



Small Group Check-ins



The Check-in is a helpful tool to incorporate at the start of the day in any meeting or in the classroom. Besides giving each individual a voice, this practice helps people tap into their personal grounding, aspirations and creative orientation and it may also lead to developing shared vision and understanding. One essential way we can adjust and shape a more generative social field is through the practice of checking in to reflect on, and become aware of, how we are showing up.

Tips for Facilitating a Check-in

Duration: 30 min

Grounding practice:

The goal of the guided practice is to help people relax and ground themselves, allowing their minds to become quieter and less distracted. It can be as simple as encouraging people to quiet their thoughts and focus on their breathing or you may choose to integrate some type of idea or guiding question before you lead them through this quiet breathing time. Ultimately, the goal is to have people ground, quieting their minds before moving into content and ideally invite them to “check-in with themselves” prior to checking in with the group. This initial phase allows for a more embodied – and often more authentic – presence. The fundamental check-in question is **“how am I today, what is moving in me”**. For people to take time to reflect on one’s own state of being, prior to connecting with others serves as a compass for staying present and mindful when relating. Usually, you will add an additional question for the check-in with oneself, depending on the nature of the meeting, the tasks ahead or the current conditions in the larger systems. This can be, for example “when reflecting on the day ahead of me, what is something I would like to contribute with” or “what is something I am grateful for” or “reflecting on the process up until now, what is something I would like to take with me going forward”. All inducing a deeper reflection and awareness prior to checking in with the group.

Journaling:

After the guided practice, encourage people to reflect and write in their journals. Ideally, they will use the check-in questions from their grounding practice as an onset for journaling, helping the sensed embodied space to become articulated in words. Or they simply reflect on how they are showing up today. Remind them this is an extension of the quiet space initiated in the check-in with self and that they, when they finish journaling, please stay quiet and at ease prior to the small-group check-in.

Check-in:

Ask people to move their chairs into circles, sit in small groups facing one another, 3-5 people per group depending on the overall group size. Each person should share out for 2-3 mins and then rotate; others should refrain from responding until everyone has finished. Keep in mind that listening intently is just as important as sharing out, holding the space for the other. When listening, we practice listening with attentive kindness and without judgement, imagine how we ourselves would like to be heard and seen in this situation and provide such a space for one another. Once everyone has shared, the group can open up the conversation, time allowing.