

Silence to Think and Re-energize

Many people are afraid of sitting in silence with a group in a Zoom room. *Don't be afraid.* Silence can be extremely helpful and needed if timed well.



Here are reasons to design for silence:

- to give people time to think
- to make space for offscreen work before coming to the large group
- to consider content, ideas, or a plan that was just offered
- to give people a break from all the talk
- to energize - both introverts and extroverts will need this from time to time

Consider the examples below and imagine how you might use each of them:

EXAMPLE #1 - at the start of a synchronous session

"To help get us ready to work together on our action plan, let's take some *solo time* to consider the desired state. Take 3 minutes to draw the new (improved) reality for our team as a result of our work today.... After we are finished, we will all hold up our drawings and hear a few words from each person. This is not a test of your artistic ability - have fun with it!"

EXAMPLE #2 - after a presentation

"We are now going to hear from [name]. As you listen, consider these two questions.... Now take 3 minutes to write your thoughts to [question #2] in the Chat box. Let's see how this pushes our thinking and work on [project]."

EXAMPLE #3 - after a presentation

"[Name] just offered us a lot to think about. Before diving into dialogue in breakout rooms, let's take 3 minutes to jot down some thoughts to these two questions: [questions].... Now please share your thoughts in a group of 5 in a breakout room. We will hear one [idea] when we are back together in the large group."

EXAMPLE #4 - at the end of your session

"Before we all head our separate ways, take 2 minutes to consider all we discussed together. What words of wisdom or caution can you offer the leadership team to further this work? [After the 2 minutes] Please offer your words of wisdom or caution in the Chat box."