Circle Reflection Protocol

Setup:

There should be enough room for everyone to gather in a circle. Find a talking piece. It can be a stuffed animal, a koosh, or anything else you have on hand for people to hold. If your team wants to, you should identify a no-tetaker to record key ideas from the conversation. It might be helpful to have on hand your Executive Summary and action planning tool to read before the circle and ground everyone in the goals you set for this year.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The facilitator should first provide some context.
    - Tell participants that we're using a circle protocol to reflect on our experiences together this year. Introduce the talking piece and explain that you want everyone's voice to be heard. When someone has the talking piece, it's their turn to speak. When you do not have it, it's your turn to listen.You can pass. If you want to pass, it's important to at least hold the talking piece for a pause so you can be engaged in the circle even if you don't speak.

2. Start the protocol by reading the following quote:

    "Listening is such a simple act. It requires us to be present, and that takes practice, but we don't have to do anything else. We don't have to advise, or coach, or sound wise. We just have to be willing to sit there and listen." — Margaret J. Wheatley

3. Then, go down the list of questions. Start with 1, allow the talking piece to travel all the way around the circle, then move onto 2 and so on until they've all been answered.
    - What's something that you would identify as a success of our team this year? What are you proud of?
    - What conditions contributed to our successes?
    - Reflect on 1 or 2 key barriers to greater success with our goals.
    - What ideas do you have for overcoming these barriers as we look ahead to next year?
    - Share a snapshot moment from our time together that was meaningful or memorable for you.

Note: There may be questions that you decide are more important for your team than the ones listed here. These can be adjusted, removed or replaced to work for you.

4. Be sure to thank everyone for their time and thoughts. End the circle protocol by reading the following quote:

    "Sane leadership is the unshakeable confidence that people can be generous, creative, and kind. The leader's role is to create the conditions for these qualities to be evoked and utilized to accomplish good work." — Margaret J. Wheatley,