Triad Group: Joshua Kwon, Jun Suk Seo, Shian Der Yuan

To be very bluntly honest, while the sessions got better towards the end, it took a while before it got better. Maybe that was inevitable given that our group was made up of three brothers. Three of us were separated by 15 years each by age from late 20s to early 60s and one in mid 40s. All three of were of Asian descents and have immigrant experience. Three Asians brothers from distinctive generations and experiences, my immediate thought was, "oh this might be hard."

Right from the first session, I sense it might be a difficult session from the fact that one brother did not have the camera on. We really should have insisted him to turn his camera on but we just took it with a face value when he said he has some issues with camera. My sinful nature doubted his answer, but I prayed immediately for spirit of understanding so that I don't assume what I don't know about this brother. I felt the need to moderate, while I do not always have to moderate, I felt the need at least in the first session. I also just took the lead and went first as the speaker. I am comfortable telling my story, and wanted to be vulnerable to increase the possibility for our group to go deep, I try to be honest, succinct yet informative about myself. We each took turns introducing ourselves, and in the end, I felt the mood improving. I can sense that people are getting more comfortable.

It was hard for us to read what brother Jun Seo was thinking or feeling because originally, he didn't have his camera on. He eventually did, but one covered half of his face. What I was curious from this behavior was, why is this brother uncomfortable with showing his face? To both me and Shian Der's credit, we waited for him to be more comfortable, and I think found the appropriate time during our second or third session to kindly turn on the camera and

change the angle, and I think by that time he felt comfortable. In hindsight maybe we should have insisted more from the start, but I think both me and Shian Der wasn't comfortable at asking. I appreciated Shian Der asking and kindly insisting Jun Seo to turn on the camera. I felt that all three of us while we tried, was having hard time focusing and being attentive especially as observers. I think we did better as a listen, but it seems like sometimes we didn't observer well as a group. Also, we didn't do a good job of giving feed-backs. To be fair, by the last session, our skills to listen and observe and giving feedbacks got better. I think what all three of us did well is that we try to listen and encourage each other to share more openly without being pushy and was just asking open ended questions. For example, when Shian Der shared about his mentor pastor's passing as well as his parents passing during the covid, I felt his desire to grieve and process, so I try to show my empathy, affirm his feeling, and listened more. I felt my empathy and wanting to know about their story grow more as I got to know their story more. More I got familiar with their upbrings and what they are going through and facing, I felt like I can sense what they are going through in a more tangible way. All three of us did not do a good job of giving each other evaluation of the listener. Overall, we just struggled to get the conversation going to be honest. Though again, it progressively got better, there were some awkward moments. Nonetheless, I think it was good to observe and feeling when our conversations got better over time.

Potential take-a-ways:

What I learned from this exercise is how important it is that we train our physical posture and listening skills and even bandwidth to be an attentive listener. Put it differently, I realize that it is skills that requires practice and training. I also recognize how important it is for us to refrain

from giving unsolicited advice with people around us and in establishing friendship and relationships. Also, I recognize how much nonverbal encouragement are part of good listening skills. For the current and future ministry context, I think reflective listing and pray to have empathy is so vital for anyone in the ministry especially for those that are ministering to "hurt people." From my experience, hurt people don't need more someone to solve their problems per se. Often what they desire is someone to listen and see their pains and empathize with them.

Members grade:

I would give Jun Seo "B" and "A" for Shian Der. Despite Shian Der was not fluent in English, I can sense that he was really trying to express his thoughts and feelings. Jun Seo, although he eventually turned his camera, there were times his camera was off. And simply put, it's impossible to read a person or observe when we can't see one's face. Additionally, he had to miss a session due to illness. Having said that we felt and saw the progression on Jun Seo becoming more open in his sharing, so personally I felt ok and empathize and going to give him the benefit of the doubt for not wanting to turn his camera on. What I was feeling was that he was going through some stuff in life, which he didn't shared in our triads.