

# INNER CIRCLE

## OBJECTIVE

- Help students to recognize which of their friends/family members make up their Inner Circle.
- Determine the importance of choosing your Inner Circle wisely.
- Understand that to accomplish goals, the people on your team matter.

## PRE-GAME

- 1-2 tent poles, unfolded and laid out on the floor. Only 1 tent pole is necessary if the class is 12 students or less.
- Candy

## LIFE/SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

### Relationship/Interpersonal Skills:

Developing positive relationships

Resisting negative social pressure

Seeking or offering support and help when needed

## CHALLENGE

### TENT POLE CHALLENGE

Line up the students evenly on either side of the tent pole, facing the pole. Instruct them to bend one arm up to approximately chest height, close to their body and have them point their index finger at the person in front of them. Lay the tent pole on top of everybody's index fingers, so that all fingers are touching the bottom of the pole. The objective is for everybody to work together to bring the tent pole all the way to the ground without anyone's index finger ever coming off the bottom of the pole, with no one ever putting any downward pressure on the top of the pole with his thumb or any other body part. If anyone's index finger comes off of the pole, they must start over again at chest height.

## COACH'S COMMENTARY

A sports team is made up of players, trainers and coaches. Not everyone on a team is necessarily best friends but all have a role to fulfill. Some teammates help each other play the game (think quarterback and wide receivers), some teammates defend the ball and rarely score (think linebacker) and some teammates are specialized with limited playing time but highly necessary (think kicker). Trainers help the team stay healthy and fit. Coaches offer strategy and advice and teach the athletes what they need to know to win.

### In-ner cir-cle

*noun*

1. a small, intimate and often influential group of people.

Everybody has a “team” of people surrounding them. The “team” is comprised of the influencers in our lives. Not everyone on your team is your closest friend but they can still have an impact on your life. Most people can easily identify a number of individuals they consider friends, but they only have 4 - 5 friends who actually have a measurable impact on the way they behave or think. This is the Inner Circle. Throughout the lesson, help the students identify who is in their Inner Circle, impacting their decision making and whether those people should have that influence over them.

## PLAYBOOK

### ASK THE STUDENTS

What were the dynamics of the teams in the Tent Pole Challenge?

Was everyone participating?

Did it make a difference when one person wasn't listening or trying?

Did it help when one person took the lead to coordinate?

Transition the discussion from the challenge questions to talking about a team and then the relationships that make up our lives. Friendships play an important part in our lives. The friends we choose today have a considerable impact on our future. Friends help us to realize our passions and to work through our problems and to develop our social skills. They also affect our confidence and self-esteem.

Throughout our time in this world, we will make a great number of friends and acquaintances. Some friendships will last for only a season of our life, while others will last a lifetime. Only a few of those relationships at any given time will have an impact on who we are trying to become. Those few people—the ones who influence our character—should be in our inner circle.

One of the most important choices we make is who we allow to be in our Inner Circle on an ongoing basis. The people in our Inner Circle will often pay the consequences or reap the rewards for our choices.

### ASK THE STUDENTS

Why is it important to have people of different ages/relationships/backgrounds on your team?

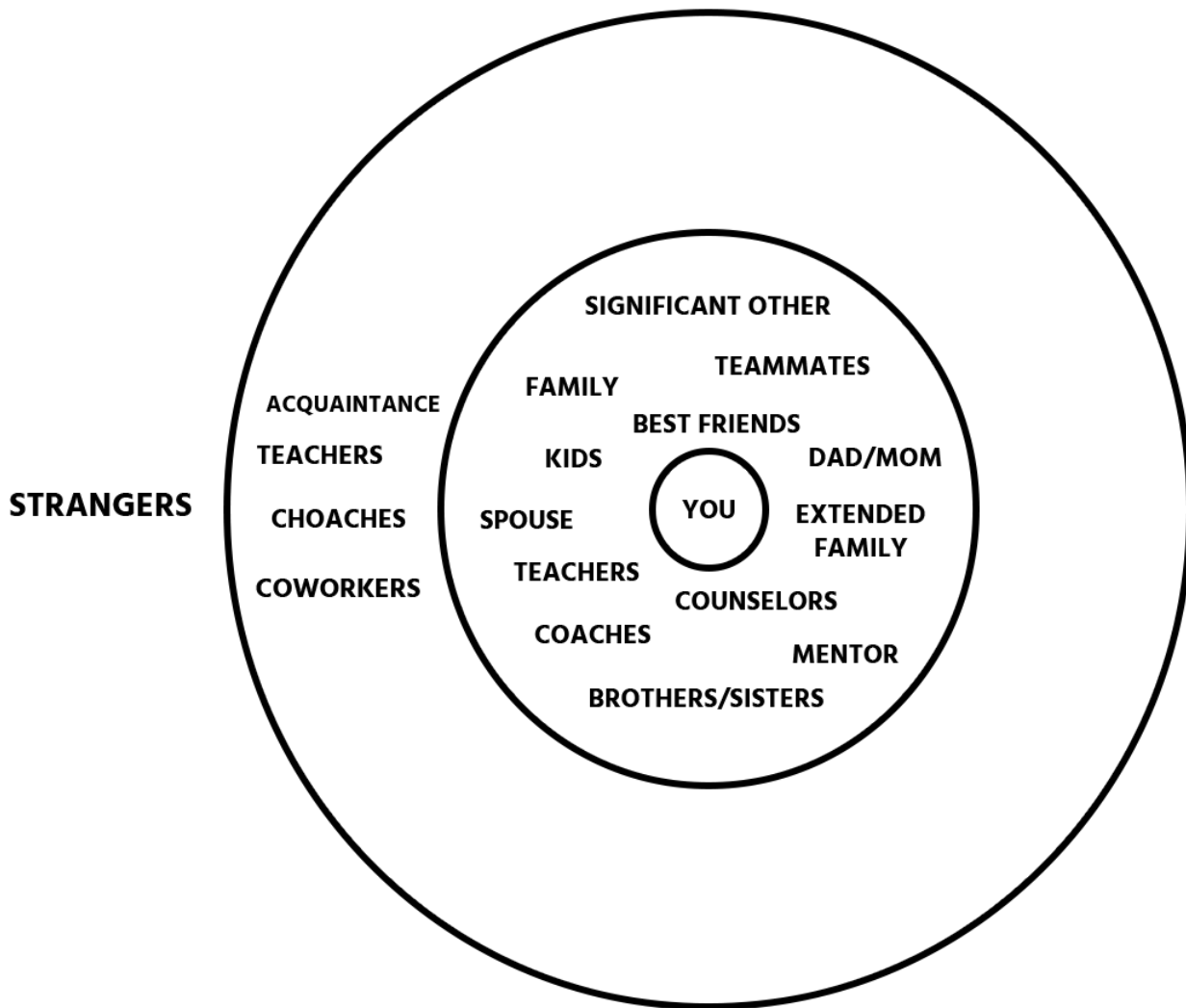
Do you think it's important to have “coaches” or mentors in your life?

We're always going to need other people to help us in life. No one ever accomplished a dream entirely on their own. And it's important to realize sometimes we won't have power over who we do life with. The tent pole challenge was an example of a time when everybody had to work together in order to accomplish the goal. The reason it may have taken more than one attempt was because a) not everyone wanted to work together, b) not everyone had the same strategy and c) no one had power

over who they worked with. It might have been easier if everyone was able to choose who participated in the challenge. But often that's how the real world works. We don't usually get to choose who our coworkers are, who our teachers are, who our classmates are, etc. But we do get to choose who will be in our Inner Circle.

### ASK THE STUDENTS

What type of people can be in our Inner and Outer Circle?



## ASK THE STUDENTS

What qualities moves someone into or out of your Inner and Outer Circle?

Next to the Inner Circle Image, write two columns and put answers into the correct category.

### Inner Circle:

- Fun/Positive Energy
- Healthy communication
- Time together
- Accepting
- Respectful
- Shared Interest
- Good advice
- Consistent
- Trust
- Honest

### Outer Circle:

- Drama/Negative Energy
- Argue/Fight
- Unavailable
- Puts you/people down
- Not loyal
- Different places in life
- Makes risky decisions
- Unreliable
- Doesn't keep word
- Lies

Lastly, emphasize the importance of having a positive mentor in your life. Have one or two of the mentors give a personal example of a time when they did have a mentor or even when they wished they would have had someone in that role. Encourage the students to find an older, wiser person—whether it's their INSPIRE mentor, a youth worker, pastor, family member, teacher or coach—to be a mentor. Their mentor should be available for conversation and help, as well as be someone they can model. As a final question, ask the students to raise their hand if they have a person like that in their life. If they do not, then tell them that the INSPIRE mentors are there for them.

## FINAL BUZZER

"If you go looking for a friend, you're going to find they're very scarce. If you go out to be a friend, you'll find them everywhere." Zig Ziglar

"Some of the biggest challenges in relationships come from the fact that most people enter a relationship in order to get something: they're trying to find someone who's going to make them feel good. In reality, the only way a relationship will last is if you see your relationship as a place that you go to give, and not a place that you go to take." Anthony Robbins