What is a study circle?

The study circle is a popular and useful method for adult education. It originated in Sweden in the late 19th century. Today the method is used in many other countries when people have a common interest to learn, analyse and find solutions to social, political or community issues or problems. Study circles allow complex topics to be broken down into manageable parts.

The study circle is formed by a small group of about six to twelve participants who work together for a certain period of time with a common problem or topic. The members meet once or twice a week for a couple of hours at a time and work according to a study plan. The study circle continues as long as necessary, usually eight to ten weeks or until the group is satisfied with the result*.* One member of the study circle acts as a leader or [facilitator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facilitator) to keep dialogues flowing and on track, and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be involved in the discussions. Choose someone to make notes at each meeting and summarize what you have come up with. Appoint a person/secretary who collects all notes and documents the activities.

***In a study circle learning depends on interaction among the participants. The work within study circles is built around the participants’ search for knowledge according to their own needs and interests.***

Three components are important to a successful study circle:

* a study-plan or study materials produced specifically for the study circle
* a leader who guides the work of the study group
* the knowledge, skills and experiences among the participants

At last:

Before the study circle ends ask yourselves - where do we go next? Shall we form another study circle, work with another problem? Include the same participants or invite new ones? Spread the word among our friends? Exchange experiences with other villages? There are endless possibilities.

Good Luck!

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