



This month's circle tale is devoted to ***The Circle Way, A Leader in Every Chair***, the new book by Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea. We hope you enjoy this excerpt from the book, and that we'll see you at an upcoming book event, or at one of our scheduled Circle Practica this year. Come join the circle!

## **Circle Tale, March 2010** ***The Circle Way* is Officially Out and Available**

***The Circle Way, A Leader in Every Chair*** begins Chapter One with the following story:

"The room sizzles with tension. Emotions are high, opinions are formed, and polarities hardened, alliances and divisions drawn. Twelve women and men dressed in the current armor of business are about to engage each other on the battlefield of a contentious meeting. In the next two hours they will decide things that shape their organization's future. The agenda is overfull, and there will be insufficient time for discussion or consideration of consequences. Perhaps this doesn't matter as the decisions have essentially been made through background emails, late and early cell phone calls, text messages, and side conversations in the catacomb of office cubicles and corner desks. The players wander in: the CEO, the guy from accounting, department managers, and supervisors. The boss's assistant sets up coffee, flipcharts, related papers, and gets ready to take notes.

These are good people.

These are the people who keep business running—in the US, Canada, Europe, India, China, in the cities of Latin and South America, in Africa. Wherever there is enough stability in society to hold together commerce and community, some variation of these people gather, around the clock, around the world. They have spouses and partners, children they love whom they send off to school in the mornings and cheer at their soccer games. They walk the dog, pet the cat, read the paper, watch television, and enjoy a good meal and perhaps a glass of wine or cup of tea to draw a line through the end of the day. They put the kids to bed and often head back to their laptops or hand-helds to tend to correspondence they have no time for in the rush of their work.

"Two to three hundred emails a day," they tell us, "and we're required to have our Blackberries™ on 24/7." Another one says, "I get up every night at 2:00 AM to see if the early meetings have been changed—sometimes we have to be here by 6:00 AM and I have an hour commute. Then I have to wake my husband and negotiate how we're doing the kids if I'm gone by 5:00—surprising how many other road warriors are on the freeway that time of day." A man laughs sardonically, "I sometimes think of myself as a six-figure lemming rushing toward the cliff. I was going to transition out, but my financial parachute burned up back in 2009. Now I'm just grateful to have made it through the lay-offs."

Underneath their resignation is tremendous frustration at what it takes to run the world this way—and to be run by the world. And the place that much of this underlying discontent shows up is in how we run our meetings--how we greet and treat each other, and how we wield interpersonal power in the attempt to hold onto some sphere of influence that satisfies our desires to make a difference. This world, however, the world of human interaction and participation, is *our* world to mold and change to fit our needs. What is about to happen here in this room is not predestined, we can redesign it. There is another way... the circle way."

With this proclamation—"There is another way..." Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea carry readers into their highly applicable and profound guide to PeerSpirit Circle Process. Nearly twenty-years in the "living into it," first in Minnesota, then on Whidbey Island, and in the last ten years across North America and the globe, *The Circle Way* is their culminating wisdom on the modernization of this ancient social process. View the Table of Contents and sample pages on their website book pages, and join the excitement over the release of this work.

*If you have a tale to tell, contact the PeerSpirit office and we'll help you share it.*

*For more information on many applications of circle, visit our web site at [www.peerspirit.com](http://www.peerspirit.com) and subscribe to our monthly Circle Tale newsletter. Your e-mail address will **not** be shared or used by anyone other than PeerSpirit, and you can unsubscribe yourself at any time.*