

— B O N U S G U I D E —



Safe Circles



Choose people who lift you up

Dede Okeke

BEFORE WE BEGIN

A Note From Dede



Welcome, friend.

The people around you shape how you heal. Some give you strength. Some take it away. This guide helps you build a circle that is safe, kind, and real.

How to use this guide

- Read one page at a time.
- Think about the people in your life.
- Be honest, and be gentle.
- Finish with your Circle Page on page 11.

This guide is general advice. Every family and friendship is different. Take what fits.

With love,

Dede Okeke

WHY IT MATTERS

Why Your Circle Matters



You become like the people you spend time with. Their words sink in. Their moods rub off.

When you are hurting, this matters even more. Kind people help you heal. Careless people can make the hurt deeper.

A safe circle is not big. It is steady.

You do not need many people

Two or three people you can trust are worth more than a crowd. Quality matters more than number.

You get to choose

You may not choose your family. But you do choose who gets your time, your secrets, and your trust.

THREE RINGS

Your Three Rings



Draw three rings, like a target. Put people in the ring that fits.

The inner ring

Very few people. They know the real you. They keep your secrets. You can call them at night.

The middle ring

Friends and family you enjoy. You share some things, but not your deepest ones.

The outer ring

Work friends, neighbors, and people you know. Polite and friendly. No deep secrets.

Not everyone belongs in the inner ring. Moving someone to an outer ring is not cruel. It is wise.

LIFTERS AND DRAINERS

Who Lifts You?



After you spend time with someone, how do you feel? Your body will tell you.

Lifter	Drainer
Listens to you	Talks over you
Keeps your secrets	Shares your business
Cheers your wins	Is jealous or cold
Tells you the truth, kindly	Tells you what you want to hear, or is harsh
You feel lighter	You feel tired

Nobody is only one or the other. But look at the pattern.

GIVE AS YOU WISH TO GET

Be a Safe Friend



A good circle goes both ways. Be the kind of friend you want to have.

- **Listen** without rushing to fix.
- **Keep** what you are told private.
- **Show up** when you say you will.
- **Be honest**, with kindness.
- **Celebrate** other people's good news.
- **Say sorry** when you are wrong.

You attract what you practice.

Notice how you treat the people close to you. Small habits of care build strong bonds.

SHARING

Who Hears Your Story?



When you are hurt, you want to tell everyone. But not everyone should hear. Go slowly.

Before you share, ask

1. Do they keep secrets?
2. Do they listen, or do they lecture?
3. Do they judge me, or care for me?
4. Will I feel better or worse after?

Share a small piece first. See what they do with it. If they are kind, you can share more.

You never owe anyone your whole story.

Step Back Kindly



Sometimes a person drains you again and again. You do not need to fight them or make a scene. You can step back, quietly.

Ways to step back

- See them less often.
- Keep visits short.
- Meet in public places.
- Do not share personal news.
- Reply later, not right away.

Words you can use

- “I cannot talk long today.”
- “I am not ready to talk about that.”

LIMITS

Say No Without Guilt



A limit is a fence with a gate. It shows where you stop and others begin. It is not a wall.

Simple sentences

- “No, thank you.”
- “That does not work for me.”
- “I need time to think. I will tell you later.”
- “I love you, and I am not going to discuss that.”

Remember

You do not have to explain a lot. You do not have to say sorry for taking care of yourself. If someone is upset by your limit, that does not mean you did wrong.

Make New Friends



It can feel hard to meet people after a hurt. Start small.

Where to look

- A class, club, or group you enjoy.
- A place of worship or community group.
- Volunteering.
- A neighbor you smile at.

Small steps

1. Say hello.
2. Ask one question.
3. Plan one short meeting, like a cup of tea.

Be patient. Real friendship grows slowly, like a plant. It needs time and water.

YOUR PAGE

My Circle Page



Write down the people and habits that will keep you well.

Person 1: _____

Person 2: _____

Person 3: _____

I will reach out to: _____

One thing to do together: _____

Keep this page where you can see it.



THANK YOU



You deserve people who are kind, honest, and steady. Choose them with care. Be that kind of person too.

This guide gives general encouragement and education. It is not medical, legal, or mental health advice. If you are in danger, please contact local emergency or crisis help.

Thank You!

Your Healing Journey Begins Here.



A Beautiful New Chapter Awaits You

"Thank you for choosing yourself, your peace, and your healing. May these pages remind you that your story is far from over."

*With love,
Dede Okeke*