

CIRCLE OF CARE & CONCERN (CCC)

History & Organization

The Circle of Care and Concern (CCC) first came into service as an experiment of the Committee on Conflict Transformation (CCT) at Summer Sessions 2016. The clerk of CCT served as clerk of the CCC, meeting each morning with the various branches, or “spokes” of the Circle, which included CCT, the Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (AIT), JYM Coordinators and the clerk (or designated representative) of Sessions Committee. Before 2016, the clerk of Sessions Committee had been the de facto “point person” for infractions of the NYYM Agreement and/or Silver Bay rules, and for assistance, s/he called on others, usually including the General Secretary, the clerk and assistant clerk of NYYM, sometimes the clerk of GSCC and often a person with specific psychological training.

After Summer Sessions 2017, it became clear that dealing with infractions was not sufficiently clearly organized or grounded in restorative justice practices. The work fell to Friends whose work during summer sessions was already extensive, so a working group was formed by Liaison to clarify procedures. This document establishes another “spoke” on the wheel of CCC, specifically to deal with infractions; the Community Agreements Response Team (CART).

Responding to Breaches in the Community Agreements at Summer Sessions

INTRODUCTION

Building community is an ongoing practice and commitment, requiring integrity, transparency, vulnerability and continuing revelation. At Summer Sessions in Silver Bay, NY, the gathered Friends accept responsibility for living up to our agreements, for keeping each other safe, and for saying no when necessary. The document “NYYM Participant Expectations & Agreements” is published in Spark as well as on line and in the Sunday Quaker Update. Registration requires signing the Expectations & Agreements by each Summer Session registrants. These include the rules of the local Silver Bay community and the Silver Bay YMCA.

Here are some of the underlying Quaker principles we try to honor when our Community Agreements are broken:

Inappropriate behavior at Yearly Meeting gatherings should be addressed in the manner of Friends: prayerfully and with an openness to Spirit, and a commitment to listen to all concerned with open minds and hearts.

Being open to Spirit means that there is no pre-determined outcome to the process. The process should be seen as an opportunity for growth and learning, not as a vehicle for punishment.

The person who has misbehaved needs to be part of the resolution. Friends across the age range will be included in the process; we feel it is particularly important for young people to be included when a young person has misbehaved.

CIRCLE OF CARE AND CONCERN

The Circle of Care and Concern (CCC) is made up of/has members from the Community Agreements Response Team (CART), Committee on Conflict Transformation (CCT), Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (AIT), Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Coordinators, and the clerk or a designated representative from Sessions Committee. The CCC meets each morning/daily at Summer Sessions. Concerns about inappropriate behavior that have been brought to members are considered. Reports on the work being done to address previous concerns are also part of the meeting. Others in the Circle may provide counsel to any of the participating individuals and groups. All issues will be handled using the principles outlined above. Elders from throughout the Yearly Meeting may be called on for assistance by any of these groups, with the possible exception of the AIT, which has specific legal requirements.

Each of the constituent groups of CCC has the primary responsibility for these infractions:

- **Community Agreements Response Team (CART):** The team may work with a person or persons who may have been injured or offended by another's actions, or situations in which someone appears to be in violation of a rule or agreement. They may also work with the person or persons who have reported or observed a situation. If an issue is primarily a dispute between individuals or between an individual and a group, CART may find alternative and appropriate ways to address the issue. For example, the team may assemble a restorative practices circle. CART works closely with the other bodies represented on CCC. CART is expected to take action in accord with Quaker practices and values.
- **Committee on Conflict Transformation (CCT):** This NYYM committee deals mainly with conflicts between individuals or between an individual and a group. CCT is available to offer assistance to CART or to individuals who request help with a conflict.
- **Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (AIT):** Any allegation of child sexual abuse is referred directly to AIT, which has distinct guidelines including privacy and criteria for reporting to local and/or New York State authorities. The protocol for AIT is available on the NYYM website under General Services Coordinating Committee, Resources for Clerks of Committees.
- **Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM):** When a report is received of someone under the age of 18 breaking one of the NYYM or Silver Bay rules and guidelines, this will come to CCC for consideration and resolution. The JYM Coordinator(s), clerk of JYM Committee or a JYM volunteer maybe asked to bring the concern if it occurred when JYM is in session, or to join in the deliberations if it occurred outside of JYM time. The parent or sponsor/guardian should be involved in the discernment.
- **ALL GROUPS ABOVE:** Follow up after Summer Sessions may be appropriate with any of the various participants and his/her meeting and, if under the age of 18, with his/her parents.
- **Silver Bay Staff:** Silver Bay shares responsibility with us, particularly when there is an emergency or when their staff and property are involved. Sessions Committee works closely with Silver Bay and with all of our programs. NYYM's Summer Session Liaison to Silver Bay or someone from Sessions Committee will work with Silver Bay to address problems.

MORE ON THE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS RESPONSE TEAM

Members of CART

The three or four members (and alternates) of CART are appointed each year by Sessions Committee. The selection is not limited to members of Sessions Committee or the CCC. CART includes at least one or two younger as well as older Friends. CART members may be reappointed for subsequent Summer Sessions at the discretion of Sessions Committee. CART members and their charge will be included on the Summer Sessions website and in other notices. They will also be introduced at the beginning of Summer Sessions.

Connections and Resources

The NYYM Participant Expectations and Agreements provide for the possibility of sending home a Friend whose actions are found to make that determination appropriate. If possible, CART will first communicate and consult with Sessions Committee clerk and primary Yearly Meeting officers and staff (clerk, assistant clerk, general secretary) in discerning and carrying out such a dismissal.

CART may also ask family and members of home meetings of any person they are working with to join in their discernment. Reports and concerns may be communicated to the Monthly Meeting and family of an individual who is considered to have broken an agreement.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

1. CART is not for medical or psychiatric emergencies, accidents or threats of violence. NYYM follows the protocols of Silver Bay Y in the event of such emergencies.
2. CART has no role in the conduct of NYYM's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, unless requested by the YM clerk to help in some way. These sessions are under the care of Liaison Committee, the Yearly Meeting Officers and the committee clerks.
3. Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) has a set of responses already in practice for any issues that arise during JYM programs. The JYM Coordinators and volunteers will decide if an incident is appropriate to share with the Response Team to gain their assistance. The JYM Coordinators are encouraged to share questions or request involvement of the Response Team, especially if an incident involved youth behavior that occurred outside of any JYM program. If an issue arising outside of JYM program time comes first to the Response Team, they will consider whether to bring in the JYM Coordinators or JYM Committee for consultation.
4. The Response Team does not duplicate or replace the Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (AIT) and would refer to them any allegation of child sexual abuse occurring or discovered during Yearly Meeting sessions. Such situations are immediately and confidentially turned over to the AIT, which works in accord with a separate set of legal requirements that may require reporting to local or NY State authorities. AIT members may also be consulted regarding concerns over other forms of abuse that may be disclosed during the week of Summer Sessions.

**MORE ON THE CIRCLE OF CARE AND CONCERN
and the
COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS RESPONSE TEAM**

PRIVACY

Both CCC and CART have discretion as to acknowledging and reporting their work and the situations encountered to other individuals and to the wider community.

REPORTING AND ARCHIVING

At the CCC's and or CART's discretion, two types of reports are to be made, submitted in writing and archived by the clerk of Sessions Committee:

1. **INTERNAL REPORT:** Names of principal Friends who were involved in the situation, along with a brief summary of the incident, and the actions or follow-up with respect to these Friends, their families or guardians if minors, and possibly with their home Monthly Meetings or other like communities.
2. **GENERAL REPORT:** A report or reports of each situation responded to without naming the individuals involved but describing the situation, the outcome and follow through. If appropriate, Sessions Committee, working with YM clerk, General Secretary and Trustees, will report to the YM's liability insurance carrier situations that might expose the YM to liability or significant expense.