Indicator#: L2Q03

5C: Community

Indicator: Encourages others

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| **Spiritual dynamic:**   * Meditate on Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Memorize several verses, and use them to meditate on God’s promises and encouragement. * Reflect on yourself and your attitudes. Do you neglect to encourage others? Why? Do you affirm and encourage people around you? How often do you do it? * Reflect on times you didn’t give others affirmation and support when they needed it. Confess your lack of love and awareness of their needs, repent before God, and receive His mercy. Ask Him to give you a heart that is sensitive to the needs of others. * Reflect on those around you who are discouraged or weary. Pray for them. Then pray that God would give you opportunities to strengthen them through affirmation and support in tangible ways. * Pray that you would see things from other people’s perspectives, and be alert to their needs. Pray that you would have the courage and strength to encourage others, and that God would give you the best words to speak. * Reflect on those times when you needed others’ affirmation and support most. How/what did you feel? Now put yourself in others’ shoes and pray for the people who are going through such moments. * Think back about the experiences when you were richly blessed by others’ affirmation and support. Give thanks to God for such experiences and ask God that you could bless others in the same way. * Worship God using songs about His love and care for you. Realize your need for His grace. | **Experiential dynamic:**   * Make a decision to give encouragement at least once every day to someone around you. * Intentionally create a culture of encouragement to others in your church, small group, or community that you have influence on. Ask your co-workers, friends, and family daily how they are doing and how you can pray for them. * Send two specific, clear messages or notes of affirmation and support to different co-workers and friends every day. Speak encouraging words to a different person or two every day, especially to those who are weak, weary, or discouraged. * Express your gratefulness to your spiritual parents and leaders. Thank them for the investment they have made in you and the opportunities and help they have given you. * Go to people with whom you’ve had conflict before and ask for their forgiveness. Work to build that person up honestly and consistently. * Invite people who need to be strengthened to your home for a meal, build an authentic relationship with them, and encourage them – all without asking for anything in return. * Compliment and encourage those who serve in unseen or neglected ways. Go to public places to affirm different people who serve the public in some way. Visit poor people in your community and offer help and encouragement in practical ways. * Hug your family members every day and give them specific, concrete affirmation and praise. Be with them when they need you and offer help. * Organize an outdoor activity with the theme of speaking affirmation and support. Attend or start a sports program and practice giving encouragement at the games. * Design a meeting, inviting people of different generations to come. Ask each generation to speak affirmation to other generations. * In your team, identify who fits best in what position and place them in the right place. Encourage them and empower them in that position. |
| **Relational dynamic:**   * Find several spiritually mature believers who are good at affirming and encouraging others. Watch their lives and learn from them about encouraging others. * Invite spiritually mature believers to share how they give encouragement to the people in their ministry. Invite them to share some testimonies of how people’s lives were blessed through their encouragement. * Observe those people around you who are ready and happy to affirm and support others in order to build and bless people. Spend time with them, learn from them, imitate them. * Find a spiritual partner to hold you accountable in this area. Ask them to pray for you that you would not speak negative words to others as before. Regularly share your recent progress with them, your difficulties and weaknesses. * Once a month have a conversation with your mentor. Report to them how you are doing in this area. Ask for their advice and make adjustment as needed. Pray together. * Find an intercessor to pray for you in this area specifically. | **Instructional dynamic:**   * Study Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11. * Study Paul’s model of affirming and supporting his co-workers in 1 Corinthians 16:15-18 and 2 Timothy 1:16. Teach this model to your church or group. * In the Old Testament, study how God gave the Israelites affirmation and support to strengthen them (see Exodus 6:2-8; Genesis 12:1-2; Joshua 1:3-7; Isaiah 43:1-5; etc.) * Consider God’s affirmation of His own Son in Matthew 3:17. Why did God do this? * Study how God and other leaders affirmed and supported people in Scripture. How did they do it? What words did they use? What was the result? * Study examples in the Bible of those who were uplifted by the affirmation and support from others and those who failed because of others’ denial of them. What can you learn from these examples? * Find and read books and articles about giving affirmation and encouragement to others (ask a spiritual leader for guidance). * Listen to sermons, training, or podcasts on giving encouragement to others. * Summarize how Paul in his letters used words of affirmation and support to strengthen the churches and imitate him. * Listen to [audio teachings on Church and Family Life](https://www.leadersource.org/resources/audio/Church-and-Family-Life/) by Malcolm Webber – at least one per week. |