

Team check-in and check-out during the Covid-19 crisis

- **There has never been a more important time for effective team working**
- **Teams need to communicate about task and check in with one another**
- **Asking the right questions can help**

With clients asking how they can maintain good team working and psychological safety in times of crisis, AOD teamworking specialists **Dr Claire Harris** and **Michele White** (pictured) share their tips for helping teams to check in and check out.



Positive round:

Everyone shares something positive (even if very small) that has happened to them at work in the last day/ week, or since the last meeting. This technique is based on sound empirical evidence about the impact of positive thinking on human flourishing and on teams (*Frederickson, 2009*).

- What one thing has happened today/this week that you are proud about?
- What one new and interesting thing have you learned or thought about today?
- What one thing has given you energy today?

‘Real’ team check-in and check-out:

We know that ‘real’ teams need to have clear team objectives, to work interdependently, to be clear on roles and to come together regularly to review how they are doing (reflexivity) (*Lyubovnikova, West, Dawson and Carter, 2015*).

- What are our priorities for today/ this meeting?
- Who is doing what?
- What is working well and what do we need to do differently/ change?
- Are we all clear on what we are doing?
- Are we all OK to meet at 3 o’clock for our next meeting/ huddle?

Psychological safety:

Professor Amy Edmondson’s work shows that leaders have an important role in building psychological safety in teams (*Edmondson, 2018*). Leaders need to acknowledge uncertainty, emphasise the important job that everyone is doing, invite ideas/ input* and express appreciation.

- *What views do we each have on that? What are we missing? What’s on your mind?
- *How can I help/ how can we as a team help?

(continued)

Example check-in questions:

- What has got your attention right now/today?
- What are you bringing to this meeting/huddle?
- What kind of day are you having/have you had?
- One high and one low this week?
- What do you need from the team/group today?
- What quality or attribute are you bringing today?
- What quality/attribute do you need from the team today?
- What do you need today to help you through the challenges?
- In one word, how are you feeling right now?
- How are you feeling about this day ahead?
- In a word or sentence, what do you do to look after yourself when you aren't here at work?
- What has inspired you lately?
- What feelings or needs are you bringing to today's meeting?
- Something from the last week that you would consider a 'win', even if small?
- What food/ drink/ colour (any metaphor) sums up your mood right now?
- What is your weather today – sunny, grey, thundery?
- What do you need right now to be fully present?
- How are you, what have you appreciated?
- What's getting in the way today?
- Any 'stucks'?

Example check-out questions:

- How are you feeling as you leave this meeting?
- What are you taking away from this?
- What are you holding on to as you leave the meeting?
- On a scale of 1-10, how helpful (or similar) has this meeting/huddle been?
- What are you going to do as you leave this meeting?
- How will you re-charge today?
- What have you valued/appreciated from your colleagues today?
- Are we all OK for tomorrow/4pm etc?

Contact details

For more information or support on any aspect of team based working or training, please contact Sarah-Jane Dale, Chief Operating Officer, AOD on 01252 727270 or helpdesk@affinaod.com

Key research references

Frederickson, B (2009). Positivity. Crown Archetype (<https://www.positivityratio.com>)

Lyubovnikova, J., West, M., Dawson, J. & Carter, M. 24-Karat or fool's gold?: Consequences of real team and co-acting group membership in healthcare organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*. 24, 6,p. 929-950 22 p, 2015

Edmondson, A. (2018). *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*. Wiley.

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