



in Partnership with



## UTAS Pathway Companions Learning Circle Process

Pathway Companion Learning Circles were first formed in 2021, to support the ongoing development of the University of Tasmania (UTAS) Advanced Leadership for Guiding Transformation Professional Practice Pathway (PPP).

These Learning Circles have a mixed membership; University Associates, Alumni of PPP & invited clients of WJQ Consulting.

UTAS University Associates, are those who have volunteered to assist with the PPP in a variety of ways and have been officially appointed by the university. Alumni of the PPP program also often volunteer to participate, and invited private coaching or mentoring clients from WJQuinn Consulting, are included with permission of the UTAS School of Medicine.

Pathway Companion Learning Circles follow a similar philosophy, practice and format to the Learning Circles included in the PPP for the student cohort. This includes the practice of utilising the major textbook and supporting books and resources, to explore the three key themes of the PPP: Transformed Thinking, Inner Transformation and Enabling Transformation.

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## Pathway Companion Role

As well as following the more general philosophy and practice of Learning Circles the Pathway Companion groups fulfil three additional roles;

1. Opportunity to become familiar with the material included within the Advanced Leadership for Guiding Transformation Professional Practice Pathway.
2. Opportunity to experience, or continue to experience, the unique learning and development that can be obtained through membership of a Learning Circle.
3. Opportunity to learn and practice the role of Learning Circle Facilitation in a supported environment as part of the requirements for endorsement to become a Facilitator for the Guiding Transformation Program.

## Number of Learning Circles

The number of Pathway Companion Learning Circles operating in any given year is confirmed depending upon participating numbers, but it is likely to be two. These are likely to be held monthly on the fourth Tuesday or the fourth Thursday each month in the evenings for up to two hours.

## Logistics

Circle Groups are likely to be entirely by Zoom connection enabling distant connection. Exact start and finishing times will be agreed by each group.

## Philosophy and Practice

A Learning Circle is a group of 6 – 12 people who are matched together with a facilitator(s). Members contract to meet each month to engage in in-depth discussion related to their transformational leadership journey. Through deep dialogue, greater levels of self-awareness and mindfulness are developed through presence, vigilant attention and learning from others. Exploring both success and failure. Skills and competence in communication, problem solving, listening, working with silence, coping with complexity, ambiguity and expressing vulnerability are refined through observation and practice within the small group setting.

Learning Circle Groups are formed at the beginning of each academic year but may have additional members added throughout the year depending upon other circumstances.

## Benefits

There are a number of benefits from this particular type of Learning Circle:

1. Research findings on the nature of transformational leadership, stress the importance of the so-called soft skills of leadership (emotional intelligence, inspiration, communication, mindfulness, mentoring and coaching) that require self-reflection, insight and development of contemplative practices and different forms of learning. Learning Circles provide an ideal and unique environment for this to occur.

2. Learning Circles provide a safe and effective place to engage in peer-learning and gain higher levels of self-knowledge. They allow for exploration of complexity and ambiguity and support the development of transformational leadership.
3. Learning Circles provide an opportunity to learn from others' experiences and expressed styles of leadership.

### **Facilitator(s) Role**

- *Introduces* new content related to transformational leadership and mindfulness for the group to consider.
- *Models* a welcoming, accepting, open tone for engagement.
- *Guides* participation so no individual is allowed to dominate or transgress ground rules agreed by the group.
- *Listens* carefully to what participants are saying.
- *Is open* to exploring difficult questions and does not avoid disagreement or discomfort.
- *Appreciates and demonstrates* that 'embracing of silence' is essential in the process.
- *Summarises and focuses* discussion where appropriate.
- *Supports* the establishment and holding of space.

### **Guidelines for Participants**

- ❖ *Come* with a welcoming, accepting, open attitude.
- ❖ *Practice* active listening and seek to understand with a willingness to learn and to potentially be changed by what you hear.
- ❖ *Ask* for clarification if confused and use open questions.
- ❖ *Use* practices for personal self-regulation when needed to maintain safety for oneself and all group members.
- ❖ *Cultivate* courage to share one's own opinions and beliefs.
- ❖ *Speak* honestly.
- ❖ *Let go* of any need to fix or judge another or yourself.
- ❖ *Be willing* to not know and embrace silence as an important part of the group learning process.
- ❖ *Be willing* to be surprised.
- ❖ *Speak* succinctly, aware of the time and the size of the group.

### **Rules of Engagement<sup>1</sup>**

- Agree to arrive on time to respect everyone in the group.
- Agree to take responsibility for one's own process including nervous system. self-regulation and call on help from coaches, mentors, and facilitators when needed.
- Agree to double confidentiality: Confidentiality means participants of the learning circle agree to never speak of what is shared within the learning circle to anyone outside the learning circle. Double confidentiality adds the agreement to not discuss what occurs in the learning circle with learning circle participants outside of the learning circle environment unless a clear agreement to do so has been established.
- Agree to always show respect for diversity and differences of opinion.

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<sup>1</sup> This are the Minimum Draft and is to be discussed and confirmed by each group

- Agree to give each person in the group the time and space to contribute in every session, and honour that the contribution could be silence itself. If the contribution is silence, that will be held and respected by the group.
- Agree that any who feels it necessary may excuse themselves from the group for whatever reason at any time.
- Agree that everyone participates as peers....no one is 'an expert'.
- Make use of the Safety Net (Culture, Values and Behaviours) to guide the function of learning circle processes<sup>2</sup>.
- Other agreements as negotiated by the PPP group.

## Textbooks

### 1. Carol Pearson; The Transforming Leader

Pearson, C. S. (Ed.). (2012). *The Transforming Leader: New approaches to leadership for the twenty-first century* (1st ed.). Collins Business.

*This is the main textbook and will be used extensively throughout the PPP.*

*Available as an e-book through Booktopia or through the UTAS SOM in hard copy upon request. UTAS has a stock for students to purchase to assist with access.*

### 2. David Daniels; The Essential Enneagram: The Definitive Personality Test and Self-Discovery Guide

Daniels, D., & Price, V. (2000). *The Essential Enneagram: The Definitive Personality Test and Self-Discovery Guide*. Harper Collins

*Available as an e-book through Booktopia*

### 3. Warren Redman; Emotional Fitness Coaching

Redman, W. (2012). *Emotional Fitness Coaching : How to develop a positive and productive workplace for leaders, managers and coaches*. Kogan Page

*Available as an e-book or hardcopy through Booktopia*

### 4. Ginger Lapid-Bogda, What type of leader are you?

Lapid-Bogda, G. (2007). *What type of leader are you? : Using the enneagram system to identify and grow your Leadership strengths and achieve maximum success*. McGraw-Hill.

### 5. Carol Pearson; What stories are you living?: Discover Your Archetypes-Transform Your Life!

Pearson, C.S. (2021). *What stories are you living? : Discover Your Archetypes-Transform Your Life!* Centre for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

*Available as an e-book through Booktopia and Amazon or other books suppliers in hard copy.*

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<sup>2</sup> (See Attachment)