



The Amma Center
Counseling and Contemplative Practices

Family Check-In *

This practice is an important one for couples to do weekly for the duration of the relationship, ideally at the same time each week. Set aside about 45 minutes, but be mindful of allowing more time if one or both of you are in a rough spot.

The meeting has three questions.

- 1) How are you doing?
- 2) How are you doing? (the other person)
- 3) How are we doing?

When **asking** the question about how your partner is doing, it is important to be in a place of genuine curiosity and caring. When **answering** the question, it is important to really check in with yourself and answer fully and honestly. Sometimes knowing how we are really doing is the most difficult part of this process. Most weeks each person can identify one thing that they will be focusing on over the next week for which they would like support or simply a witness. (This could be anything – finally making a doctor’s appointment, recommitting to exercising, being more mindful of patience, committing to keeping a sabbath/rest day, etc.)

Then they ask their partner for support with this task, being as specific as possible. Support might be things like, “Could you ask me on Thursday whether I’ve called the doctor yet?” or “Would you be willing to go for a bike ride with me on Saturday to help me get in one of my exercise sessions?” Then the partner has a chance to agree with the request or suggest a modification as needed.

Now it is the relationship’s “turn”. Together both partners check in about how the relationship is doing this week. As with the individual check-ins, some weeks you will identify something that would be good for the relationship and make a specific plan. This can be anything that is about the emotional health of the relationship, increasing intimacy, shared spiritual practice, fun or rest. This is **not** a time for logistical planning (such as we need a plumber, the kids get off of school early on Thursday, etc.) Some couples choose to have a second meeting about logistics immediately after this meeting, since finding time to sit down and focus on logistics can be difficult.

Ideally this “meeting” should be a time the people can look forward to. Sometimes going out to breakfast or lunch, and having the meeting at the beginning of your time together can foster this positive feeling about the weekly check-in.

* This format is most often used for couples so you can feel free to call it whatever you like.

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