

Building a friendship with someone in poverty will have a life-changing effect on both of you.

LEARNING TOGETHER

Participants are called Circle Leaders, and volunteers are called Allies. After both groups receive training, two Allies are matched with every Circle Leader. These intentional friendships are the foundation of the Circles model. Circle Leaders set their own goals and run the weekly meetings. As an Ally, your job is to listen, ask questions, and make suggestions. You'll help Circle Leaders use their unique gifts and skills to reach their goals, and Circle Leaders will help you better understand poverty in your community.

CIRCLES GIVES YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO

- > Support people as they leave poverty for good
- > Use your experience and networks to help others
- > Improve your problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills
- > Expand your perspective about the culture of poverty
- > Take an active role in improving your community



WHAT
PEOPLE
SAY



“Being a Circles Ally is like being a VIP on the floor at a Knicks game. You see the ‘thrill of victory’ up-close-and-personal.”

— Ken Smith (Circles Ally)



“When you listen intently to individuals and families living in poverty and engage in relationships with them, you develop a different understanding of their circumstances and a deep desire to create change.”

— Jeannie Chaffin (Circles Supporter)



“I can’t come to Circles with an attitude of ‘I can fix you’ or even ‘I can show you the way.’ In Circles, everyone—volunteers and participants—has something to offer to the group.”

— Sherri Brown (Circles Chapter Director)

HOW IT WORKS

- > All participants and volunteers receive training
- > Circle Leaders set goals, and Allies support Leaders as they meet their goals
- > Circle Leaders and Allies gather for weekly large group meetings
- > Monthly sessions engage community leaders in the work of poverty reduction
- > Most families achieve financial stability around the 18-month mark
- > Victories and milestones are celebrated together
- > Friendships formed in the group last a lifetime

LEADERS & ALLIES COMMIT TO

- > Building a friendship
- > Attending meetings regularly
- > Being open to new perspectives
- > Being honest
- > Trusting the process even when it's challenging