I Am Because We Are

Ubuntu Circle Guide

A facilitation guide for running Ubuntu Circles: spaces of collective healing, truth-telling, and community restoration rooted in African philosophical traditions.

"I thought liberation was an individual achievement."

About This Guide

This guide accompanies Lesson 6: Ubuntu — I Am Because We Are. It provides a practical framework for facilitating Ubuntu Circles—spaces of collective healing, truth-telling, and community restoration rooted in African philosophical traditions.

> **Ubuntu** *(Nguni/Bantu): 'I am because we are.' A philosophy that recognises our humanity as bound together—your healing is my healing, your liberation is my liberation.*

Part 1: Preparing the Circle

An Ubuntu Circle requires intentional preparation. Use this checklist before facilitating.

■ Identify 4–8 participants (diversity of role, seniority, and lived experience)

■ Choose a quiet, private space where all feel safe

■ Prepare a centrepiece (candle, plant, or meaningful object)

■ Write opening and closing words (see templates below)

■ Brief participants: confidentiality, respect, no hierarchy in the circle

■ Prepare 2–3 reflective prompts (see Part 2)

■ Allow 60–90 minutes (no rushing)

■ Arrange chairs in a circle (no tables as barriers)

Part 2: Facilitation Prompts

Select 2–3 prompts per circle. Allow silence between speakers. Never force anyone to share.

Prompt 1: *"When did you first become aware of race in a healthcare setting?"*

Prompt 2: *"What do you carry from your cultural background that shapes how you give care?"*

Prompt 3: *"Describe a moment when you witnessed racial bias but did not speak. What held you back?"*

Prompt 4: *"What would it look like if this team truly practised Ubuntu?"*

Prompt 5: *"What do you need from this group to feel safe enough to be honest?"*

Prompt 6: *"If you could change one thing about how race is handled in this service, what would it be?"*

Your own prompt ideas:

Part 3: Circle Reflection Log

After each circle, capture what emerged.

Date and participants (first names only):

What themes emerged?

What was left unsaid? (Notice the silences as data)

What collective commitment did the group make?

How did YOU feel during and after the circle?

"A person is a person through other people. Your liberation is bound up in mine."