Closing Circle

What is it for?
....
A reflective closing for an event.

Time & People
....
Any number of people
Time depends on number of people

Materials
....
Talking piece

Source
....
Indigenous practice, Open Space Technology

And...
....
If you are up for it, you can write a slam poem based on people's comments and read it back to them after everyone who wants to has spoken. It is very satisfying.

Remind people to listen, to notice the voice in their head chattering about what they might say when it's their turn – to notice that and let it go, and bring their attention back to the speaker.

If you are short of time, can ask people to say one word or one sentence that sums up their experience.

Even in very large groups, at least find a way to give people the opportunity to speak if they want to.

Sit participants in a circle. Make sure everyone can see everyone else, and remove any vacant chairs. Ask people to pull their chairs into a tight, but comfortable circle.

Introduce the talking piece. It need not be significant, though it can be relevant to that particular group. The modern 'talking piece' is a microphone. If you have a large group (over 40) you may want to use a microphone to ensure everyone can hear.

Explain that the closing is a time of reflection, and opportunity to share with the group something of what you have experienced with the group throughout your session/time together. It is not a time to raise new issues.

The process is simple. Whoever has the talking piece is talking and everyone else listens. No interruptions, no questions.

You can either pass the talking piece around the circle, or place it in the middle. If it is in the middle, instruct people to pick it up when they want to speak, and place it back in the centre. Avoid giving it to another person.

Speaking is voluntary. If someone does not want to speak, that is okay. If they are passed the talking piece in the circle, and they don't want to speak, they can simply pass it onto the next person.

When it's over, it's over.