



region4

Maintaining
MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL WELLNESS
Virtually

Lisette Spraggins, M.A., M. Ed.

Virtual Restorative Strategies: Greetings, Focusing Moments and Check-ins
Circle Up by Winneker, Martinez & Sandomierski, 2017

What is a

Greeting

- ▶ Happens first to set positive tone
- ▶ Acknowledge each individual
- ▶ Everyone is included
- ▶ Their name is said once
- ▶ Respectful and friendly
- ▶ Short time frame (between two to five minutes)

Focusing Moment

- ▶ Can calm students
- ▶ Supports behavioral momentum



Ideas for Greetings

- My name is _____ and I wonder...
- Hand movement
- Silly face
- Dance movement
- Alphabetical greeting
- First letter of name and an animal with the same first letter

Keep it
fresh - use a
variety of
greetings

Ideas for Focusing Moments

- ▶ Deep breaths
- ▶ Visualization
- ▶ Chant
- ▶ Song
- ▶ Sound Machine
- ▶ Simon Says
- ▶ Scents and smells



Check-in

- ▶ Purpose: to invite participants to talk about how they are feeling on physical, mental or emotional levels at the moment.
- ▶ Builds emotional awareness among students
- ▶ Creates connections among teachers, students, school, and home
- ▶ All have a chance to share
 - May be a brief check, or an opportunity to share more detail (e.g., weekend activities, something pleasant that happened last night)
- ▶ Participation is optional



Ideas for Check-In

- ▶ 1-5 Fingers
- ▶ On a scale of 1-10
- ▶ Thumbs up, Thumbs sideways, Thumbs down
- ▶ Roses or Thorns
- ▶ Emotion Pictures
- ▶ Emotion Words
- ▶ If I were a color I would be
- ▶ If I were an animal I would be
- ▶ Use math symbols +/-
- ▶ What weather best describes how I feel
- ▶ What movie title best describes how I feel

More ideas in the 'Feelings Check-in' handout

Ideas for Greetings

Below are examples of greetings that could be used in many types of circles. Read the examples and highlight the different greetings you would like to use as a facilitator.

Name of Greeting	Description
Group greeting	<p>One person says their name and everyone greets them at once. This continues until all participants names have been said.</p> <p>You can have a fun adaptation on this by having each person say their name in a funny voice, dramatic style, foreign accent, etc. and having the group attempt to mimic that style.</p>
Match card greeting	<p>There can be many variations to this greeting. The object is to have participants purposefully match with another participant based on information on the cards. An example could be using a math problem. One student has a card with '3 x 2' and needs to find another student with this answer to the that problem.</p>
Spider web greeting	<p>Using a ball of yarn, one student rolls the ball to a person on another side of circle and greets them. The student greets them back and rolls it to a different student, and this continues until all students are greeted. The greetings are then performed in reverse order so the group can roll the ball of yarn back up.</p>
I wonder....	<p>Have index cards with lots of different questions for example—If you could be any superhero, who would be? Why? If you could have one wish come true, what would it be? Why? If you could travel anywhere, where would you? Share one interesting fact about yourself (I have been to all 50 states, I have 8 older siblings, I have a pet tarantula, etc.).</p>
Hand Movement	<p>Person stands up and says their name. Then do a hand movement (i.e. jazz hands, princess wave, golf clap). The person sits back down and the group repeats back the person's name with the hand movement.</p>
Alphabetical Greeting	<p>Individuals greet one another starting with the individual's first initial and moving on in alphabetical order or reverse alphabetical order. For example: Abby, Amy, Ashley, Brian, Curtis, Dreah...</p>
Ball Toss Greeting	<p>An individual is selected to begin the circle and is given a ball. S/he greets another participant and tosses the ball to him/her. This continues until all participants have received the ball. The last participant ends the greeting by tossing the ball back to the person who began the greeting.</p>

Continued...

Guess My Feeling Greeting	Participants receive an index card with an emotion written on it, and greet one another in a way that conveys the emotion on their card. The other participants get to guess which emotion was written on the index cards.
Name Card Greeting	Everyone's name is written on a card, collected, shuffled, and placed face down in the center of the circle. One individual begins by selecting a card and greeting that individual. The person who was greeted gets up and continues the process. Variation: Individuals do not have to physically get up. They just introduce themselves to someone and that person then introduces themselves to someone else. Another variation is they can share something that they like to eat, their favorite activity etc.
One-Minute Mingle Greeting	Participants greet as many people as they can in one minute. Every greeting must meet the basic criteria for a quality greeting: eye contact, greeting with name, partner returns the greeting. The criteria should be modeled prior to starting the timer. The person who greets the most individuals may receive group recognition; the person who greeted the fewest individuals could be personally greeted by the rest of the group members.
Snake Greeting	A participant begins by greeting another individual, moving on to another randomly selected individual. Each participant who is greeted gets up and greets the same people greeted by the leader, in the same order, so that a "snake" of participants forms behind the leader. When the leader finishes greeting the last participant, s/he sits down, as do the other students, in order.
Inside-Outside Greeting	Participants form two circles, one inside of the other. They stand so the inner circle is facing the outer circle, and the outer circle is facing the inner circle. The inner and outer circles take turns "rotating" so each person greets another who had been standing in a different location in the circle. The circles may rotate one step at a time, or several steps at a time.
Greet and Meet Greeting	Participants form groups of three, greet each other, and briefly discuss a topic provided by the leader.
Reach Out Greeting	The leader provides a guideline to the group, and individuals greet at least one other person according to the stated guideline. For example: a) greet someone you haven't talked to yet today; b) greet someone of the opposite gender; c) greet someone who is much older/younger than you; etc.

Adapted from:

- Responsive Classrooms, <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>
- Teaching Restorative Practices using Circles/ San Francisco Unified School District, <http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/>
- Crawford, L. (2012). *The Advisory Book*. Developmental Designs, Minneapolis, MN.

Ideas for Focusing Moments

These are examples of focusing moments that could be used in many types of circles. Read the examples and highlight the different greetings you would like to use as a facilitator.

Name of Greeting	Description
Deep Breaths	Close eyes/look down take a deep breath & count to 5. Take another deep breath & count backwards from 5. Feel free to add a couple of cycles to this to help the group calm down & focus.
Visualization	Close your eyes and visual your happy place (i.e. beach, mountains, lake, snow, etc.)
Chant	Develop a chant the students can say (i.e. Never Give Up: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible)
Song	Play a song (i.e. soft, classical)
Sound Machine	Play a sound from a sound machine and ask the participants to focus on the sound
Simon Says	Do a simple round of follow the leader or Simon says (only use the Simon says part)
Scent and Smells	Spray a scent (i.e., lavender, mint), ask participants to close their eyes and focus on the smells can choose from.

Adapted from:

- Responsive Classrooms, <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>
- Teaching Restorative Practices using Circles/ San Francisco Unified School District, <http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/>
- Crawford, L. (2012). *The Advisory Book*. Developmental Designs, Minneapolis, MN.

Ideas for Feelings Check-Ins

Below are examples of Feelings Check-ins to be used in all types of circles. Read the examples and highlight feelings check-ins you would like to use as a facilitator.

Feelings Check-in	Description
“Who’s a five today?”	<p>This is a very brief way of checking in with your participants/students, seeing how they feel today. Here’s a sample scale:</p> <p><i>5 = Couldn’t be better, feeling energized and happy, excited for the day to begin</i></p> <p><i>4 = Feeling pretty happy, relaxed, feeling relatively optimistic about the day</i></p> <p><i>3 = So-So, relaxed, not particularly excited or happy but still alert & engaged</i></p> <p><i>2 = Not terrible, a little low energy, not particularly motivated to be here</i></p> <p><i>1 = Feeling really bad, really low energy, pull the covers up over they’re head.</i></p> <p>Note: If a participant reports that they are a “1,” the facilitator should prompt the group to address this in a positive way. For example: facilitator says “I’m sorry to hear that! I’m glad you made it in today even if you’re not feeling very good. Hopefully we can help you feel a little better as the day goes on. Can someone in our group offer [participant’s name] a little encouragement to get [him/her] going?” Praise the student who provides encouragement.</p>
Thumbs up, Thumbs down	<p>Ask participants to give either a Thumb up if doing great/fabulous, thumbs to the side if doing okay, thumbs down if not having a good day.</p>
Roses or Thorns	<p>Ask participants to identify how their day is going, is it more like roses or thorns.</p>
Emotion Pictures	<p>Have an emotion chart. Ask participants to point to the picture of how they are feeling today.</p>
Emotion Words	<p>Have participants identify one word to describe how they are feeling today. They can either say it out loud or they can write it down on an index card and lift up. For students who may have difficulty with words to express their emotions, suggest having emotion pictures they can choose from.</p>

Adapted from:

- Responsive Classrooms, <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>
- Teaching Restorative Practices using Circles/ San Francisco Unified School District, <http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/>
- Crawford, L. (2012). *The Advisory Book*. Developmental Designs, Minneapolis, MN.