



Community Support Nights Community Check-In

This session offers the opportunity to see how we are living up to our commitments to one another and to our community, and to understand how community is affected by our actions.

We sometimes mistakenly think that it is kinder to withhold so-called “negative” feelings from others, and that that will improve the relationship. The opposite is often true, in that relationships where feelings are masked tend to become more distant. Conversely, sharing feedback is a way to deepen and strengthen relationships, because it is an offering of a part of one’s self, and an invitation to greater closeness.

This session provides a forum for sharing appreciation for, and challenges arising from, specific behaviors in community.

Process:

Each person should have paper and a pen. Take some quiet time to reflect on each community member with these two questions in mind.*

- 1) Through your eyes, how does each community member “hinder” community? (What specific behaviors seem to negatively impact community?)
- 2) How does each community member “help” or promote community?

Write the answers down. Think about how you would both give and receive this feedback. Give your feedback with compassion for the other person. Remember that community is a safe place where there is respect for each person’s voice. Don’t harbor pettiness that leads to resentment. Peace is not only the avoidance of conflict; it is also facing the situation, working through it, and understanding.

Each community member should meet with another one for 10 minutes: 5 minutes receiving feedback, and 5 minutes giving feedback. Do this with each community member.

It is important to follow this exercise by gathering the group together and telling how you felt both giving and receiving the feedback. What did you learn? Does the community need to renegotiate any agreements?

* An alternative method is to reflect on how **I** have helped/hindered community. Community members then meet and discuss their self-assessments.