



Practice of Cultivating Awareness:
Quality of Engagement and Quality of Presence
(Based on Dynamic Dialogue resource materials)

Quality of Presence— "The quality of our presence is simply the way we show up. If we are genuine, authentic, compassionate, open, focused, and willing to listen it is part of the quality of our presence."¹ This is beneficial for us as individuals as we gain a better sense of self-awareness, and an ability to recognize what is influencing our interactions, decisions, and perspectives.

Quality of Engagement—"In the quality of engagement, we focus on how the Quality of Presence is impacted as we interact with others. Any of us can find ourselves reacting to another in ways that negatively impact the quality of our presence and the desired outcomes we seek."² By being aware of our own quality of presence, and creating space for others to share their quality of presence, we gain the ability to be more sensitive to the feelings, experiences, and life-circumstances of one another. This enhances quality of engagement, and heightens our ability to have meaningful conversation in community.

Cultivating Awareness: Sharing our Quality of Presence as Practice

The purpose of this practice is to discern our individual quality of presence, and also to hear through sharing the quality of presence of one another. This practice is meaningfully applied as a way to begin Leadership Team Meetings, Business Meetings, worship services, and can even be applied in corporate and other professional environments.

- 1) Begin by inviting the group to spend 5 minutes in silence reflecting on the following questions:

What do you bring with you this morning? As you are present in silence, pay attention to what dominates your focus, what your mind is drawn to, and how that brings you into the circle.

- 2) Bring the time of silence to a close with a chime or simple invitation to journey back to presence in the circle. Invite the group to share reflections on their experience. As expectations, ensure the group is faithful to the following:
 - *honoring the silence between sharing as sacred*
 - *listening deeply and fully to each person*
 - *not responding to individuals' personal sharing. The invitation is only to share what happened within your own experience, not to affirm, relate, or respond in any way to the experience of others in the circle (this includes after this time of sharing has ended).*
- 3) If meaningful and appropriate, create an opportunity for the group to share about the experience as a whole, without getting into specifics of individuals' sharing. *What was meaningful about this experience? How will this effect continued quality of engagement? How does this practice change the way you come into the circle?*
- 4) Bless the experience and name it as sacred, reiterating the significance of cultivating awareness when we share together.

¹ Dynamic Dialogue Program Materials, 9.

² Dynamic Dialogue Program Materials, 9.