

In Lak Ech

Tu eres mi otro yo.

You are the other me.

Si te hago daño a ti,

If I do harm to you,

Me hago daño a mi mismo.

I do harm to myself.

Si te amo y respeto,

If I love and respect you,

Me amo y me respeto yo.

I love and respect myself.

From Mayan-inspired poem "Pensamiento Serpentino"  
by Luis Valdez (1971)



**CONFFLICT SOLUTIONS CENTER**

*Community Mediation and  
Restorative Justice Partnership*

## **Accountability Circles**



805-349-8943  
[www.cscsb.org](http://www.cscsb.org)

**ACCOUNTABILITY CIRCLES** provide youth with an open, yet structured space for honest dialogue that challenges previously held attitudes.

**ACCOUNTABILITY CIRCLES** encourage honest reflection on the perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors that have brought the youth to their current circumstances, which in many cases include suspension or expulsion from their school or district and/or involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Basic questions are used in various ways repeatedly throughout the circle dialogue in order for everyone to explore:

- Who are you truly?
- What does your life mean to you?
- How are your attitudes and decisions supporting or detracting from your life?
- How can you learn to use your inherent power in life-affirming ways?
- How does your individual life form a part of the greater life of your community?



These questions summarize the overall orientation of the **ACCOUNTABILITY CIRCLE** process, which is meant to provide an experiential platform for youth to make deep-seated changes in their relationship to themselves and how they live, allowing them to take their rightful place as a creative participant in the life of the community.

- At its heart, the accountability circle is a process of initiation, where youth can gain direct insight into the power and purpose of being human.
- The process of assuming real responsibility as human beings seamlessly lends itself to restorative practices and the restorative circle format.
- One of the foundational principles of restorative practices is an awareness that everything is connected and that people's choices in attitude, action, and speech affect other people and our world, whether we acknowledge those effects or not.

**ACCOUNTABILITY CIRCLES** last 12 weeks, one 2-hour Circle per week. They are open entry.

**For youth ages 13-17** as an alternative to suspension, expulsion or as diversion.

Each week one of the following core accountability circle dialogue topics is used as the centerpiece for the participants from initiation to graduation:

1. Restorative Justice and the Restorative Circle
2. Power Through Stories
3. Respect
4. Empathy and Compassion
5. Making Things Right
6. Apologies
7. Anger
8. Violence
9. Decision-Making
10. Life Goals
11. Critical Values

**Fee:** Sliding fee scale \$60—\$120

**Where:** 705 So. McClelland  
Santa Maria  
Cornerstone Community room

**For more information about how to enroll contact Lynn at 805 349-8943 or [lbecerra@cscsb.org](mailto:lbecerra@cscsb.org)**