



Sample Circle of Support and Accountability (CoSA) Script*

**This script is geared towards students who were suspended for disciplinary reasons and are now returning to Rutgers New Brunswick; however, it can be adapted to meet the needs of many other scenarios!*

Grounding

- **Read by facilitators:** *"Some people think they are in community, but they are only in proximity. True community requires commitment and openness. It is a willingness to extend yourself to encounter and know the other." -David Spangler*

Goals/Process

- **Facilitators explain the purpose:** We are gathering to facilitate a successful transition back to Rutgers University New Brunswick and to provide support, while holding [student] accountable for past, present, and future behaviors.
- **Facilitators explain the process:** In just a moment, I will ask [student] a series of questions and allow them to answer each one thoroughly and honestly. Next, I will ask the community members a series of questions. We'll answer each question in a circle format and use a talking piece. When you have the talking piece, it is your opportunity to speak your truth. When someone else has the talking piece, it is your opportunity to listen to that person with an open mind and heart.

Student Reflections

One facilitator reads a question and gives the student space to answer honestly and fully before moving onto the next question. **A second facilitator** is taking notes.

- "What happened?"
 - *The expectation here is for the student to explain, in some detail, what occurred. This includes their behaviors and their violation of Rutgers policy.*
- "What were you thinking about at the time?"
 - *The expectation here is for the student to vocally reflect on their thoughts that arose when the incident occurred.*
- "What have you thought about since?"
 - *The expectation here is for the student to verbalize their thoughts that arose since the incident occurred.*
- "Who do you think have been affected by your actions?"
 - *The expectation here is for the student to describe the people who have been impacted by their actions, both directly and indirectly.*
- "How have they been affected?"
 - *The expectation here is for the student to thoughtfully consider and verbalize the affects this incident has had on those impacted.*
- "How will you benefit the campus community moving forward?"



- *The student is a member of the Rutgers New Brunswick community. The expectation here is for them to reflect on and describe how they can contribute to the community in more positive ways.*
- “What are some strategies/resources you have put into place to prevent future occurrence?”
 - *This is the student’s opportunity to outline methods they will utilize in the future to prevent this from happening again.*
- “How can we support your success?”
 - *This is an opportunity for the student to vocalize their needs from the individuals in the room and the best ways for the student to feel supported by everyone moving forward.*

*Participant Reflections

**Participants may include community members such as representatives from CAPS (counseling center), the Office of the Dean of Students – Advocacy, Outreach, and Support, an academic advisor from the student’s school, etc.*

One facilitator reads a question and gives each participant time to answer honestly and fully before moving onto the next question. **A second facilitator** is taking notes.

- “What do you need from [student] or others in the room?”
- “What can you offer [student] to support them moving forward?”
- “In what ways can you commit to holding [student] accountable now and in the future?”
- “Are there Rutgers supports that you see as useful to include in our agreement?”

Agreement

- **Facilitators** will lead the group in creating an agreement of support and accountability. The expectation is for all members of the circle, including the student and the community members, to commit to the agreement. All components of the agreement need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.
 - **Examples: Student will set up a meeting with their academic advisor by the end of the month. Dean of Students – Advocacy, Outreach, and Support will send resources to student by**

Grounding

- **Read by facilitators:** *“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” -Coretta Scott King*