

## In their own words:

“ Facilitating a [Resilience Circle] feels like providing water to desperately thirsty people. People are hungry for this information, hungry to share their experiences and frustrations, and hungry to gain some control in a world that often seems out of control. During the first session one participant commented that ‘this may well be the most important program the congregation has ever offered.’ ”

- Trudy McNulty, Portland ME

“ We used to meet in the basement of the local library, about twelve of us, each week. The librarian was always asking us what we were laughing at. Somehow we just always had a lot of fun when we met. And we helped each other in all kinds of ways. ”

- Bill R, Hobart IN

“ At the fifth meeting of my Resilience Circle, we exchanged “Gifts and Needs.” Participants had written their gifts – things they could offer – on one set of note-cards and their needs on another. The facilitator started the exchange by offering to give bike tune-ups, and mentioning she’d like to be able to hem her own pants. A few moments later, after two others also said that they’d like to learn to sew, one woman offered to run a sewing class for the group. Moments after that, I was somehow scheduling a time for the pastor of the church to cut my hair. A dog-sitting/child-care exchange began to bud. People began brainstorming about how to find and share a 20-foot ladder. ”

- Sarah Byrnes, Roslindale MA

“ This is one of the best pastoral tools I’ve used in terms of giving members of my congregation a sense of agency in their economic lives. ”

- Rev. Cecelia Kingman, Edmonds WA

## In uncertain times...

*help is closer than you think.*



The Great Recession has reminded us of our vulnerabilities. Now, small groups of people across the country are forming Resilience Circles in their own communities to help support each other in hard times.

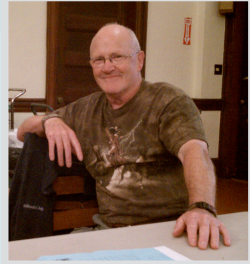


The Resilience Circle Network is a project of the Program on Inequality and the Common Good at the Institute for Policy Studies ([www.inequality.org](http://www.inequality.org)).

Resilience Circle Network  
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Learn how to find a circle near you, or get the tools you need to start your own!



## A Resilience Circle

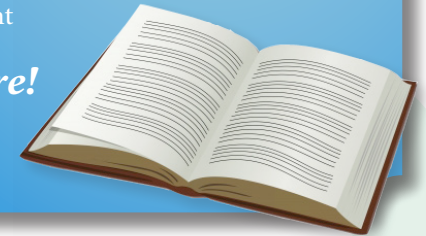
is a group of **10 to 20 people** who come **together** to **increase personal security** in **hard times**.

Groups have three purposes: **learning, mutual aid, and social action**.

## Free Resources for Organizers & Facilitators

- A Seven-session Facilitator's Guide
- Continually updated lists of project and meeting ideas
- Interactive Webinars about organizing a circle in your community
- Connections with other people in your area
- Free publicity for your circle on our website and e-newsletter
- In-person facilitator trainings in your area, by arrangement

*Plus More!*



## HOW IT WORKS

**Circles are self-organizing.** They're forming all around the country through churches, neighborhood associations, social action groups, Transition initiatives, labor unions and groups of friends.

The **free, open-source curriculum** provides a guide for facilitators to lead groups through seven initial sessions. After seven sessions, a circle determines its own projects and activities.

## CIRCLES HELP Us...

- Face our economic challenges and learn together about the root causes of the recession.
- Build relationships and engage in mutual aid and shared action.
- Rediscover the abundance of what we have and recognize the possibility of a better future.
- See ourselves as part of a larger effort to create a fair and healthy economy that works for everyone in harmony with the earth.
- Get to know our neighbors, find inspiration, and have fun!

## Can groups like these really make a difference?

*History tells us they can. At many crucial moments in our past, small groups have played an essential role in incubating the seeds of great change. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, "Share Our Wealth" clubs formed to discuss the causes of the Depression and advocate for what became Social Security. The non-violent direct action groups in the civil rights movement and consciousness-raising groups in the women's movement are other examples.*