

Objective: To hear the advice of internal voices.

TIME REQUIRED About an hour

RISK LEVEL High

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED Any number of participants, plus one facilitator

PROCEDURE Please take the following steps:

1. Divide the participants into two groups of equal size.
2. Ask one group to be seated in a circle and the other group members to stand behind a seated member. There should be quiet music suitable for meditation playing in the background to facilitate concentration.
3. Have those standing place their hands on the shoulders of the seated members and stand quietly waiting for a message, thought, insight, or suggestion to come into consciousness.
4. Indicate when the standing person should move to the next seated person in the circle, usually after about 1 to 2 minutes.
5. Tell the standing person to whisper the thought or message that has come to his or her mind to the seated person before moving to the next person.
6. When each standing person has completed the circle, have the standing people and seated people exchange places and repeat the same experience.
7. At the end of the experience, ask members to describe what they experienced both as a standing speaker and as a seated listener (if they would like to share their experiences).

DEBRIEFING This experience was developed by Native American groups for whom spiritual resources are a profoundly important source of advice and energy. In directing this experience, the leader should be sensitive to the fact that it is based on a spiritual

activity designed for use among participants who have respect for the spiritual process. The leader should verify that no participant would be offended by this adaptation of that spiritual experience before proceeding. Debriefing needs to be done with sensitivity so that participants do not reveal more of their feelings than they might want to. At the same time, participants should be allowed to comment spontaneously. Discussion questions may include the following:

1. Did you feel any special connection with your partners during the experience?
2. Were you apprehensive about this experience?
3. Which was more powerful for you, listening to comments or giving comments?
4. What function might this experience serve in a culture?
5. What might be some negative consequences of this experience?

INSIGHT Taking time to listen to one's internal voices can teach important insights.