

The Learning Circle Project: *Activities for Circles*

Peer Learning Activity by Arthur Bull

The Idea

One of the common themes that we hear about from everyone who is involved in learning circles is that there is a lot of PEER LEARNING going on. In a learning circle each of us can be a teacher, and each of us can be learner. How do we teach each other things? How do we learn from each other?

This exercise is one way to get a group thinking about peer learning.

The Method

Step 1

Divide the group into pairs. (It works best if the pairs do not already know each other.)

Step 2

- a) Ask one person in each pair to talk about some skill that he or she knows how to do, that the other person does not know how to do, e.g. dance the tango, speak Punjabi, recite a limerick.
- b) Talk about how he or she would show the other person how to do this.
- c) Actually try to teach the other person a little bit of the skill in question, e.g. a couple of tango steps, a few words of Punjabi, a limerick

Then reverse the roles

Also, ask the participants to talk a little bit about their observations about the roles of teacher and learner, once they have both had a turn.

Step 3

Bring the whole group together and have a brainstorm discussion about what they learned from this exercise about peer learning and about how we switch our roles as teachers and learners.