

# CO2

# RHYTHMS OF ATTENTION

## OVERVIEW

The following rounds can be practiced in any order, although we recommend beginning (after prayer inviting God's presence) with either Checking In or the Appreciation Round. The four rounds listed are the foundation for CO2 and should be included every time as much as possible.

## 1. CHECKING IN

Using the acronym SASHET (sad, angry, scared, happy, excited, tender), take turns sharing with your partner(s) the most prominent emotions on your heart and why. Once you're done sharing, end with the phrase "I'm in." This signals to your partner(s) you're finished. Those listening can respond "Thank you for sharing."

### Some guidelines:

- You may share as little or as much as you feel comfortable
- Anyone may "pass," but keep in mind that growth happens through vulnerability
- This is not a time to offer advice, try to fix, or tell stories about your own similar experiences

### Checking In supplements:

- **Clarifying questions:** if given permission, listeners may ask clarifying questions to better understand what was shared. Questions should be asked in an attitude of "gentle curiosity."
- **Reflecting back:** After someone shares, the next person can reflect back what was shared by starting, "So what I heard you say is..." then repeating what was shared in their own words, ending with the question, "Is that accurate?" or "Did I hear you clearly?" If not, the person originally sharing can clarify or correct.

## 2. APPRECIATION STORY

Each CO2 member takes a turn sharing (in as close to two minutes as possible) an event, interaction, or something they experienced that resulted in their feeling gratitude and/or joy. This can be a story that happened recently or a long time ago. Don't be worried about "topping" each other's stories or that your story is simple as being glad to be with your dog. What's important is that it made you feel appreciation/joy in a way that is unique to you. As with Checking In, finish by saying, "I'm in."

It's good to include naming how your body felt during your experience (laughing, crying, clapping, heart pounding, etc.). Sharing in this way does two things:

- By connecting our body to our experience and emotions, we use both sides of our brain simultaneously.
- Sharing appreciation raises joy and activates our brain's "relational circuits," making us ready to connect with others in a constructive and meaningful way.

### 3. LISTENING TO JESUS

During this time, partners decide on an amount of time to be silent (we recommend between 5-10 minutes) and reflect on an agreed upon question directed at Jesus. You might want to listen to Jesus around something that one of you shared during Checking In, or you could use some general questions such as:

- "Jesus, what would you like to say to us right now?"
- "Jesus, what is it you would like us to know (about...)?"
- "Jesus, what would you like to say to your church?"

Take a moment to quiet yourselves and direct your thoughts towards Jesus as you ask the question. As you listen, take note of spontaneous thoughts that come to you. These thoughts might come in the form of a song, scripture, or image.

- Writing them down is very helpful
- Do not judge them or stop to try to figure out if they're from Jesus, just let them flow.
- Pay attention also to feelings you experience.

Once the time is up, come back together and share. Do not feel discouraged if you did not "get" anything. This is a skill that gets better with practice, so just enjoy the experiment. If you didn't hear anything, or feel that what you heard was too personal, feel free to "pass." Preface sharing with, "This could be the Lord or just me." It is the burden of community to help us discern if what we heard aligns with Scripture and what sounds congruent with what God might say to us. We can be relatively sure that harsh, demeaning, critical thoughts are not from the Lord, who treats us kindly and compassionately.

### 4. CLOSING ROUND

Take a moment to reflect back on your time together.

- What did you notice?
- What are you grateful for?
- What did you feel?
- What is your takeaway?

Take turns sharing one or two things that you are taking away from your time together. After your time together, continue to reflect on that, asking the Lord what might be significant about that for you.

End with a prayer of gratitude for what the Lord revealed during your time and for his presence with you.

### SUPPLEMENTAL ROUNDS

If there's time, feel free to experiment with these additional rounds:

- **Image Bearer Round:** During the Check In, rather than reflect back what you heard from the previous person, express to them how what they shared reflects the character of God.
- **Revelation Round:** Take turns sharing what you believe God is teaching you/revealing to you personally and how.

These rounds are to supplement, not take the place of, the four foundational rounds.