

# THE INNER CIRCLE



**“When Darnellia was a freshman, she wasn't really into being a team player. She was a marvelous, gifted athlete, but not about the team. That's what she learned at Roosevelt. She became the consummate team player.”**

— Coach Bill Resler



**PART A.** In the exhilarating and emotional documentary *The Heart of the Game* from Miramax Films, Bill Resler, coach of the girls' basketball team at Roosevelt High School in Seattle, decided that the best way for the girls on his team to both solve their problems and gel as a team was for them to be part of their own "Inner Circle"—with no parents, coaches or any authority figures to help resolve conflicts. The girls worked out their issues and problems together. The results molded this group of very different girls into a powerhouse, built around teamwork.

## CREATE YOUR OWN INNER CIRCLE

Keep in mind that conflict often occurs over power, property, loyalty, territory or jealousy and envy. Working in a group, choose and describe a problem in your class, school, or community.

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If you were to set up an Inner Circle to solve this problem, who would you invite to be in that circle?

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What specific issues would you discuss?

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What conflict resolution techniques would you institute to help your discussion?

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What results would you expect to achieve?

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Consider the Inner Circle concept as compared to traditional methods of solving problems (such as going to parents, teachers, or other authority figures).

Advantages:

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Disadvantages:

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**PART B.** Coach Resler used some unusual methods to help his players work together as a team. He told them to think of themselves as a "pack of wolves" swarming around its prey, ready to devour it. Later he used the image of a "pride of lions" out for the hunt. He also told them that they were a "tropical storm" blowing in off the coast to devastate everything in its path.

## AS A CLASS, DISCUSS:

- How could his methods promote teamwork in the classroom, or in extra-curricular activities like school plays, school orchestra and band, or academic clubs?
- Do you think your peers would be reluctant or embarrassed to accept Coach Resler's approach? What would make you accept this inspirational concept?
- Who or what gives you the desire to achieve?

Look for **THE HEART OF THE GAME** coming to a theater near you this summer.

Go to [www.heartofthegame-film.com](http://www.heartofthegame-film.com) to find out when the film is coming to your area or for group sales information.



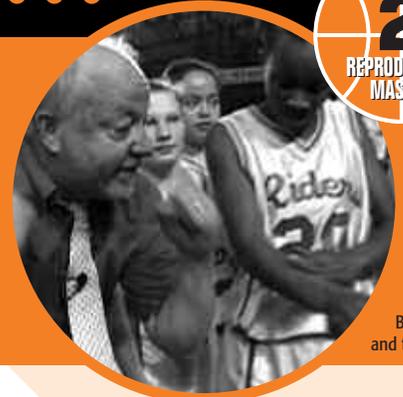
# A TEST OF CHARACTER

**“It’s not about winning and losing, but about how hard you tried, how you overcome obstacles emotionally, how you rely on other girls and how they rely on you.”**

– Coach Bill Resler



Cheering the team to victory



Bill Resler and the team

**PART A.** The real-life teens in Miramax Films’ *The Heart of the Game* exhibit strong character under difficult circumstances.

The **Roosevelt Roughriders** girls’ basketball team agrees to allow Darnellia (dar-NEE-lee-uh) Russell to play on the team in the state championship even though it means that they may have to later forfeit these games.

**Coach Bill Resler** puts every player on his team into the state championship game instead of only using his best players—espousing his philosophy that teamwork is more important than winning.

**Darnellia Russell** has the courage to go to a school out of her neighborhood. She comes back to school after missing a year, deals with legal issues surrounding her ability to play, leads her team to a basketball championship, and graduates with honors.

Think about a difficult situation in the life of someone close to you, where strength of character was key.

What was the situation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What choice did that person make that displayed character? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What different outcome might have occurred if he or she had made another choice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Given the perspective of time, would the choice have been the same today? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PART B.** Many sports heroes and popular entertainers are considered role models in our society. As a group, choose a famous person who is *widely considered* a role model.

Consider the traits of good character—*trustworthiness, fairness, respect, caring, responsibility and citizenship*—when discussing the following questions:

- What character traits went into your decision? What actions?
- Who is presenting this person to the public as a role model?
- Is it fair to expect a person with unusual athletic or performing abilities to serve as a role model? Why or why not?
- What are the risks when an athlete or performer demonstrates inappropriate character traits?
- Does it matter to you if a role model is male or female? Why or why not?
- Choose another famous person that your group considers a role model and answer the questions above. How do your answers differ?



Future members of the Inner Circle

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