

Research question 2 = *What do you 'get out' of attending your men's group?*

→ Analysis ↓

→ *Grounded and Emergent Concepts*

First and Most Relevant Concept: THE CIRCLE

All five participating men's groups meet and conduct their business by group participants sitting 'shoulder to shoulder' in circular format. They are also 'open' groups in the sense that any man can turn up unannounced to group meetings without prior screening or interview. They are also low-cost (* there are slight exceptions to these rule as outlined in appendix)

The circular format of groups – and their open nature - was perceived strongly by participants to be fundamental to men's groups, in respect of shaping – if not determining – further features and aspects to the groups deemed crucial to their needs. It is for this reasons that the analysis begins with – and is based upon – the circle.

Open, circular men's groups meetings promote notions of inclusivity and equality while simultaneously downgrading notions of hierarchy and exclusivity. Accordingly participating men's groups attract men of a large variety of backgrounds (occupation and residency) and ages.

what I think part of the power of our men's group..is..for a long time I didn't know what people did for a livin..didn't know their surnames..didn't know what they're personal circumstances were (Noel)

'cause we have in our group, solicitors and..fuckin bank workers an..project workers an building workers..an it doesn't give a fuck..it's..the whole thing about it is..the common denominator is that we're a..we're men..that's the only thing that's important (Jimmy)

Additional elements inherent in circular men's groups meetings are perceived by participants facilitate and reinforce further notions of these important concepts of inclusion and equality. Consequently, the circle format results in individual men being seen and heard clearly and in turn each man can see and hear every other man resulting in a close integration of men and experience. In turn this results in the construction of a group experience conceptualised as a shared physical and psychological space and illustrated as such in figure 2

Well, there seems to be something very special about the circle..there's a lot in the fact that you can see the people you're talkin te (Andrew)

I feel the circle gets rid of all kinds [of] roles and..eh everyone is equal..so it's not like sittin in a line or you're sittin in a square where there's people in the corner and there's people that ye can't see..so for me the circle is powerful (Dessie)

the circle is very important..I mean it's the..the democratic nature and the fact that you can see everybody's face in a circle..and there's no..it's not hierarchical..there's no leader, plus, yeknow..a hierarchy of followers..it's..it's..it's in a circle..everybody is equal within the circle and that's..that's very important (Séan, p.15)