. This week, you'll think of your network as a tribe of people connected by a shared interest. It could be as simple as a small group connected by a common hobby or it could be much, much bigger. Whether or not you want to build a tribe of your own, it's good to know you have the power and influence to create one if you wanted to.

## **12: Reflect and celebrate**

Consider holding this final meeting over dinner if you can. It's a nice way to celebrate your 12 weeks together, and talking over a meal is conducive to reflecting on your progress and considering possible next steps.