



POKESHOT
SMARTERPATH
ACTIVATE KNOWLEDGE INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

WORKING OUT LOUD

Getting started

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1. What is Working out Loud?

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1. What is WOL?

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Working Out Loud is an approach to **building relationships** that can help you in some way. It's a practice that combines **conventional wisdom** about relationships with **modern ways** to reach and engage people.

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1. What is WOL?

Instead of networking to get something, you **lead with generosity, investing in relationships** that give you access to other people, knowledge, and possibilities. Part of the process is learning ways to make your work visible and frame it as a contribution. Combined, these elements form a powerful approach to work and life.

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1. What is WOL?

When you Work Out Loud, you feel good and empowered at the same time because the practice taps into your intrinsic needs for **autonomy, mastery, and purpose**. As people across an organization Work Out Loud, work becomes more effective and fulfilling, and the culture becomes more **open and collaborative**.”

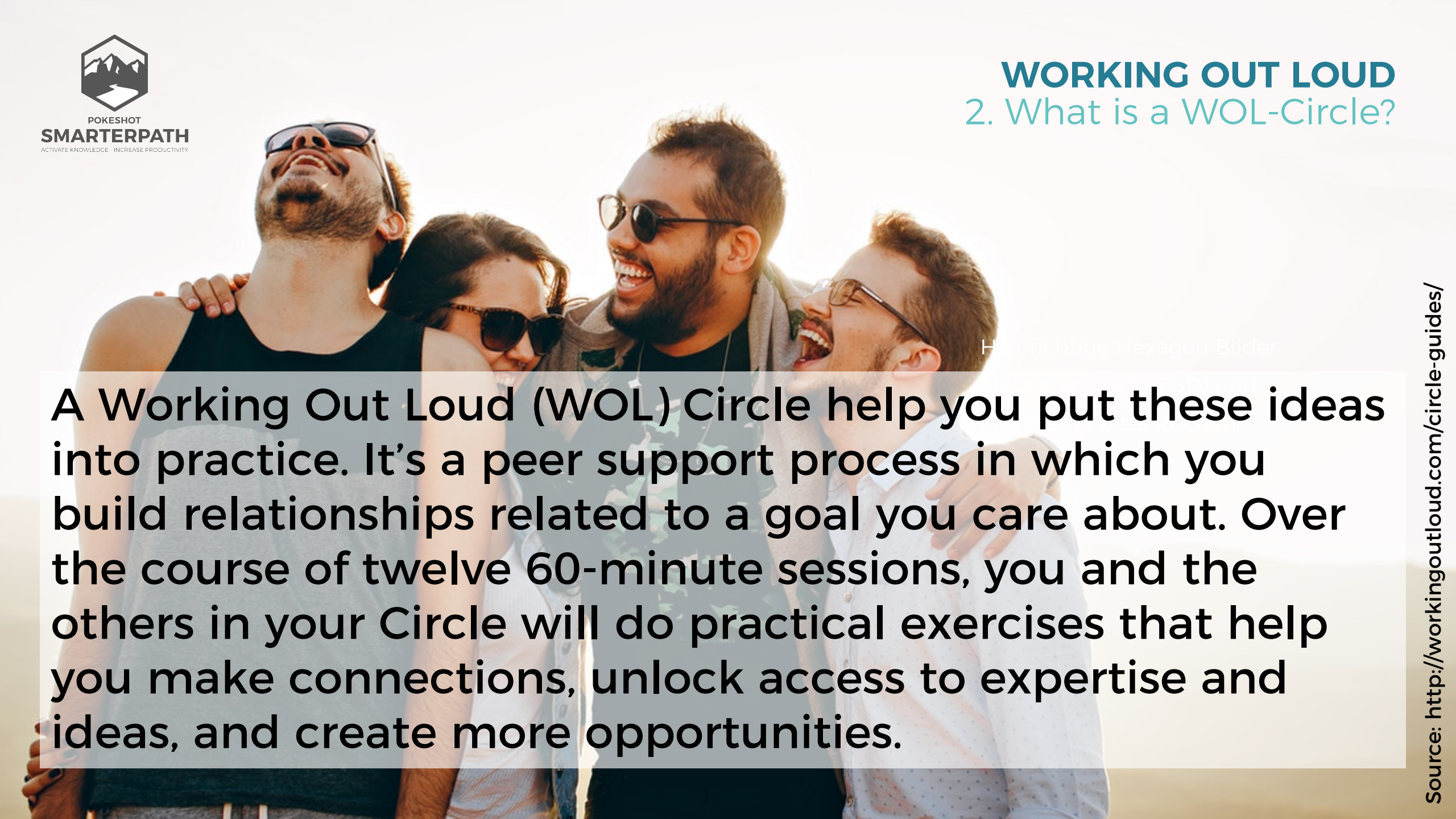
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2. What is a WOL Circle?

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2. What is a WOL-Circle?



A Working Out Loud (WOL) Circle help you put these ideas into practice. It's a peer support process in which you build relationships related to a goal you care about. Over the course of twelve 60-minute sessions, you and the others in your Circle will do practical exercises that help you make connections, unlock access to expertise and ideas, and create more opportunities.

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2. What is a WOL-Circle?

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By the end of your time together, each of you will have developed a larger, more diverse network that's related to your goal - **a set of relationships that matter**. You'll have also developed habits and a mindset you can apply towards any goal.

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2. What is a WOL-Circle?

WOL is for work, too. WOL Circles can be readily integrated into on-boarding, leadership, and digital transformation programs. The Circle Guides help people use digital tools to make connections, share work, and deepen relationships. As WOL Circles spread across an organization, the **culture changes, becoming more agile and collaborative.**

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2. What is a WOL-Circle?

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Dion Hinchcliffe, author and Chief Strategy Officer, called Working Out Loud “perhaps the most fundamental digital workplace skill.” WOL Circles are now in over 40 countries and a wide range of organizations.

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3. How WOL-Circles work.

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3. How WOL-Circles work.

You can think of your WOL Circle as a kind of “guided mastery” program for **collaboration and relationship-building**. You learn by doing. Each week, with the help of the Circle Guides and the other members of your Circle, you practice different ways to find people related to your work and **develop meaningful relationships**.

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3. How WOL-Circles work.

The most common words that Circle members use to describe how they feel after 12 weeks are “**confident**” and “**empowered.**” That’s because with each step you take, you’re tapping into your **intrinsic motivation** - your innate needs for a bit more control, competence, and connection.

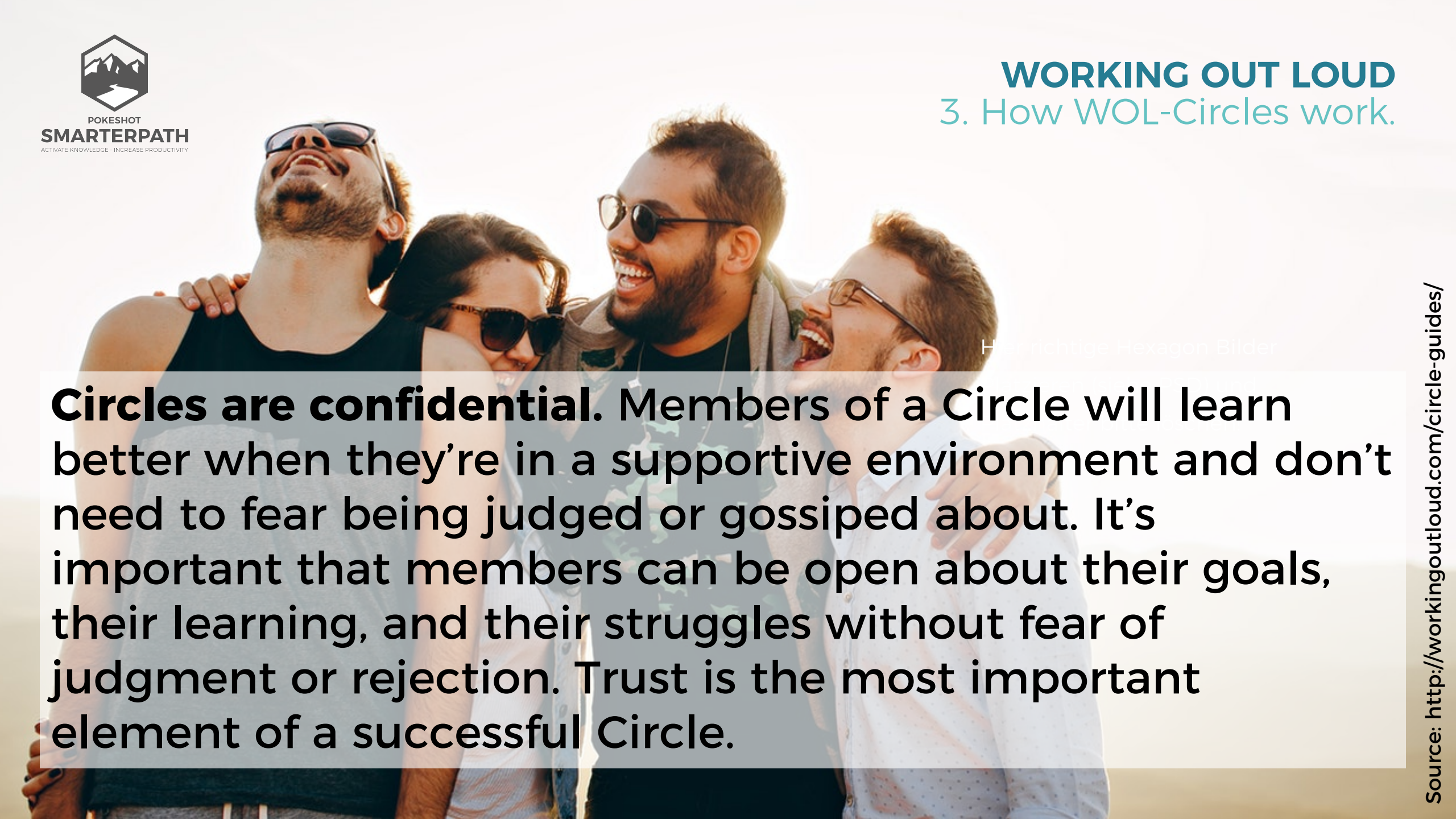
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Here are six important things to know about your Circle.

You start with an individual goal you care about. Each of you in the Circle will pick your own goal. You want to each pick something you care about and can make progress towards in 12 weeks. It's one of the first exercises in Week 1, and the Circle Guide for that week will give you some helpful instructions.

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3. How WOL-Circles work.



Circles are confidential. Members of a Circle will learn better when they're in a supportive environment and don't need to fear being judged or gossiped about. It's important that members can be open about their goals, their learning, and their struggles without fear of judgment or rejection. Trust is the most important element of a successful Circle.

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3. How WOL-Circles work.



Circles are best with four to five people. More than five people means there's too much communications overhead and not enough time to provide detailed feedback on each individual's progress. Generally, more diverse Circles lead to more creativity and ideas. Many Circles meet via video, allowing them to include people in different locations.

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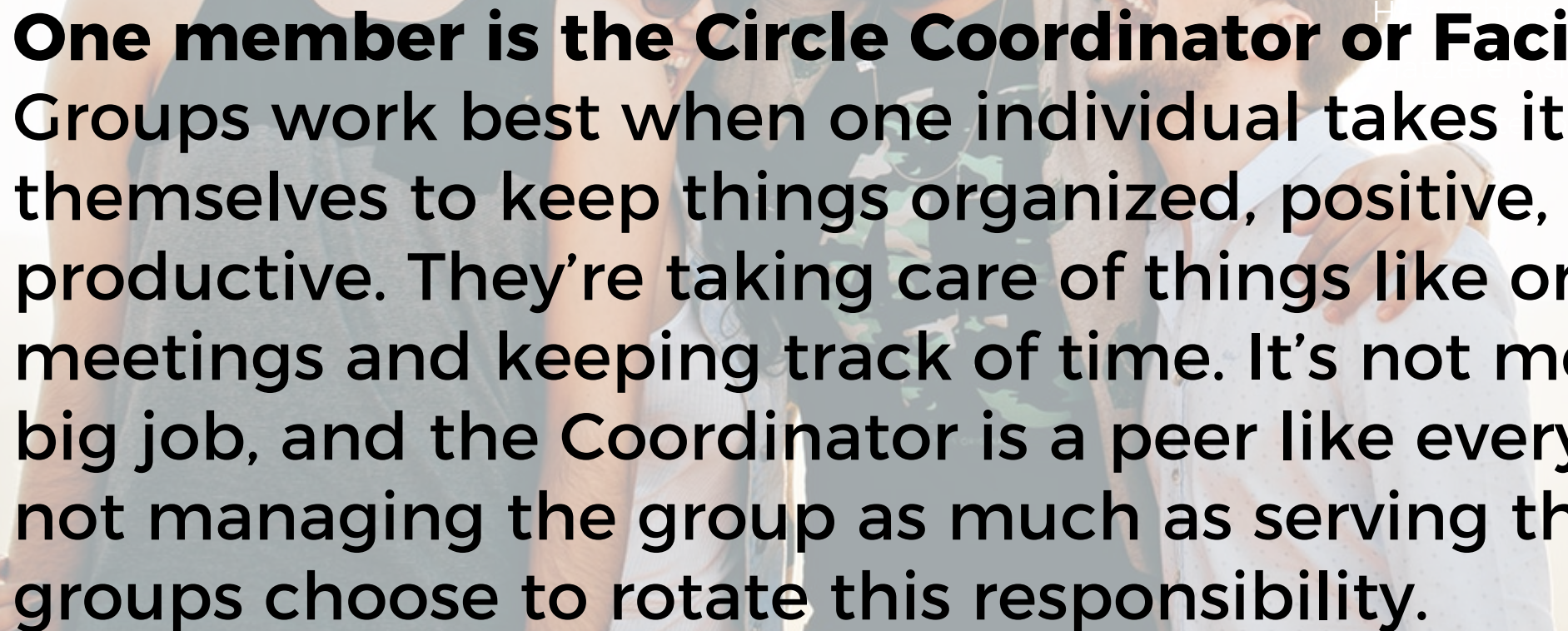
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3. How WOL-Circles work.

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Circles meet for one hour a week for 12 weeks. Think of the hour you meet each week as investing 2% of your time to develop a 21st-century skill. Making that investment for 12 weeks is long enough for you to develop new habits, and short enough so your effort is focused and sustainable.

There's a simple, structured curriculum. The 12 weeks are meant to be a guided mastery program. That means you take small steps, get feedback, and make progress at your own pace. There are specific exercises, but there is no test and no judgment. Some Circles choose to do the exercises in between meetings and leave more time for discussion while others do as much as they can in their one hour together. Any progress you make will help you build your network and increase your chances of reaching your goal.



One member is the Circle Coordinator or Facilitator. Groups work best when one individual takes it upon themselves to keep things organized, positive, and productive. They're taking care of things like organizing meetings and keeping track of time. It's not meant to be a big job, and the Coordinator is a peer like everyone else - not managing the group as much as serving them. Some groups choose to rotate this responsibility.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.



As Circles form across many countries and organizations, I get a chance to **see what's working well** and what's challenging. The results described in the reviews of Working Out Loud range from feeling more open and optimistic to accomplishing specific goals.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

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“After just one WOL Circle meeting, I was already feeling **more connected** with my colleagues and more encouraged about my career.”

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

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“I am really enjoying the process outlined in this book...It is clear and concise and motivating. John Stepper provides **small easy steps** to guide us...I honestly feel empowered to own my success and not wait for it to come knocking.”



These tips - in order of importance - will help your Circle have a similar experience.

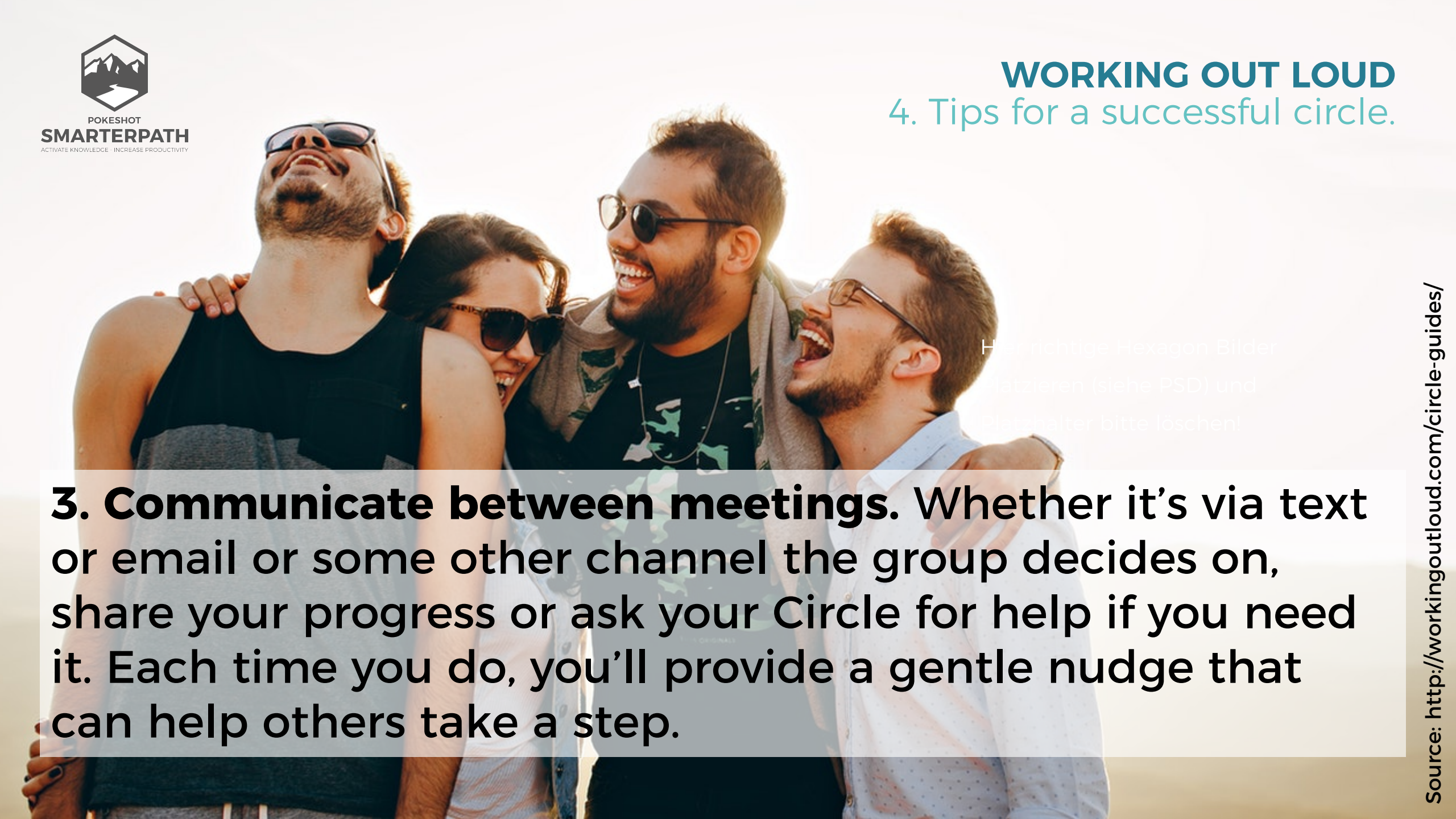
1. Maintain momentum. Try to plan all your meetings ahead of time, anticipating holidays and other breaks. If one can't attend and you can't easily reschedule, have the meeting anyway and use other channels to help the person keep up.

2. If you get stuck, take smaller steps. As with almost any new habit or skill, there may come a time when your motivation lags and you want to give up. It's natural. When that happens, shrink the change. Better to do one small thing than to skip the week entirely.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

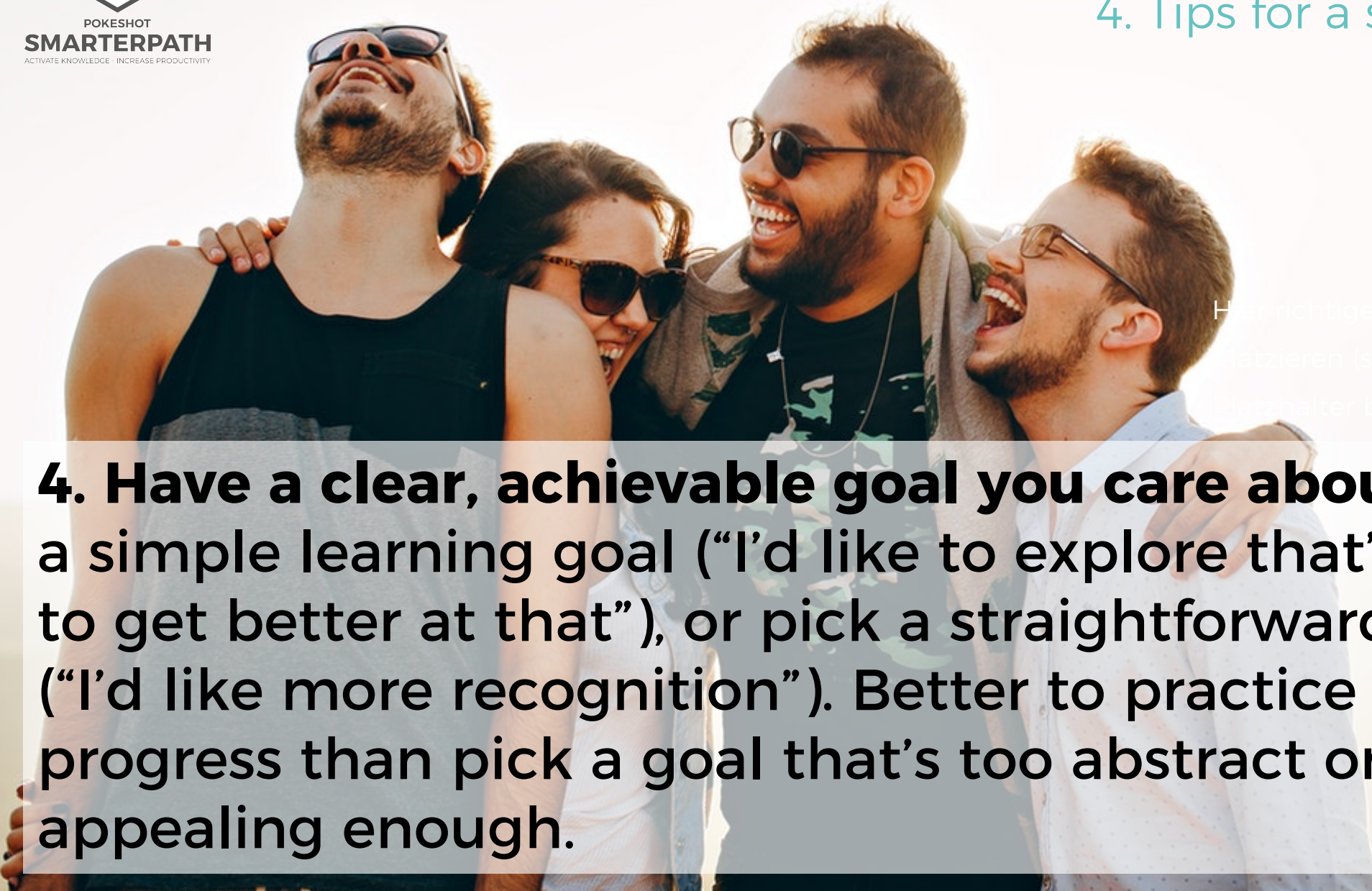


3. Communicate between meetings. Whether it's via text or email or some other channel the group decides on, share your progress or ask your Circle for help if you need it. Each time you do, you'll provide a gentle nudge that can help others take a step.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.



4. Have a clear, achievable goal you care about. Focus on a simple learning goal (“I’d like to explore that” or “I’d like to get better at that”), or pick a straightforward work goal (“I’d like more recognition”). Better to practice and make progress than pick a goal that’s too abstract or isn’t appealing enough.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

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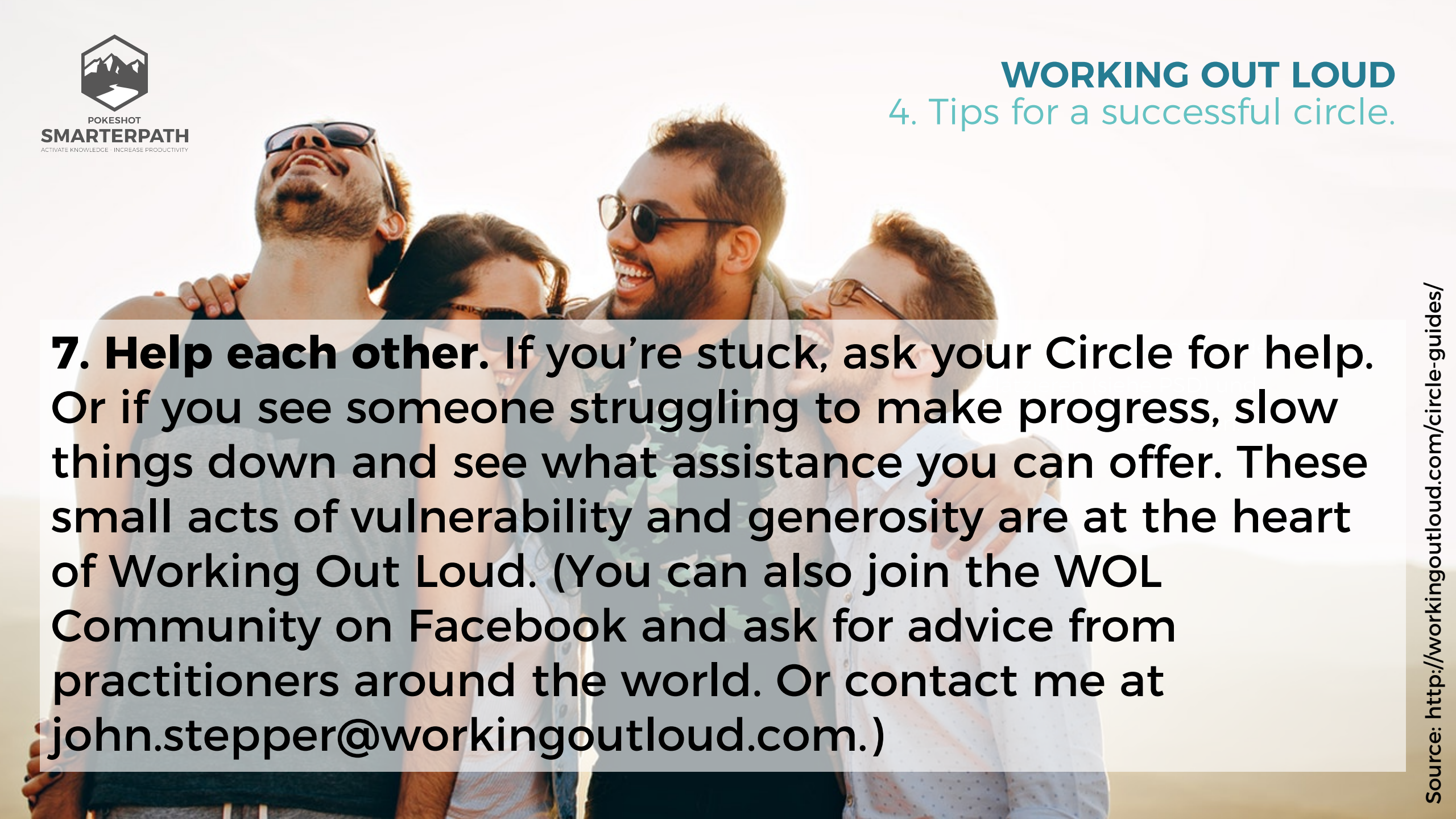
5. Schedule time to work out loud. Building relationships is an investment in yourself. Remember to “pay yourself first.” Even a single 30-minute session each week or two 15- minute sessions will help you make meaningful progress.

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

6. Read the Circle Guides before the meetings. This will give you more time for the exercises and discussion in your Circle meetings. (Reading the book and subscribing to updates from workingoutloud.com will also help you make progress.)

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7. Help each other. If you're stuck, ask your Circle for help. Or if you see someone struggling to make progress, slow things down and see what assistance you can offer. These small acts of vulnerability and generosity are at the heart of Working Out Loud. (You can also join the WOL Community on Facebook and ask for advice from practitioners around the world. Or contact me at john.stepper@workingoutloud.com.)

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4. Tips for a successful circle.

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8. Relax and enjoy yourself. The time you spend thinking about your goals and practicing ways to build meaningful relationships is time well spent. Enjoy it.



Enjoy the process!

More information

www.pokeshot.com

workingoutloud.com/circle-guides



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