



"Rhythms of Life"
Drum Circle Grief Ceremony
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Opening: *G Flute Improvisation*

Self-introduction

Discussion: Music as a form of expression & communication

- Music in tribal cultures
 - Drum is sacred
 - Brings people together
 - Used to communicate
 - river & talking drums
 - Drum circle
 - circle of life
 - Mitokoye Oyasin = All my Relatives
 - each other
 - ancestors, those who have died
 - all life
 - Earth itself
 - drum & circle as a symbol of our connectedness
 - drum rhythms as mirror to the rhythms of life
 - expression
 - equality- equal distance from center-
 - each person gets a chance to be heard
 - we are each sacred
 - every one listens
- Music as expression
 - nonverbal- what we might not be able to say with words
 - expressive tradition of drums & flute

Opening ceremony (optional):

- 4 directions
- Tobacco / Corn Meal
- Prayer

Call & Response: "Bright Light"

I am a bright light
I am a bright light
Perfect just the way I am

We are all bright lights
Sharing joys and sharing sorrow
Honoring the ones we love

Call & Response singing (improvised)

- Lead with drum & voice.
- vowel sounds
- African Hey! Ho!, etc.
- sounds of different emotions
 - Ask participants to identify emotions used

The sounds of emotions

- Play examples of what different emotions sound like
- Ask participants to identify emotions used (appropriate to age)
- The rhythms of life & loss
 - life before loss
 - loss
 - time after loss
 - out of balance / out of rhythm
 - finding a new rhythm (integration of loss)

Pass the drum / telling the story

- Please tell us your name and the name of the person you lost,
- Or "tell us your story with the drum?"
- Or "how do you feel about your loss?"
- Or "how do you feel right now?"
- "What would you say to the person you lost without using words?"

Rotating conversation

- 2 drums opposite sides of circle- clockwise
 - participants take turns conversing, then passing.

Drumming**-THE RULES (before handing out instruments!):**

- “part of communicating is good listening- please listen to the directions”
- “respect each person’s right to be heard”
- show cut-off, crescendo, decrescendo, down, & solo signs
- explain "rumble"

-Modeling and responsive playing

- Chris lead with drum
- Staff assist group responses (when available)

-Group Improvisation

(introduce rainsticks, ocean drum, gong, & triangle)

-“Start by listening, when you can feel the heartbeat- join in”

-complimentary rhythms

(start heartbeat- participants join when ready)

-Play:

-soft/loud

-fast/slow

-emotions

-mad/happy/sad/afraid

-exchanges

-one side vs. other side

-male vs. female

-kids vs. adults

-instrument types

-sound vs. silence

-your own part based on you’re feelings

-playing to honor yourself, and the person you have lost.

-end in rumble or "on 1"

Listening to the Silence- *instruments down*

-Silence and taking time to hear it is a part of understanding our place in the rhythms of life.

-Moment of silence- put down instruments

-Rhythm/Music is a combination of sound and silence

-Some still trying to find our new rhythms in our lives/families/communities

-others have found it a difficult dance

-life is not always a dance we understand, but we are a part of it in every moment

-“This has been a (hopefully) fun experience, but also a time when we have come together and connected as people to share our experiences of loss...”

Closing: *Lakota Lullaby- 6 hole flute*