

Heart Check

Starting week 10, we will move from a weekly FCI to a “heart check” to know each other, ourselves and God more deeply.

There are two aspects to the check-in:

- a) **Preparation** enables you to reflect on the matters of your heart, connect them to Scripture, and pray to the Lord.
- b) **Sharing** creates a meaningful conversation and connection with each other.

Each person will have 5 minutes to share each week. The best way for us to get the most out of our time is to invest some thought into the check-in form **before we meet**.

How does the check-in form work?

There are 4 columns:

- 1) **Circumstances:** What important circumstance happened since we last met? Name a high/low that happened to you personally and at work. This needs to be edited down to a *one or two sentence* summary.
- 2) **Significance:** This is the most important column. Why does this matter to you with regard to your faith, values, fears, vulnerabilities? What is the spiritual significance of the circumstance? *Why* did you choose this item as the most important in this area?

We don't know why this is significant to YOU unless you tell us. Did you feel restricted before and now you have freedom because of it? Did you believe you had something to prove that now you've proved? Do you feel validated now where before you didn't? This part of the exercise takes the most thought to prepare, and the most courage to share. Make this rich in meaning rather than rich in detail.
- 3) **Feelings.** Strive to capture 2-3 words here. If a circumstance is significant, there typically will be both positive and negative emotions. Look for both. If you are stuck identifying feelings, spend some time looking over the feelings wheel words.
- 4) **Truth.** Who is Christ to you in this circumstance? What does Scripture say? What Truth can you cling to this week to help ground you in who you are in Him? Let's look to Jesus together.

NOTE: Remember, you only have **five minutes** to share with the group. The purpose of only having five minutes is that it forces you to focus and to EDIT, to get to the matters of your heart.

Heart Check EXAMPLES:

Personal low, WEAK: I had a really hard week and I am completely overwhelmed with all that is going on in my life. I got a flat tire and had to call a tow truck which took over 2 hours so I had to sit on the side of the road and wait. My dog got sick and couldn't go to daycare so I had to work from home and then take him to the vet and that cost a ton of money. I also realized I said yes to hanging out with several different people all in one week. I was so tired from everything that I ended up backing out of two dinners and I know that my friends are frustrated with me. On top of that, I am behind on going to the doctor and I'm embarrassed about it so I hesitate to make a new appointment.

Personal low, STRONG: I faced multiple challenging circumstances last week. The significance is that I am overwhelmed with all that I am carrying. I realize I have unrealistic expectations on myself that I can't fulfill. I am not a super human. I am feeling anxious, tender and angry. The Lord is my rock and my deliverer, and I can find refuge in Him as I face these overwhelming circumstances.

Notes: *The difference is that the strong version left out a lot of detail. It's great to hear about the week, but we can get that socially. The strong update focuses on the issues, not the story. It gets to the heart of the matter, what is going on within me and who God is in the midst of it.*

Work high, Weak: I applied for a new job in my company and I have been praying for direction from the Lord. I wasn't sure if I wanted the new job but one of my co-workers kept urging me to apply for it. I have gone through multiple interviews and met with several executives. I found out today that I got the job and I am so pumped. I have really been praying that the Lord will make His path clear to me and since I got the job, I am going for it. There are more responsibilities with this job and I will be managing someone for the first time in my career. I don't really know how I will be as a manager so I am feeling pretty nervous about it.

Work high, Strong: I got a promotion at work which is very exciting for me. This is significant for me because this will help me on my path to making partner. It's also significant because it's making me question whether I will be a good manager and if my co-worker will actually like me. I feel proud, eager and apprehensive. I know the Lord is my Shepherd and He cares deeply for me. I have His approval because I'm His child.

Notes: *Here, the weaker version is all about the external of what's going on. The strong version shows self-reflection and how the person is seen in Christ. It takes much more honesty and courage to share this.*