

## Check-in & Introduction Prompts

Spending the time to connect people together in trusting relationships pays real dividends for collaborative work over time. In fact, a study of change initiatives in school systems found that the level of relational trust among people involved was the primary determinant of success.

Here are our tips for intentionally designing meaningful moments of connection during sessions, and several prompts for you to consider in your own work.

### Suggestions

1. **If two or more people on the call or in the meeting haven't yet met, then do introductions**, which involve more basic questions about who we are, what we do, and why we're in the meeting/network/project. **If everyone has already met, then do check-ins**, which are about deepening empathy, learning more about one another, and building shared values, interests, and culture.
2. **Do these consistently and get groups used to them early.**
3. **Start with prompts that allow people to share significant things about themselves**, what they're good at, what they value. You might offer more serious/meaningful prompts in the first half-dozen calls, then move to more fun ones and/or a mix of serious and fun topics.
4. **Consider the purpose/intent of the particular meeting and choose an introduction or check-in prompt that will best support that.** For example, if the meeting is going to involve asking everyone to make a big commitment, choose a prompt like "what gives you courage," or "Share a story about a time you took a risk based on your values." Or if you're going to talk about interviewing other people about their experiences, choose a prompt like, "Share a time when you felt deeply listened to, and how you felt about that."
5. **Start with a participant** rather than the meeting host or facilitator, but be careful not to put a new person on the spot.
6. **Either call on people or ask people to "pass it to the next person"** to keep things moving. For more thoughtful, deep, or challenging prompts, you might want to give more space and wait for people to speak whenever they are ready.
7. **If pressed for time, ask people to share in tweet format**, in a few words, or in one sentence.
8. **Give people silent time to first reflect on what they want to share if the prompt is deeper or more challenging** (e.g., "share a story about a time you took a risk based on your values"). That way, they're not trying to think of what they want to say while they're trying to listen to others.

### Introduction Prompts

"Let's go around and introduce ourselves. Please share your name, organization, one line about what you do there, and [choose one]:

- One thing that you love most about your work."
- One value that consistently informs your life and work.
- One gift you bring to this work, by finishing the sentence, "Call me if..." or "Call me when..."

## Significant Check-in Prompts

1. How are you arriving?
2. How are you in mind, body, and spirit?
3. What's one gift you are bringing to our work together today?
4. What's one thing you love about your community, however you choose to define it?
5. What's giving you hope in your work/life/world right now?
6. What's enlivening you in your work right now?
7. What's something you're proud of in your work/life/world right now?
8. What's something you're grateful for in your work/life/world right now?
9. Share an ancestor or teacher who's deeply influenced your life and work, and what impact that person has had on your life.
10. What is one powerful shift that's happening in your life or work?
11. Why did you choose to spend your work-life time the way you did/do?
12. Share one gift you bring to this work by finishing the sentence, "Call me when.../call me if..."
13. Share a story of a time you took a risk based on your values.
14. What is the BEST compliment you have ever received? What did it mean to you?
15. Who would you trust with your life? Why?
16. Share one value that consistently informs your life and work (and, optionally, one example of how that has shown up).
17. One thing you are looking forward to this year/summer/winter/etc.
18. One thing that you love about our planet.
19. Would you consider yourself more an introvert or extravert? What might that mean for how we work together?
20. What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do? Why was it hard for you?
21. When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
22. What is one goal you'd like to accomplish during your lifetime?
23. What past action (big or small) did you take to improve the quality of your life?
24. What's one highlight of your past week?
25. What part of your daily routine do you enjoy most?
26. Who is someone you admire, and why?
27. Where do you feel most at peace?
28. What might you say your calling in life is?
29. What would you do if you did not have to work?
30. What's one item that has great meaning for you, and why?
31. What book, movie or video have you seen/read recently you would recommend? Why?
32. What was your most embarrassing moment?
33. What is your favorite hobby?
34. What's your favorite outdoor activity?
35. What is one favorite thing to do by yourself?
36. What's one crazy activity you've considered trying?

37. What is your idea of fun?
38. What was one new experience you tried that was really uncomfortable to you at the time you first tried it?
39. How do you like to spend a rainy day?
40. What's your hidden talent?
41. Share a powerful time when you learned something new or important.
42. Who is your hero, and why?
43. Who was a big role model for you when you were young?
44. What was the happiest moment in your life?
45. What was a defining event in your life?
46. Who is your favorite fictional character, and why?
47. Was there ever a time when you were truly frightened for your life?
48. What is one quote or saying you really appreciate?
49. How do you feed your soul? Food? Music? Other?
50. What is one thing you might change about your community?
51. What do you consider the most important event of your life so far?
52. What do you think is the secret to a good life?
53. What do you value most in life?
54. What gift have you received that you will always treasure?
55. What is your motto in life?
56. Share a piece of art that represents part of your life.
57. What would you like to be known for?
58. Describe a real-life situation where you stood up for something, or saw someone else do this.
59. Describe one experience you have had where you took a huge leap of faith.
60. Describe one past action (big or small) you took to improve the quality of your life.
61. Describe your own outlook on life in six words.
62. What one thing do you think would create peace in the world?
63. What product would you refuse to promote?
64. What is the one thing you can't live without?
65. What is the best thing that has ever happened to you, and why?
66. What is important to you in your life right now?
67. How are you like the people who raised you?
68. If you were to hang out with one historical figure for the day, who would you choose and why?
69. What is a typical day like for you?
70. What is one thing that not many people know about you?
71. What is that one thing which makes you different from most people?
72. What will you be like when you are 98?
73. What might be a perfect afternoon for you?
74. What is your favorite book? Why?
75. Who has been the greatest influence in your life?
76. What is the hardest thing you have ever done?
77. What do you do first thing in the morning?

78. What do you think is the greatest invention in your lifetime and why?
79. What, in your opinion, is the greatest invention ever?
80. What is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen in nature?
81. What is the kindest thing that someone has ever done for you?
82. What two words best describe you?
83. If your name was a verb, what would it's definition be

## Lighter Check-in Prompts

*Good questions to use once a group is more personally connected.*

1. Do you believe in extraterrestrials or life on other planets?
2. Do you believe in ghosts?
3. Which was the funniest prank played on you, or played by you?
4. What's the best concert you've ever attended?
5. What is your funniest family story?
6. What is your earliest memory?
7. What is the most fun thing you did in school?
8. What is the silliest thing you have heard people say about you?
9. What was the most outlandish/wild thing you ever did? Tell us about it.
10. What is the weirdest thing you have ever eaten?
11. What's one food you love now that you didn't eat when you were growing up?
12. If I gave you \$10,000, how would you spend it??
13. If you were a cartoon character, which one would you prefer being?
14. If you were a superhero, what would your super-name be? What would your superpower be?
15. If you were to write an autobiography, what title might you choose?
16. If you could anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
17. If you were an animal, what animal might you be?
18. What's your favorite piece of office equipment (can be a simple one)?
19. What is your perfect pizza?
20. What makes the world go around?
21. If you had your human body, but the head of an animal, what animal would you pick?
22. If you could go back in time and change history, what might you change? Why?
23. On what topic would you feel confident in giving an impromptu presentation?
24. What are you going to do today to take care of yourself?
25. Share a fascinating fact you think might interest this group.
26. What's your favorite karaoke song?
27. You've been designated group chef for the day. What's on the menu?

## Check-out Prompts

Used at the end of a meeting or work session to bring a sense of closure and satisfaction to the group.

1. What is one thing you're taking away from our work together today?
2. One appreciation you have for this group.
3. One appreciation you have for our work together.
4. Share an expression, in whatever form you wish, of how you felt the session went today.
5. In one word, how are you as we leave this meeting today?
6. Share one thing you're becoming more aware of as a result of our work together today.
7. Share one thing you've learned in our time together today.