

**Village Music Circles Global**

**Introduction to Drum Circle Facilitation**

**Village Music Circle Global Trainers’ Outline**

The purpose of the “Introduction to Drum Circle Facilitation” is to deliver enough information and experience so that participants can successfully facilitate a drum circle using basic techniques, and to give them a window into the vast world of possibilities that the art of drum circle facilitation offers. Mention your 3 day Playshops and the 6 day VMCG Playshops, as well as Arthur's books during the day, and direct the attention of the trainees to the Resource section at the end of the day where you can add your personal information as well as additional resources.

This is an outline with simple suggestions to prompt your deeper understanding. This is NOT a script, so add your own style, your own spice, and modify the program and the handout to suit the needs of your culture, community and group.

Ideally, you will have a about 6 ½ hours of teaching time to deliver this Introduction if you are hosting an 8 hour training, as you will need to include about 1 ½ hours for a meal and short breaks. However, it is possible, with adjustments, to deliver the program within a 5 or 6 hour time period, if you are able to eliminate a meal break. How thoroughly you can cover the material depends on the size of the training group and the time allowed.

**Objectives List for use in promotion**

These were important when promoting the Elements to therapists, teachers, etc., in the USA so they would be able to receive credit. You may use them, adjust them, or leave them out of your promotion entirely.

**After attending the VMC Global Elements of Drum Circle Facilitation s one-day introductory program, you will be able to:**

* Describe how and why drum circle facilitation can be used in your setting.
* Identify eleven or more concepts/terms used in basic rhythm facilitation.
* Attendees will be able to demonstrate basic rhythm facilitation techniques and concepts.
* Attendees will participate in a question and answer session about how rhythm facilitation can be integrated into various settings, including but not limited to the school, medical, therapeutic, spiritual, and social setting.
* Attendees will be given the opportunity to network and communicate with members of a variety of different disciplines, including educators, occupational therapists, music therapists.
* Attendees will be able to identify resources for rhythm facilitation.

**Formats**

We have not included breaks in the format below as you will need to adjust them according to how long you will have to deliver the program and what time of day you begin and end.

**The Format for the day:**

* Experiential Orientation - Drum Call & Running the Map
* Welcome - Introduction and Philosophy:  What we do and why
* Overview of Basic Concepts and Techniques
* Exercises – the main body of the program
* Full group closing Jump Time (if time allows)
* Closing Debrief
* Conclusion

**The Format for the Exercises:**

* Description and demonstration
  + The name of the activity or technique and its purpose
  + A demonstration by either the trainer or a Challenge participant
  + Some basic language is included under each breakout exercise for reference only; I, 2, make up your own! etc. You are welcome to modify as you need.
  + You can have participants practice facilitation signals from the seats in the full group before splitting the group up for breakouts.
* Breakout practice groups
  + Try to maintain a minimum of 9 people in the breakouts.
  + Use body percussion or small hand held percussion.
  + If you need to be in a single room, you may want to provide a common pulse for all breakout groups using a bass drum, or other distinct instrument, to keep all groups on the same pulse.
  + Circulate to all break out groups to monitor progress, give feedback, or assign Challenge participants to each group if available.
* Full group Jump Time
  + Any participant can facilitate the Exercise with the full group.
    - Keep an eye out for those who may be reluctant and create an opportunity for them to feel safe enough to facilitate the whole group before the end of the program. You may want to give Arthur’s Type A and Type B personality speech (“A”s will always get there turn, so make room for the “B”s).

**NOTES**

* + Have either yourself or a Challenge participant, who is a VMC Playshop graduate, start and stop in the group in a different way whenever you are able, and let the group know that you are doing this to encourage innovation and creativity, and illustrate that there are many ways to start and stop a group.
  + At the end of the participant’s handout, you may want to add information about local resources and your own outreach information.

**Participant Handout**

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**Village Music Circles Global**

**Introduction to Drum Circle Facilitation**

**Participant Handout**

**Welcome, Introduction and Philosophy: What we do and why**

The purpose of this one day introduction to Drum Circle Facilitation (DCF)  is to deliver enough information and experience so that you can successfully begin the process of ‘learning to learn’ how to facilitate a drum circle with some basic techniques, and take a first step into the vast world of possibilities that the art of drum circle facilitation offers. For further drum circle facilitation development and in depth training, attend the next upcoming 3 Day DCF Playshop Training in your area, or VMCG 6 Day Playshops. You’ll find information about trainings and other educational materials in the Resources section at the end of this document.

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Drum circles are a wonderful way to bring community together no matter what age or background. You can use a drum circle to celebrate an accomplishment, to reflect on a theme, reinforce a concept, and much more.

It’s great tool for creating connections within a group by building a sense of community and common purpose and for the individuals within the group by connecting them with their unique gifts, both musical and nonmusical.

The drum circle facilitators’ (DCFs’) job is to create a safe and playful place for people to explore their own unique creativity, support each other and build a sense of community at the same time. All that AND we get to have lots of fun playing music together!

We started the day today with what is called “Drum Call.” It is a wonderful opportunity to accomplish many things; establish rapport, create a sense of safety and inclusion, teach your body language, and get a feel for the group and the individuals in the group. Our Drum Call also contained all that we will learn, practice, and experience here today. Here are some of the techniques used by facilitators worldwide and the purpose for them as well:

The following are some important Tools and Techniques we will touch on throughout the day

**Tools**

* Attention Call
  + Establishes the facilitator's’ role as guide
  + Enhances focus and attention abilities
* Stop Cut and Call to Groove
  + Define a rhythmic phrase intuitively
  + Builds confidence
  + Group accomplishment, build group awareness
  + Reinforces focus and attention abilities
* Rumble
  + A fun and *freeing* activity
  + Reinforces focus and attention abilities
* Volume up and down
  + Teach musicality (dynamics) and listening skills
  + Reinforces focus and attention abilities
* ½ Sculpt
  + Group accomplishment, build group awareness
  + Enhance listening skills
  + Build appreciation and support
* Sculpt a Song, 5-7 instruments
  + Listening skills
  + Build appreciation and support

**Concepts**

* GOOW (Get Out Of the Way)

Getting out of the middle of the circle when not actively facilitating is a very important concept. When you leave the circle after facilitating, it is a message to the group that they are in charge and that you trust them. This builds individual confidences as well as group bonding.

* Orchestration Spot

The orchestration spot is the location from which you facilitate the group. In small groups this can be from a seat within the circle, in large groups it is in the center of the circle. By using the orchestration spot as a group focusing technique you create a place with the power to pull the group’s attention to you as you work from it. Don’t overuse it (GOOW)!

* Marking the Pulse

You are the rhythm conductor.  While in the center of the circle you can dance, step in time or play a simple rhythm on a bell or block to reinforce the awareness of the beat or pulse.

* Transition Point

Sometimes the rhythm will begin to feel unsteady. At this point you can decide to mark the pulse more strongly or facilitate a simple stop and go to help everyone get back together. You can also let it go and see what develops. Sometimes a little magic happens as the group facilitates itself. At other times a “train wreck” may provide a valuable learning opportunity. Remember, it’s only a drum circle, so if the rhythm falls apart, we just start it up again!

* Telegraphing

As you do a Stop Cut, or other facilitation technique that your group would like the group to respond to, it is very helpful “set up” that action. Think of it as an inhale before an exhale, or as actors do when stage fighting. They will pull back their arm and fist before punching so that their acting partner will know just when to move out of the way.

* Sound Bowl

This is the area directly in front of one section the circle, close to the participants. From here you will be able to hear and feel the rhythm of that section of the group clearly, especially if you have sculpted them and are facilitating a Call and Response or some other facilitation action with the rest of the group.

**1st Exercise – Rumble - Volume Up or Down - Stop Cut**

**Rumble**

You initiate a group rumble by holding your hands out in front of you and wiggling them quickly from the wrists. The group responds, creating musical chaos, a non-rhythmical noise, with their instruments. You can direct your rumble to the whole circle or to a group that you have sculpted (indicated).

**Volume Up or Down**

To raise the volume of a group rumble, continue to wiggle your hands, extend and raise your arms with palms turned upward, as if lifting the group. Lower the volume by lowering your arms with palms turned downward.

**Stop Cut**

By giving a full group attention call and then giving a full group stop cut at the beginning of the rhythm cycle you are often able to stop the circle’s music on a dime. There are many ways to execute a stop cut.

**Exercise Sequence**

* Enter the circle and step into the Orchestration Spot
* Create a Rumble
* Give the Volume Up and Down signals 2 or 3 times
* Give the group the “Stop Cut” signal
* Step out of the circle and make way for the next facilitator

**Jump Time - Practice the Exercise with full group**

**2nd Exercise - Attention Call - Stop Cut - Call to Groove**

**Attention Call**

Attention calls are body signals that gain the group’s attention and let them know that a new facilitation signal is about to be given. Do this by simply holding up your hand, looking around the entire circle in order to get the group’s attention. Don’t forget to make eye contact and smile!

**Call to Groove**

Call to groove is a way to start a group rhythm. It’s helpful if you set the pulse with your voice, your body and your musical instrument before the call. The group will almost always make rhythmical adjustments during the first few measures after you start the groove. Don’t worry, just keep smiling and marking the pulse! Here are a few versions:

* Call out “one, two, let’s all play” (this is the one we will use in this exercise)
* Play a rhythm on your instrument and invite others to join in
* Ask one of the participants to start a rhythm (be prepared to reinforce it!)
* Build a rhythm by having one person start and asks that each person add to that rhythm going

**Exercise Sequence**

* + With the group in full groove, step into the middle of the circle marking time with your body and your instrument (bell, hand clap, etc.) allowing yourself time to connect to the rhythm.
  + Do an Attention Call, again making eye contact with all in the circle.
  + Give the Facilitators  “Stop Cut” signal to stop the group.  (Counting down from 4 to 1 to do a Stop Cut is optional for people with musical expertise.)
  + Still feeling the pulse and marking time, call out “one, two, let’s all play”.
  + Allow the rhythm to continue for a few cycles while you continue to mark the beat with your body and instrument to reground the group in the pulse.
  + Leave the circle, then the next facilitator enters after a few cycles have passed.

**Jump Time - Practice the Exercise with full group**

**3rd Exercise - Call and Response**

**Call and Response**

Indicate by the “I play, you play” gesture that you are about to play a rhythm and invite them to play it back. Create successes by playing very simple patterns and keep them all to the same length.

**Exercise Sequence**

* Group is in full Groove
* Give an Attention Call and indicate “I play, you play”
* Do Call and Response 4 times
* Call the group back to the Groove
* Remain in the middle marking time for a few beats
* Leave the circle, then the next facilitator enters

**Jump Time - Practice the Exercise with full group**

**4th Breakout Exercise - Half Group Sculpt**

**Sculpting**

Sculpting means to select a subset of the group, a section, a small group, an instrument type, individual players, etc., in order to raise awareness of the various aspects of the circle, and can be used to create a platform on which other facilitate other activities, Call and Response for instance. There are many ways to sculpt the circle. Here are two:

**Sculpt by sections -** by indicating the section to be sculpted with arms and hands held out. That part of the circle between your two outstretched hands is the piece of the drum circle pie that you have just sculpted.

**Sculpt a song –**  by choosing a few participants around the circle who are playing interesting parts, ones that sound good together. Give the selected players a continue-to-play signal. Stop cut the remaining players to unveil the groups’ drum song.

**Continue to Play**

The standard continue-to-play body language signal is to point your two index fingers toward each other in front of your chest and rotate them around each other.

Note: Before sculpting and stopping a particular segment of your circle, it is good to give a continue-to-play signal to the rest of the group. Otherwise, the whole circle might stop when you give the stop-cut signal.

**Exercise Sequence**

* Enter with the group in full groove.
* Sculpt half the group and give them the Continue to Play signal.
* Sculpt the other half of the group and give an Attention Call and then a Stop Cut so they are not playing.
* Give that half of the group an “I play, you play” signal.
* Then give that group a short sequence of Call and Responses.
* Then give a Call to Groove to the whole group so they are in rhythm together.
* Step out of the circle and let the next facilitator enter.

**Jump Time - Practice the Exercise with full group**

**5th Exercise - Sculpting a Song**

**Sculpting a Song**

Selecting individual players who are playing interesting parts and highlighting their Song for the rest of the circle will raise musical awareness and connection within the group. Choose players around the circle, rather than ones that are sitting next to one another. Listen for parts that complement each other.

**Exercise Sequence**

* Group in full Groove
* Sculpt 5-7 players and give them the Continue to Play signal. Repeat it when you’ve selected all the players to reinforce the Continue to Play message.
* Attention Call then Stop Cut all other players
* Listen, marking the pulse and giving affirmation.
* Bring the group back in with a Call to Groove
* Mark time for a few beats, and leave to make way for the next facilitator.

**Jump Time - Practice the Exercise with full group**

**Closing Jump Time**

This is your chance to try all the ideas we practiced, and come up with a few new ones as well.

**Closing Discussion**

**[INSERT QUESTIONS MOST VALUABLE TO YOUR GROUP FOR REFLECTION LATER AND IN DISCUSSION]**

Congratulations! You are now have enough information and experience to being your drum circle facilitation journey, and begin serving your community! You are now part of a global community of drum circle facilitators. Be sure to join one of the Yahoo drum circle groups listed below. It is an amazing resource for our entire worldwide community!

Feel free to contact me for more information about upcoming drum circle facilitation trainings and let me know if I can support you in anyway.

**[VMCG Trainers’ Name Here**

**Contact Info**

**NEXT TRAINING INFORMATION**

**6 DAY TRAINING INFORMATION]**

**Resources**

**Village Music** **Circles Global-** Founded by Arthur Hull**,** who is widely considered to be the father of the contemporary facilitated drum circle movement. VMCG holds trainings year around in the USA and abroad.  You will find information about trainings, books and a wonderful video overview of the art of facilitation on the Village Music Circle website.

[www.drumcircle.com](about:blank)

**Yahoo DrumCircles Group**

A forum for facilitators from all over the globe. You will find interesting discussions on all aspects of drum circle facilitation from instrument choice to special needs programming. It is invaluable support for beginning facilitators and seasoned professionals alike. It is suggested that you sign up for the Digest format due to the large number of postings.

<http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/DrumCircles/>

**Yahoo European Drum Circle Facilitators Group**

This is the European Drum Circle Facilitators group.

<http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/EDCF/>

**Drum Circle Facilitators’ Guild**

The DCFG is hosts a DCF conference each year and supports its members in a number of ways.

<http://dcfg.net/>

**[VMCG Certified Facilitator’s Next Training Dates HERE]**