

STARTING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS WHILE STUCK @ HOME

Over the past 22 years, BYTE has been working with young people to learn about their perspectives on a number of important topics from substance use and mental health to relationships and consent.

We love working with youth and hearing all about their skills, strengths and resilience as they navigate their mental health, their relationships, being leaders in their community, worrying about climate change and much more!

In light of Covid-19 and a temporary pause in our in-person work with youth, we'd like to share some ideas and activities to start some important conversations at home!

Over the next few weeks, we will tackle topics such as Healthy Relationships, Healthy Minds and Safer Partying. Drop us a line at manager@yukonyouth.com if you have any specific requests!

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR TALKING TO YOUTH

When we spend time talking to youth about anything we try to follow these tips and tricks for creating open, honest and non-judgemental conversations:

- **Think about your own biases!** Of course as adult allies we all have our own experiences that influence our opinions. Acknowledge where these biases might be present in your conversations and do your best to catch yourself if your thinking turns judgemental.
- **Know your purpose!** Why do you want to have this conversation? For us, we want to remind young people that they already have a lot of skills for navigating the world!
- **Be genuine.** Be honest and sincere. It'll be much easier to have these conversations if youth understand there is no hidden agenda.
- **There are no bad questions.** We try not to shy away from any questions and do our best to answer everything openly and honestly. If we can answer honestly now, we can build a strong foundation for more serious questions later.

•**Manage your expectations!** Don't strike up this conversation with the goal of teaching a lesson or to change minds. Instead, be open-minded about learning about their perspectives.

•**Be conscious of your tone.** Use a tone and ask questions that encourage honest answers. Try saying things like "I want to understand more about that."

•**Listen!** Be present and set aside enough time to have a meaningful conversation. Listen to understand and not to respond - this has been a super helpful mindset for us!

•**Be comfortable with some silence.** If there is silence in your discussion, don't stress about filling it. Sometimes young people need time to open up, even if you have a close relationship with them already!

•**Be supportive and empower.** You might not necessarily agree with everything they say, but let them know you stand by them and their right to make their own decisions and have their own opinions.



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS 101 - PART 1

Relationships "with our family, friends, romantic partners or goldfish" define many aspects of our lives, but learning to navigate them can be a challenge. In part 1 of this workshop, we explore who is in our circle and what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like. You'll be able to reflect on personal values and build self-esteem through a variety of activities that help prepare for challenges in various relationships. **Please note: this workbook is best for youth aged 11-14.**

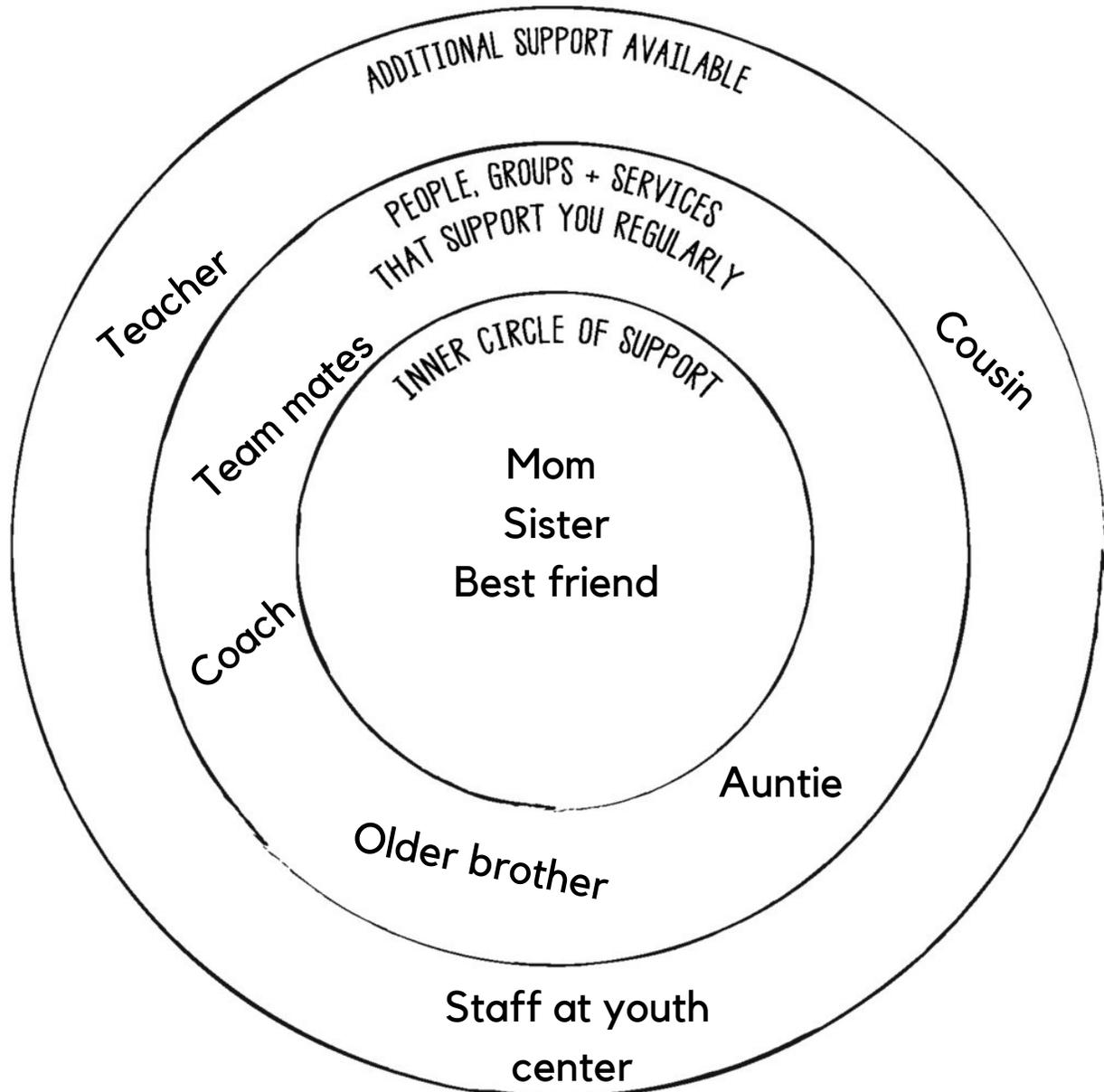
"THE MOST VALUABLE THING I
LEARNED IN THIS WORKSHOP WAS
HOW TO EVALUATE MY
RELATIONSHIPS AND CHANGE
THEM FOR THE BETTER."

We've facilitated
over 30 Healthy
Relationships
workshops for
youth aged 12-18
since 2017.

Activity 1: Who's in your circle?

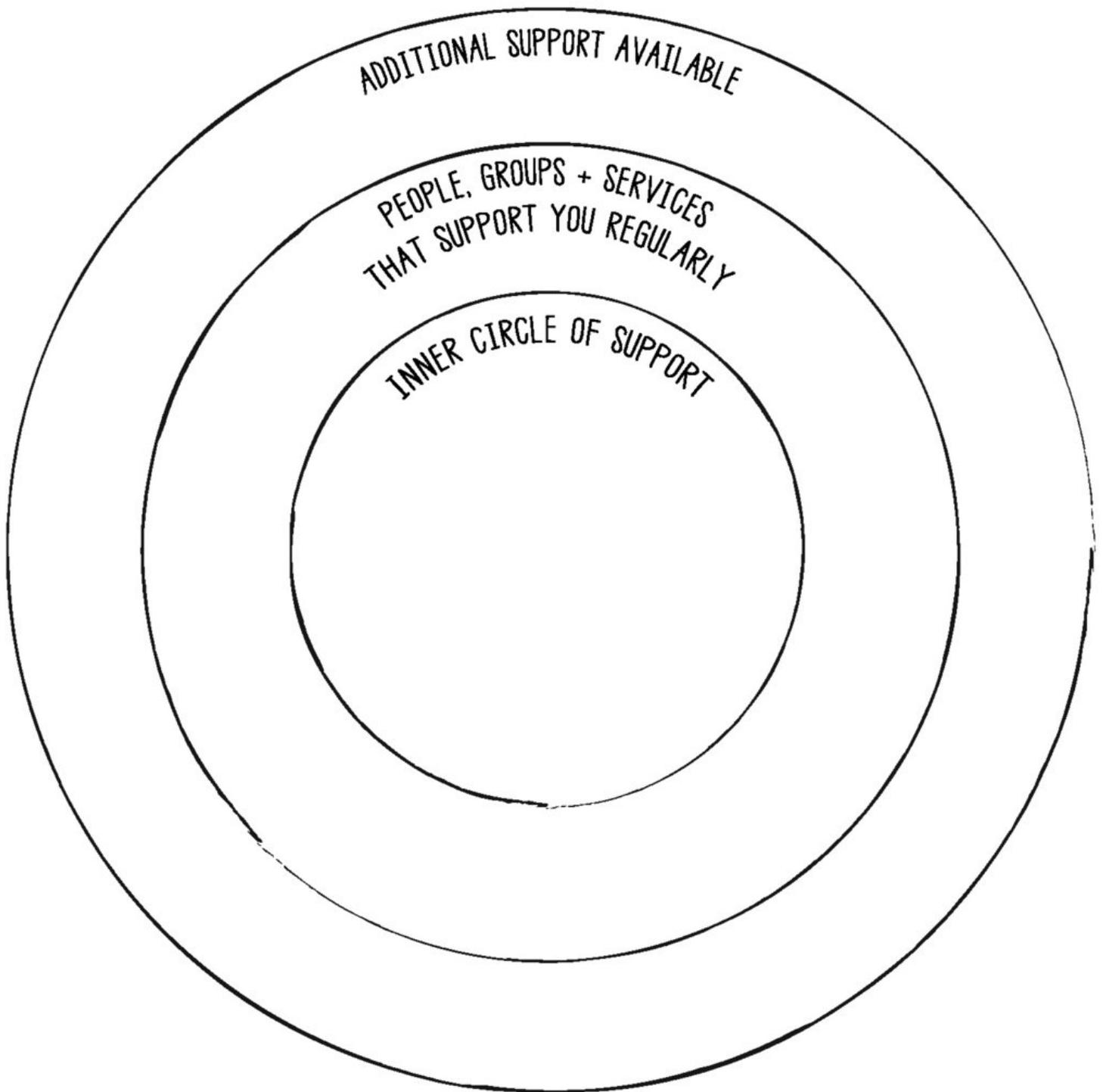
Brainstorm what types of relationships you are in and who is part of your circle of support. Adults and youth can each fill out their own. Get as specific as you are both comfortable with. Here is a sample of ours!

CIRCLES OF SUPPORT



And a blank one for you to fill out!

CIRCLES OF SUPPORT



****Activity note:** Everyone's circle looks different! You might only have one person in your inner circle, and that's ok! The goal is to reflect on the people who you trust, who support you and why.

Activity 2: Inside vs. Outside

What are the qualities of someone who is "in" your circle? Why would someone be "outside" of your circle? Create a list and discuss together.

*Inside/
Healthy*

-
-
-
-
-

*Outside/
Unhealthy*

-
-
-
-
-

Debrief 2: Inside vs. Outside

Here is a sample of our list of qualities of someone who is inside vs. someone who is outside our circle. Compare it to your own - what did we miss?

Healthy

Supportive and encouraging
Interested in your hobbies
Helpful
Gives you space to do the things you enjoy
You understand each others boundaries
We take responsibility for our actions and feelings
You are open and honest with each other
You are able to have two-way communication
There is respect and trust
Kind and caring

Unhealthy

Lack of respect for boundaries and consent
Jealousy
Talking down to or insulting each other
Possessive or not giving each other space to do things on your own
Gossiping
Poor communication
Controlling
Too dependent
Intimidating
Uses the silent treatment
Abusive

Activity 3: Your non-negotiable values

Take a look at these "Would you rather" questions. Circle the answer the best applies to you. If you can't choose, circle the whole question!

Would you rather...

Ex. Do homework OR Do chores

Be out on the land OR Be practicing your art

Be honest OR Be independent

Practice your faith OR Practice your language

Be with friends OR Be with your pets

Travel OR Play sports

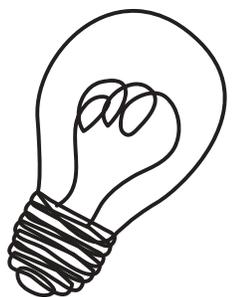
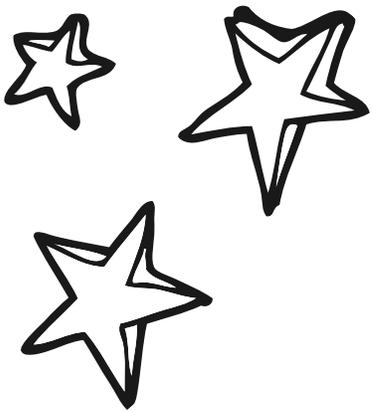
Be healthy OR Have money

Have freedom OR Be kind

Have a strong family OR Have a strong community

Activity 3: Your non-negotiable values

How did it feel to choose between the values on the last page? Which ones were the most difficult to choose between? What would you do if a friend or partner asked you to choose between these things? Use the space below to journal about how this would feel.



Debrief 3: Your non-negotiable values

Sometimes relationships require compromise. Compromise is when two people (or groups of people) reach an agreement by changing their goals or by each giving up part of their demand. Compromise is important in relationships but it is also important to know yourself and know what you are not willing to give up. If a partner, friend or other ever asks you to give up these non-negotiable values – ask yourself if the relationship you are in is really worth it.