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An Extraordinary Journey!

Serving as a Short-Term Volunteer is an extraordinary call to answer.

This journey will be one of service to God and personal spiritual growth. You’ll experience excitement and stress, fun and frustration, joy and satisfaction. Your life will be changed in ways from the simple and unexpected to the more profound.

- You’ll experience firsthand what it means to serve in another culture and learn the challenges of communicating the Gospel and of ministry in that culture.
- You’ll encourage those who serve in the country you visit by your presence. The missionaries, volunteer spouses, children, and nationals who serve in that country all need your prayers and encouragement as they minister and share the Good News of Jesus.
- You’ll also discover how you and your congregation can lend aid and support to the ongoing ministry in that country.
- Finally, you’ll learn how God’s heart aches for the lost, for your heart, too, will ache for those not yet connected to Jesus. Hopefully, this ache will motivate you to engage your congregation more courageously in connecting people to Jesus.

Training

This training is an important step in your journey. It will provide answers about what to expect and tools for your success.

It also allows you to meet and work with your team before you travel, live and work together. This is an important step in building a strong, effective team.

To truly benefit from these sessions, always be open-minded and participate in the devotions, discussions and activities that are part of this training.

Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV)

37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Exodus 4:12 (NIV)

Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.

To truly benefit from these sessions, always be open-minded and participate in the devotions, discussions and activities that are part of this training.
Session 1: Role and Identity

Notes

Opening Devotion

Training Introduction

Activity: What Is Your Role?

View Video Role and Identity

Activity: Name That Role (See page 4.)

View Next Segment of Video

Review Key Points: Part 1

Key Points: Part 1

What are your three roles as a short-term volunteer?

• _______________
• _______________
• _______________

It’s always important to:

• _______________
• _______________
# Activity: Name That Role

Under each statement, decide if it relates to the role of servant, learner, or guest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You conduct a Bible study for a group of teenagers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The bathrooms are so different! Yuck!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During services, you sit in an area for men or women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At dinner, everyone is eating out of the same bowl. Using their hands!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>While coaching kids, a Muslim child stops for prayers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Every day around 2 p.m., everyone takes a short nap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All women, including Christians, cover their heads with scarves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You’ve been invited to sing with the choir.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes

View Final Segment of Video

Activity: Overview Journaling

Review Key Points: Part 2

Key Points: Part 2

Why are daily team meetings important?

• ______________________________________

• ______________________________________

What should you do in personal time each day?

• ______________________________________

• ______________________________________

• ______________________________________

Homework: Session 1 Journaling

Closing Prayer
Your Roles As a Short-Term Volunteer

You have three distinct roles as a Short-Term Volunteer—learner, servant and guest.

- **Learner**
  Your trip will give you the opportunity to learn about the life of Christians in another part of the world. You’ll also see what overseas missionaries face on a day-to-day basis—the joys, frustrations and challenges they experience.

  You’ll also learn about living with a lower standard of living than your own. The food, accommodations, and practicalities of day-to-day living will be very different. You’ll come to better appreciate those who serve full-time, especially in the less developed nations.

- **Servant**
  The work you do on your trip has been requested by the mission field. The value of this work may not be readily apparent to you, but as you continue, you’ll see how it fits into the overall purpose of that mission.

  “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.” Ephesians 6:7 (NIV)

- **Guest**
  To be a good guest, simply think of the role in reverse. If you were the host, what behavior would you expect from your guest? Always act in a gracious, accommodating manner.

Success As a Learner, Servant and Guest

Success in each of your roles will come as you approach everything you say and do knowing that you’re going in the glory of God. With an attitude of service and humility, people will feel you’re there to help and serve them rather than to advance your own agenda.

Your words and actions make a statement. So at all times be flexible and show respect.

- **Be flexible**
  Expect the unexpected! Plans, schedules and even your original task could change. Never let a change of plan or the stress it might cause you interfere with the overall experience.

  Change may be when the best things happen. Always have a spiritual understanding that whatever changes, it happened for a reason.

- **Show respect**
  Show respect at all times and in all situations. The life of the people, including the church life, will be very different from home. Don’t assume that what you do at home will work in another country.

  Also remember it is an established church. You’re not there to change it but to help expand and enlarge its mission. Respect how things are done, and realize the work is within the context of that culture. Avoid snap judgments. Don’t disagree with what you see because you may not fully understand the big picture.
Team Meetings

Daily team meetings should be a priority. They provide a time to discuss the day and process feelings, as well as time for communal prayer and devotion.

“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!” Psalm 133:1 (NIV)

HALT

You need to set a time for these meetings and then adjust them as needed. You should reschedule if one or more people on the team are:

- Hungry.
- Angry.
- Lonely for home.
- Tired.

When people are experiencing any of these feelings, the discussion may become negative. Think of these conditions as a time to HALT. If it’s only one or two people, you may simply excuse them from that one meeting. If it’s several team members, it’s best to reschedule.

Discuss the Day

These meetings should be an open forum that gives each team member the opportunity to talk and share his or her feelings. It’s an important and healthy outlet to share with each other the day’s events, whether those are joys or frustrations.

You should also talk about concerns and needs. Meeting daily helps prevent issues and concerns from building up. It’s not a time to complain, but a time to build each other up. After the team hears and addresses a concern, simply move on.

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.” Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)
Team Devotions

Daily team meeting should also include a daily devotion. You may be able to coordinate this with a local service. If you do this, also be sure to still have a time for the team to meet alone.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

Planning Ahead

To prepare before you go as a team, you may consider reading the book Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This short book offers excellent insight into the Christian community.

One individual should be designated as the spiritual leader to coordinate these devotions. This person may also be the leader of the devotion or could rotate it among several team members.

Typically devotions include a short scripture reading, a short devotion, and then prayer. However, the devotion may differ to fit your team and your trip.

Following are some suggested resources.

- Orders for daily prayers are in the Lutheran Service Book. (See pages 219-259, 282-287, and 294-298.)
- Laminated card with orders for morning and evening prayers from The Hymnal Supplement 98 are available from Concordia Publishing House (CPH). These are durable and easy to pack.
- A short, ongoing Bible study may be appropriate. Select a particular theme or book of the Bible for the study. The Lutheran Spirituality Series from CPH provides six-part sessions that are reflective and interactive studies. You may be able to tie the study to your trip or the current time of the church year.
- Other devotional resources are:
  - Portals of Prayer.
  - Day by Day We Magnify Thee by Martin Luther (Wipf & Stock Press).
  - Imaging the Journey by Mark Mattes (Lutheran University Press).
  - The Lord Will Answer (CPH).
  - Meditations on Mercy by Johann Gerhard/Matthew Harrison (CPH).
  - A Devotional Companion: Blessings and Prayers for College Students (CPH).
  - God Grant It by C.F.W. Walther (CPH).

Prayer

As you pray, remember those at home, those in the mission you serve, the safety and protection of the team and any special needs of the team or mission. Also be sure to give thanks for the good you’ve been permitted to give and receive.
### Session 2: Safe Travel and Living Abroad

**Notes**

**Opening Devotion**

**Activity: Concerns – Part 1**

**View Video Safe Travel and Living Abroad**

**Activity: Concerns – Part 2**

**View Final Segment of Video**

**Activity: Excitements**

**Review Key Points**

**Key Points**

- Be physically prepared for your trip.
- Pack light! Only bring what you need.
- Coordinate some items as a group (first aid kit, basic medicines, etc.).
- Leave PDA, pager, etc. at home.
- Remember that personal items aren’t easily replaced.
- Make sure your clothing is modest, culturally appropriate and suited for your task.
- Be flexible and cooperative with your accommodations.
Notes

- Discover new foods! Be open to food you’re offered. Be gracious to those offering it.
  - Be sure food is properly prepared.
- Know quality of water. Drink plenty to avoid dehydration. To overcome jet lag:
  - adjust to local time.
  - do not take a nap.
- Be aware of safety considerations:
  - Stay with the group at all times.
  - Keep money safe and secure.
  - Bring cash and one credit card.
  - Always keep your passport on you.
  - Have second form of photo identification, such as a driver’s license.
  - Bring a copy of your passport identification page that you keep separate from your passport. Also leave a copy of this page and a certified copy of your birth certificate at home with a friend or relative.
- If you have paper airline tickets, keep them in a secure location.

Homework: Session 2 Journaling

Closing Prayer
Travel Guidelines

The following travel guidelines are as up to date as possible. However, check with your sending agency for specific information before you go.

Weather

Research the weather where you’ll be. Become familiar with destination point seasons, temperatures and humidity.

Insurance

- **Health**—Your personal health insurance should be adequate. However, it is always wise to check and make sure that you have emergency coverage overseas if needed. If you’re not covered by your own insurance, contact your sending agency for options.

- **Medical Evacuation**—This is insurance that you’ll obtain through your sending agency. In the event someone has a medical emergency and needs to be evacuated, this insurance will cover such an event.

Travel Documents

An essential part of planning is to have all of your documentation completed before your departure date. Keep these documents in your physical possession at all times when traveling. Also keep all paperwork that you are given by authorities. It’s not always clear which papers will be important to you later.

- **Vaccination Certificate Booklet**
  Obtain this booklet at most doctor’s offices or travel clinics. You should have all vaccinations recorded in this booklet by your doctor. Carry the booklet with your passport because it may be examined as you enter the country. In most cases, it’s not required to have this booklet unless a country requires you to have a specific vaccination.

- **Passport**
  A passport is a formal travel document issued by a government to its citizens. A passport attests to the bearer’s identity and nationality and indicates that the bearer is entitled to receive the protection and assistance of the country’s consular office while abroad. Make a copy of your passport identification page in the worst-case scenario you lose your passport and have to replace it. Keep this in a separate location than your passport.

- **Visa**
  A visa indicates you have permission to enter a specific country.
Other Important Items

- **Itinerary and Contacts**
  You’ll be provided with names of your volunteer hosts, including telephone numbers and addresses. **Keep this information with you and easily accessible in case you get lost or separated while traveling.** Make additional copies of your flight itinerary and contact sheet for your family, office, and friends as appropriate.

- **Driver’s Licenses**
  Driver’s licenses are required for operating automobiles in most countries. More than likely, it will be unnecessary for you to obtain a driver’s license. If you do anticipate driving, check out requirements and procedures with your sending agency. An international driver’s license can be secured at your local Division of Motor Vehicles or the Automobile Association of America (AAA) offices for a small fee. Legal requirements differ from country to country. Therefore, it is extremely important that you have a thorough understanding of these rules before you drive any vehicle in the country you’re visiting. In some countries, an international driver’s license is not accepted at all.

- **Calling Cards**
  For convenient calling from anywhere in the world, you might consider getting a calling card with international access numbers. These calling cards are often different from what are commonly advertised as “international calling cards.” AT&T, Sprint, and MCI are the most common brands that will fit your needs. With these cards comes a list of local access numbers for countries all around the world. Make sure that your calling card company services the country to which you are traveling.

- **Credit Cards/ATM**
  Keep a copy of your credit card numbers and store it in a safe place (separate from the actual items) in case you should need to cancel or replace the cards. Remember to note the phone number you would need to call if these items are lost and stolen. Travelers checks are not recommended. It is difficult, costly, and sometimes impossible to exchange them for local currency.

  ATMs are universal. You can find them in many countries. The money you get from an ATM is in the local currency. Be aware that there is also a charge for this as well.

- **Money**
  Most countries operate on cash. Restaurants and stores are likely to only accept local currency. Exchanging U.S. dollars in another country is easy. Generally, you should do this at the airport when you arrive. Don’t carry bills that are damaged in any way or have writing on them. They usually won’t be accepted. Beware of pickpockets. Protect your valuables and be discreet when handling money.

- **Valuables**
  Don’t wear or take any valuable that you can live without. Don’t wear or take expensive jewelry. Being modest in all aspects is important.
Packing

- **Luggage**
  It is generally recommended that you have one suitcase and one carry-on piece. The smaller and lighter, the better. Commonly, in international travel you find yourself needing to transport your entire luggage alone. This might happen while getting on or off a bus or train or just walking across the street. In these situations, sturdy, wheeled luggage is very helpful.

  Be sure to hand-carry some essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is delayed or lost. “Mixed-packing,” or putting necessary items in multiple suitcases, is a good idea for couples. That way, one person won’t end up with nothing, while the other has everything!

- **Clothing**
  Clothing appropriate to the country is important. Learn what is culturally appropriate. Keep in mind that what may be acceptable at home may not be considered modest in another culture. Always respect the country and culture you’re in.

  Also be sure clothes are appropriate to the climate and time of year you’re there. Have comfortable clothing that can be easily laundered. Knits, permanent press, washables, and wrinkle-free items are especially appropriate. Comfortable walking shoes that are easily removable are a necessity in many countries. Include a fold-up raincoat and/or small travel umbrella. Be conservative in your jewelry use. The old rule of thumb “take half as many clothes and twice as much money as you think you need” applies. It’s common practice to wear the same piece of clothing more than once.

Travel

- **Departure Airport**
  Consult your airline concerning how early to arrive at the airport. Allow plenty of time to take care of necessary matters and ensure you board your international flight with as little stress as possible. International travel security measures are generally more difficult and take more time.

- **Travel Time**
  Use your time wisely. Plan for the time you’ll have on the plane. Bring a favorite book and be prepared in the event of a grounded flight or other delays.

- **Travel Sickness**
  If you suffer from any type of travel sickness, bring proper medication. Remember, it may be difficult for the group to slow down or stop for you to recuperate. Taking precautions is both helpful and thoughtful.

- **Snacks**
  Carry some snacks with you. Nuts, dried fruit, granola and candy help keep your energy high and blood sugar stable, and they provide nutrition in case of delays. Always give attention to proper nutrition, especially the day before traveling. Drink plenty of liquids because dehydration can be significant during long periods of travel. Minimize the amount of alcohol because it is dehydrating.
• **Arrival**
  Arrival at your destination airport usually involves a two-step process; immigration and customs. The first step is customs where you are required to show your passport and landing card stating your purpose for visiting and where you will be staying. If a special visa is required, you will need to show it at this time. It will be usually attached to or stamped in your passport. Once you have your passport stamped and clear this area, you then pick up your luggage and head for customs.

• **Customs**
  Before landing, the airline attendants will give you a customs declaration form or landing card to fill out. You’ll be required to list an address of where you’ll be staying. Make sure you have that address in your carry-on items. Write “personal effects” on the form rather than listing everything in your luggage. You’ll need to show this form and your passport to customs officials upon arrival. Keep both handy.

  Luggage also may be inspected by customs officials when you land. An exemption of up to $400 per person is allowed on accompanied luggage when you return to the United States. Keep receipts for purchases made overseas to prove your declaration of value.

  Register foreign-made articles, such as cameras and watches, with customs before you leave the United States or take proof of prior purchase with you.

  **Keep all paperwork that you are given by authorities.** You may be required to show a seemingly worthless (in your eyes) piece of paper before leaving the country.

• **Airport Tax**
  Most countries charge an airport tax to be paid when you leave the country. The cost varies from $10–25 per person. Contact the travel agency to determine the cost for your country.

**Jet Lag**

To avoid jet lag as much as possible, go to bed a little earlier or later each night before your trip to help you adjust to the difference in time zones. Shift mealtimes gradually, and prepare yourself psychologically by setting your watch for arrival time in the new time zone once you board your plane. Drinks plenty of water to offset possible dehydration caused by the low humidity aboard planes and trains.

**Don’t stay seated for the entire flight:** Try to get up and get the circulation moving. Upon arrival, eat a light meal, get some exercise and, if possible, shower, relax and go to bed early. The sooner you adjust your schedule to that of your host country, the better.

**E-mail and Internet Access**

Almost all of your fields have e-mail and Internet access of one form or another. More than likely you’ll have the ability to communicate back home during your stay by using the host volunteer’s computer. Recognize the limitations of usage. Realize that there may be some cost involved. Be prepared to reimburse the host volunteer for the time you use the Internet.
Health

Nothing can ruin the effectiveness or pleasure of your overseas trip as much as illness or bad health. The following lines of defense will help you to maintain your health during this time. You may see the nationals and even some of the missionaries disregard some of these hints, but remember that they have lived many years where they are and have developed immunity. You won’t be able to develop this immunity during a few weeks.

These lines of defense are for your protection. Use them and you’ll have a much more profitable and enjoyable trip. Disregard them and you’ll endanger your usefulness and your health.

If you do become ill, consult with your local host to find the best way to deal with your illness.

First Line of Defense: Know Your Present Health

Be sure you’re in good health. You might want to consider having a physical examination before leaving. If you wear glasses, take along a spare pair and your prescription for lenses. If you have diabetes, are allergic to penicillin, or have any physical condition that may require emergency care, have some identification (a card, bracelet, or tag on your person at all times indicating this). You’ll fill out a medical emergency form that can serve in this capacity.

Second Line of Defense: Immunizations

Some countries require certain vaccinations. You should consider your regular “well” shots, as well as Hepatitis A and B. We strongly recommend that you consult your doctor for recommended vaccines for the country you’ll visit.

Third Line of Defense: Common Sense and Health Rules

- Be sure to get sufficient rest.
  A short afternoon nap may be a local custom in the country you’re visiting.

- Be aware of the food you eat.
  Avoid street vendor food without the recommendation of local missionaries. Also avoid foods that spoil easily, such as cream- or custard-filled pastries and meringues, potato salads, cold egg mixtures, creamed foods, cold meats, milk and milk products (except boiled fresh milk). Eat only hot, thoroughly cooked foods except for thick-skinned raw fruits that you can peel yourself. The local volunteer will tell you whether the milk and milk products are safe (such as ice cream).
Be careful of the water you drink.
Your drinking water is crucial. Many diseases may be transmitted through drinking water. While you are traveling, do not take it for granted that the tap water or the water served in a hotel or restaurant is pure. Asking the volunteer host about the water is wise. Most bottled drinks are clean. If water is brought in jugs, be sure that the company selling the water is reputable. Remember that ice is frozen water and may be contaminated. Hot coffee and tea are usually safe.

Drink plenty of water. Water filters are available at most sites. Where water filters are not available, consult your volunteer host how to find clean water.

Check with the volunteer host before you go swimming.
Many streams and rivers in the tropical areas are contaminated by parasites. Ocean beaches can be treacherous with undercurrents. Some rivers have carnivorous fish called piranha. They can cause severe injuries. Never go swimming alone.

Be careful to not spread germs when using the bathroom.
Use an adequate supply of clean water to wash your hands before eating and after using the toilet. Contaminated hands spread many germs. Bring anti-bacterial liquid hand gel with you because running water and/or soap is sometimes not available in public restrooms overseas.

Emergency Information Reference
You’ll be asked to fill out an emergency information reference form in triplicate. You’ll keep one copy with you at all times. The second copy will be given to your team coordinator. The third copy will remain with your sending agency.
Packing List

Clothing needs may vary from country to country. This is a “starter” list for you to consider.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men’s Clothing</th>
<th>Health Items</th>
<th>Women’s Clothing</th>
<th>Personal Items</th>
<th>Travel Documents</th>
<th>Food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long pants</td>
<td>Bug repellent</td>
<td>Travel: dresses/skirts/slacks</td>
<td>Razor/shaving cream</td>
<td>Passport/visa and copy</td>
<td>Snack food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirts/sweater/jacket</td>
<td>Antibiotic medicine</td>
<td>Sunday dress and dress shoes</td>
<td>Alarm clock</td>
<td>Immunization record</td>
<td>Granola bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church: Dress pants, shirt,</td>
<td>Pepto-Bismol</td>
<td>Comfortable walking shoes,</td>
<td>Shampoo</td>
<td>Insurance records</td>
<td>Juice boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoes &amp; tie</td>
<td>Anti-diarrhea medicine</td>
<td>sandals for bathing</td>
<td>Deodorant</td>
<td>Phone numbers and e-mail</td>
<td>Bottles of water in carry-on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underwear</td>
<td>Lomotil (for diarrhea)</td>
<td>Underwear</td>
<td>Soap/washcloth</td>
<td>of friends and family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable walking shoes,</td>
<td>Tylenol</td>
<td>Umbrella &amp; rain jacket</td>
<td>Towel (not always</td>
<td>Address and phone of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sandals for bathing</td>
<td>Bandages/gauze &amp; tape</td>
<td>Swim suit</td>
<td>necessary)</td>
<td>host volunteer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underwear</td>
<td>Antihistamines for</td>
<td>Umbrella &amp; rain jacket</td>
<td>Toothbrush/toothpaste</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Swim suit</td>
<td>allergies</td>
<td>Swim suit (modest)</td>
<td>Antibacterial lotion/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Umbrella &amp; rain jacket</td>
<td>Antibacterial solution</td>
<td>Sweater</td>
<td>wipes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Swim suit (modest)</td>
<td>Malarial pills (if</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweater</td>
<td>recommended)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prescription medicines</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Session 3: Team Roles and Responsibilities

Notes

Opening Devotion

View Video Team Roles and Responsibilities

Activity: Review Team Roles (See page 22.)

View Next Segment of Video

Activity: Handling Conflict (See page 24.)

Case Study 1
Each day your team takes a bus to a work site. The team coordinator gets a bout of food poisoning and is unable to go. You’re not sure how long he or she will be sick.

Case Study 2
Your team has to share bathroom facilities. Every morning someone has to wait for one person, who always seems to take an inordinate amount of time. Everyone on the team is complaining about it to each other. How do you handle the situation?

Case Study 3
Your team is in an undeveloped country and staying in very rugged conditions. You have no electricity, and the food has been difficult to eat. One person is continuously complaining about the living conditions to the point where it’s simply become whining. It’s getting on everyone’s nerves.

Case Study 4
You’re serving in a country where women are second-class citizens. They’re required to walk behind men when in public, and church services are divided by gender. Two women decide to make a statement and sit in the front row of the men’s section during services.
Activity: Team Covenant (See page 24.)

View Final Segment of Video

Review Key Points

Key Points

What’s the value of a team?

T__________ E__________ A__________ M__________

What are important things to do to help build the team?

• __________________________________________

• __________________________________________

What should you do if there’s a change of plans and/or roles?

_________________________________________________

How should you handle conflict?

_________________________________________________
Before you go, establish ______________.

What activities will you do as a team? ____________!

Homework: Bring a Vacation Photograph

Homework: Session 3 Journaling

Closing Prayer
TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More

It’s important to know that your journey as a Short-Term Volunteer is with a team, not as an individual. Although a team requires compromise and cooperation, combining individual strengths and gifts brings greater results than what one person can do alone.

Team Building

A team is a mix of people from various backgrounds and individual personalities. Respect each team member and his or her contribution to the team. Also be careful to not unintentionally exclude any team members or isolate yourself as a team.

Team Roles

Each team member should be assigned a role with specific duties.

The following is a list of possible roles. This list is simply a starting place. The roles and responsibilities for your team will be determined by the exact nature of your trip. For example, you may split the duties under one role to several people.

- **Team Coordinator**
  The team coordinator will identify, facilitate and delegate essential tasks. The team coordinator is also the one person who should contact the sending agency with questions from the team.

- **Assistant Team Coordinator**
  All great leaders have great assistants! You may consider having an assistant team coordinator who is “in the know” in case of an emergency.

- **Project Manager**
  The project manager will prepare for the work to be accomplished on the trip. This person will be the point person with the host while on the field about problems or needs of team members. If your trip has more than one project, each one requires a project manager.

- **Researcher**
  To prepare for your trip, the researcher will find as much information as possible about the country and ministry for presentations and personal preparation. Assigning one person to the task of gathering this information can save time for the entire team.

- **Fund-Raising Coordinator**
  Many teams will sponsor Fund-Raising Events. These events connect the congregation to the mission team and garner prayer and financial support. Coordinating these events is a big undertaking. Having a “manager” for each different event is wise.
• **Treasurer**
The treasurer communicates all financial information to the necessary individuals such as the team coordinator, church treasurer or pastor; manages funds collected in joint support-raising events; and manages and tracks team members’ individual funds.

• **Logistic Coordinator**
The logistics coordinator takes care of the organizational side of the trip such as scheduling meetings, developing a packing list, coordinating team supplies and coordinating transportation.

• **Spiritual Leader**
The spiritual leader coordinates the daily team meetings and devotions. Also, although it is the responsibility of all team members to care for each other’s spiritual needs and growth, it is helpful to also have the spiritual leader oversee and encourage this aspect of the trip.

• **Nurse**
The team nurse does not need to be a medical professional. This person will coordinate the first aid kit and other supplies. He or she would also help any individuals with medical needs during the trip.

• **Communications Coordinator**
The communications editor coordinates the communication activities of the team and is responsible for the final production of any newsletters, brochures or presentations.

• **Photographer/Videographer**
Although several team members will likely take photographs, the designated photographer is responsible for producing photographs needed for communications.

• **Artifact Collector**
The artifact collector coordinates the collection of artifacts to use in presentations and displays about your trip.

### Change of Plans

Every team needs to be prepared for a change of plan. This change may also result in needing to step in to help someone with his or her role or take it over completely. Individuals may become ill or for some other reason need help.

Flexibility is always the key!
Handling Conflict

It’s important to realize that it will be impossible to avoid all conflict before, during or after the trip. You need to be equipped to deal with it in a loving, non-threatening manner.

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.” (Matthew 18:15 NIV)

Here are some guidelines to deal with conflict.

- Promise to resolve disagreements in a loving way. This provides a starting point for resolution, helps prevent some conflicts, and minimizes disagreements that do happen.
- Before you go, establish boundaries.
  - Each person will need times to absorb and process the experiences the team will have.
  - One person might need alone time for quiet reflection. Another will need to talk through his or her feelings.
  - Recognize and respect these differences and know the boundaries each person will need.
- Pray for God to give you wisdom and guidance.
- Self-examine for your part of the conflict.
- Go to the person with a gentle spirit and ask to talk.
- Explain how you feel, but do not engage in finger pointing. Make sure to restate what the other person is saying for clear communication.
- Remember a resolution happens when both people are satisfied, not when only one person feels better.
- If no resolution can be reached, agree to talk about this again with your team coordinator or other neutral person on your team.
- Continue to pray together and individually for a resolution.

Team Covenant

Write your team covenant here:
United We Stand

During your trip all travel, meals and sightseeing will be done with your team. Trip planning, which has required a lot of time and effort on the part of many individuals, has been done for a group. It is neither possible nor practical to accommodate individual travel plans. To best serve your team and the ministry, put the team first.
Session 4: Effective Mission Communication

Notes

Opening Devotion

Activity: Share a Vacation Photo

View Effective Mission Communication

Activity: Good or Bad? (See page 30.)

View Last Segment of Video

Review Key Points

Key Points

As a short-term volunteer, you become a ____________ link

between the _________________and _________________.

When working in or writing about some countries, you need to
consider: _________________.

In countries where communication security is an issue, you cannot
assume any level of ____________ for any type of communication.
Before you go, select someone to be the ____________.

What should you start to do as soon as you arrive?

• ________________
• ________________
• ________________
• ________________

What should you know before you start taking photographs?

__________________________________

What should you consider as you gather artifacts?

• ________________
• ________________
• ________________
• ________________

As you journal and write about your experience, don’t forget the ____________ aspect.

___________________________

**Homework: Session 4 Journaling**

**Closing Prayer**
Activity: Effective Photos

Circle which photo would be a more effective way to tell the story of a trip.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story to tell</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Local shopping</td>
<td>A shop selling cultural items you would not see at home</td>
<td>All shops down the street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching</td>
<td>Teacher in front of room</td>
<td>Teacher one-on-one with a student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Construction</td>
<td>A wide or distant shot of the entire construction project showing all team members</td>
<td>A close-up of two individuals painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Worship</td>
<td>Unique custom or object used in worship</td>
<td>Choir singing in choir robes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. National church workers</td>
<td>Pastor posed in front of wall</td>
<td>Pastor working at his desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Country's culture</td>
<td>Random shots of individuals</td>
<td>Photos you take after checking on local etiquette for taking pictures of people, places or objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For tips on good photos, see [www.kodak.com](http://www.kodak.com). Type “photo tips” in the search function.
When You Arrive!

When you first arrive, you should immediately start to think about photo-taking, collecting artifacts and journaling. Not only will this ensure you get what you need, you’ll also automatically notice all the differences that point to a different way of life, worldview and conception of God.

You’re initially in “tourist” mode—and that’s the ideal time to take photos and collect objects for the sake of family, friends and supporters back home. What you’re noticing is exactly what they would notice if they were there. Both photos and artifacts help to communicate the people and culture of your area of service to your audience.

Collecting Artifacts

Artifacts from your trip can help make the culture you experience real to others and serve as an avenue to share information about your trip and the culture. For some reason, it is easier for people to care about and pray for people that they’ve never met when having seen tangible objects of that culture. You’ll also want to bring home personal souvenirs, but don’t plan to use those for your presentations.

Choose artifacts that are:

- multisensory.
- portable.
- meaningful.
- inexpensive.
- sturdy.

You can use artifacts for:

- table-top display.
- three-panel display.
- discovery boxes.
- giveaways.
- visual aids for verbal presentation.
- interactive games.
- crafts.
Photographs and Videos

Photographs and videos will be a great tool to talk about your trip. Also, be sure to share your photos with your sending agency.

Important! Before you take a photo or video, ask experienced missionaries about cultural etiquette regarding photo-taking. This differs from country to country. You want to be sure you don’t offend anyone!

Consider the following as you take photos or video.

- Get a balance of photos with you “at work” and also photos focusing on nationals.
- Avoid too many posed, group shots.
- Get photos that show:
  - training of national Christians.
  - church-planting activities.
  - social ministry.
  - fellowship.
  - worship.
  - the culture and environment (lifestyle, clothing, housing, transportation and scenery).

Photo Tips!

- If your camera has an auto-date function, disable it so that people won’t know if your photos are old.
- Get as close as you can to the subject and fill your frame with it or use the rule of thirds. (Divide frame into a tic-tac-toe grid. Place subject at intersection of any two lines for a more dramatic composition.)
- Use the flash when photographing dark skin or facial detail will be lost.
- Stay away from distracting backgrounds and objects that “grow” out of your subject’s head.
- Keep the sun and other light sources (such as indoor windows) to your back. If it can’t be avoided, use the flash.
- When using focus-free or disposable cameras, stay within 10 feet of subject.
- For photography hints, help and online tutorials see www.kodak.com.
- If using film, use print film (not slide film) because it’s the most versatile for all your needs. Where good lighting exists, use 100 ASA, which will make enlargements less grainy. For indoor or low light settings, use 400 ASA. Use well-known film brands and check the date on package before using.
Video Tips

- Disable auto-date function. Keep notes of date and subject matter in a notebook or on a tape label, record date verbally or record the date briefly in auto mode and disable before recording important segments.
- Use a tripod.

Digital Tips

- You can always compress a digital photo, but you can NEVER increase the original digital resolution of a photo. Make sure to take plenty of photos at the largest photo size setting possible.
- Digital photos for use in your newsletters, Web sites, blogs, etc. are convenient and easy. However, if you need to compress a photo, rename the compressed photo so that you do not eliminate the large photo for future use.
- If you plan to have photos enlarged to use in displays or transparencies or to be used for print materials, low-resolution digital photos will not enlarge.

Equipment Protection

You’ll want to take extra care to protect your equipment when traveling.

- Protect your camera equipment from humidity, sand/dust and bugs. Check with your field for specific conditions.
- Avoid damage by keeping your equipment in one or two plastic bags with zippers.
- Keep, collect or buy desiccant (drying agent) packages. Save the packages that come free in pill bottles, packaging of electronic equipment, cameras, etc. If you put recycled silica packages into a reclosable plastic bag with your camera, you shouldn’t have to worry about humidity or condensation. Do keep the closed bag out of the sun.
- Ask to have your camera equipment hand-inspected at airports.
- Take additional batteries because many are difficult to find in local stores.
Communications Security Guidelines for Work in Sensitive Regions

Many unreached peoples live in regions of the world where volunteer activity is frowned upon or even illegal. Sending agencies may only work in humanitarian and educational capacities. In those areas, security is not only crucial but a prerequisite for some partner agencies who support our work in these regions. Your team coordinator will let you know if these guidelines apply to you and your group.

**Important!** Remember that letters (including hand-carried mail), e-mail, faxes, telephone messages, parcels, media (including print, video, DVD, Internet and Web media) in certain countries may be and very often are opened/intercepted and read by government officials.

If there are things that you would like to write but are not sure about, please contact your sending agency.

**Tech Tips**

**Picasa—Organize Your Digital Photo Files**

Picasa offers software to organize your digital photo files—and it’s FREE! Visit www.picasa.com to learn how to download this software to your PC. For those with a Macintosh computer, you already have iPhoto software that organizes your digital photos.

**Working with Large Files**

As you incorporate photos or other graphics into your newsletters, brochures and presentations, your files could become large and difficult to e-mail.

Use these tips to share files with family, friends, supporters and your sending agency.

- **www.YouSendIt.com**
  
  www.YouSendIt.com is a FREE Web site designed to make transferring large files via the Internet easy. YouSendIt serves as a temporary holding place for your file, until your intended recipient can download it. You can upload as much as 1 GB (that’s pretty big for you “non-techy” types), and your recipient is informed via e-mail that the file is ready and waiting for them to download.

- **PDFs and Compressed Files**
  
  Another option for large files is to create a portable document format (PDF). A PDF is easy for any platform to open and in a manageable file size, even for dial-up Internet connections. In addition, the file cannot be altered or changed by the person who receives it.

  Free downloadable software to convert your documents to a PDF is available from PDF 995 at http://www.pdf995.com/. If your file is less than 2 MB, you can use a free online service for making a PDF at http://www.gohtm.com/.
Bible Resources

You may want to include Bible verses in your communications or simply to prepare for your trip. Here are two online resources.

- **BibleGateway.com—online Bible**
  
  www.BibleGateway.com is a free site for reading and researching Scripture online—all in the language or translation of your choice! You can also search the Bible by keywords or verse, as well as other tools to enhance your study of the Bible. More than 35 languages and 50 versions make this an invaluable tool!

- **Talking Bibles International**
  
  The goal and focus of this organization’s ministry is to reach non-readers with the Word of God in a format they can understand and relate to—the Talking Bible in their own languages. For more information, visit www.talkingbibles.org.

Notes
Session 5: A Multicultural Christian Perspective

Notes

Opening Devotion

View Video A Multicultural Christian Perspective

Activity: Culture Quiz (See page 37.)

View Next Segment of Video

Activity: Locals and Visitors

View Last Segment of Video

Review Key Points

Key Points

You’ll experience: ____________________.

What are the four key behaviors that help build relationships in a different culture?

• ____________________

• ____________________

• ____________________

• ____________________
Notes

What’s a good rule to follow when asking questions?

________________________________________________________________________

In many cultures, people are typically more ________________.

What we consider private here, in another culture could be

______________________________________________________________________

Before you give gifts, what should you do?

______________________________________________________________________

When talking to non-Christians, Paul says in Corinthians, you

must be careful how you use your ________________.

Always be _____________.

______________________________________________________________________

Homework: Session 5 Journaling

Closing Prayer
**Culture Quiz!**
Test your knowledge of other cultures!

1. You’re in Korea. Writing someone’s name in red ink is considered a sign of honor.  
   - True  
   - False

2. You’re in Mexico. When meeting someone be careful not to touch the other person.  
   - True  
   - False

3. You’re in Indonesia. Remove your shoes when entering someone’s home.  
   - True  
   - False

4. You’re in China. Don’t be surprised if the host of your dinner takes food parcels from the public plate and places it onto your plate.  
   - True  
   - False

5. You’re in Pakistan. Praising a nice painting or vase that someone has in their home is polite.  
   - True  
   - False

6. You’re in Malaysia. Wedding gifts are typically wrapped in yellow paper.  
   - True  
   - False

7. You’re in Kenya. It’s a hot day, so it’s OK to wear shorts when meeting with a local official.  
   - True  
   - False

8. You’re in Taiwan. Never ask a waiter to refill your teapot. To request a refill, simply leave the top cover ajar for a porcelain pot or flip open the lid for a hinged pot.  
   - True  
   - False

9. You’re in Brazil. Do not use the “ok” sign of putting together your forefinger and thumb.  
   - True  
   - False

10. You’re in Japan. Only use the right hand to handle or receive an object.  
    - True  
    - False
Culture

Culture refers to the total way of life of particular groups of people. It includes their ideas, customs, traditions, languages, arts, social structures and values. People are different in their greetings, celebrations, eating habits, food, trading, dress, property, acceptance, faith and management.

How do we discover those differences?

- Observe.
- Listen.
- Inquire.
- Adapt.

Be aware of the tendency to convey “ethnocentrism,” the idea that our culture is superior. Remember that we’re the intruders. We must adjust and attempt to be at home in their culture. Don’t show paternalistic politeness. Treat everyone as adults. You don’t have to be passive—go ahead and enter yourself into their culture, give yourself to the people. You might make mistakes, but everyone will gain.

Adapting to a New Culture

Here are some areas in which you may find the host culture to be very different from yours.

Educational methods: Many cultures teach by rote. You’ll find Christians in this kind of culture who have memorized large portions of Scripture and many, many songs. But when it comes to having a discussion regarding the meaning of Scripture or about their beliefs, it will come back to those memorized verses.

Problem solving by consensus: In many cultures, a problem has no simple, quick, logical answer. Instead, you might sit for hours and listen to every view, then come to unanimity.

Desire to please: It’s more important in many cultures to say something to please the person to whom you are speaking than to “tell the truth” about how you feel. People in these cultures value the relationship more than the objective facts. Often you might really want to know what a national is thinking, and they’ll be searching for the answer that they believe will please you the most.

Time: Time has a very different value in some other cultures. You may be kept waiting an inordinate amount of time. Some people do not run their lives by the clock like we do. They probably don’t even have clocks. People wake up in the morning, prepare, and then come to worship. Some will come earlier and others later. No one knows what time it is. They simply come when they’re ready. We may be told that a worship service will start at 9:00 a.m., but it may actually start an hour later than scheduled and last 2 hours longer! Put away your watch and do not judge your hosts by their “promptness.”
Personal space: In a number of cultures, people often stand very close when communicating. Americans may feel that their space is being invaded. In many cultures it is normal for people of the same sex to hold hands, even when walking together. In other cultures, you must be very careful with your body language, never touching a person on the head, never pointing at someone with your hand or your foot, never touching a woman, etc. Please refer to the specific country information to see what is accepted in the country you’ll be visiting.

Greetings: Americans can walk down the street and speak to no one. In many other cultures, this is not the norm. Greeting others, even those you do not know as you pass them on the street, may be mandatory in certain cultures. Because you are from the United States, other nationals may wait for you to greet them first (out of respect). When you do, they may respond enthusiastically. At worship services in our local congregations, visitors may receive a few handshakes and welcomes from those immediately around them. But in most other countries, everyone attending that service will usually wait to greet and welcome each and every new person.

Animals: In the third world, people treat their animals differently. Don’t play with dogs! In most other cultures they are scavenging house guards, not pets! If you feel bad about how skinny or sick the animals look, don’t express it. Just think about the poverty of the people.

Clothes: In many cultures, what we would consider normal hot weather attire would be worn only by prostitutes. Be sure you read and understand what is appropriate for the culture you’re visiting. We do not want to shame or embarrass our hosts.

Cross-cultural Communication

How you communicate cross-culturally is perhaps the most difficult thing to change and understand. Certain verbal and nonverbal styles of communication may be difficult to learn, change or even notice. Some ways of communication that are perfectly fine here in the United States are awkward and sometimes even offensive in another culture. As you seek to adapt to your new culture, remember some of those “automatic” ways that you communicate. If you’re having a difficult time being understood by or understanding a national, examine your communication techniques. For example, you can:

- watch your gestures and facial expressions.
  - In Africa, Malaysia and the Middle East it’s considered bad manners to give someone an object using the left hand.
  - In West Africa if you stand before another person with arms crossed it implies condescension. But in Fiji it is a sign of respect.
  - In Singapore carrying on a conversation with your hands on your hips signifies defiance and anger.
  - In the Far East avoiding eye contact during a conversation is proper.
- remember that your hosts are giving you the best they have, so be gracious.
- keep your hands at your sides until you learn what gestures mean.
- learn to laugh at yourself.
- avoid using slang because most people outside the United States won’t understand.
• avoid sloppy speech.

Mealtime
Mealtime is one of the most important social occasions for many cultures. Enjoy these times and remember that any mealtime will also be a cross-cultural experience. It may be difficult, especially if you’re not an adventurous eater, but don’t be afraid.

• Each country has its own way of using silverware or eating implements (including fingers).
• In some countries it is considered rude to leave food on the plate.
• In some countries if you clean your plate it will always be refilled.
• Find out if it is appropriate to arrive for dinner at the stated time or somewhat later.
• Watch your hosts or simply ask what is proper.

Gifts
Gifts are particularly tricky. Discuss with your volunteer or national host about what is most appropriate when giving and receiving gifts.

• Avoid giving large gifts or money.
• Gifts that benefit as many people as possible are more appropriate.
• Gifts of flowers and food are acceptable in some countries and not in others.

Things to Expect
• Differences will be apparent (remember differences are just differences, not necessarily wrong).
• The schedule won’t always happen as planned.
• Your expectations won’t all be met.
• Frustration will occur (but refuse to complain).
• You’ll be stretched, challenged and changed.
• God will work in you and through you.
• Be flexible—and flexible and more flexible!
Culture Shock

As a short-term volunteer you’re essentially “plopped” down in a culture quite different than your own. The behaviors, values, and beliefs of the people may differ greatly from those you’re familiar with. You’ll also notice some common denominators between yourself and the people you meet. But the differences will hit you first. Cultural differences might be pictured in the following way. There are two cliffs. On one side is the North American way of life, and on the other is the way of life found in the host country. In between is a large chasm. For the two cultures to meet and understand one another, a bridge must be built.

What Is Culture Shock?

Culture shock is psychological disorientation or anxiety that results from losing familiar signs and symbols of social behavior and reaction. It may begin at the airport while going through customs or may not occur for several days. All of us depend on cues, which involve words, gestures and facial expressions for our peace of mind. When a person enters a new culture, all or most of these familiar cues are removed. The person is like a fish out of water. Nothing makes sense. No matter how broad-minded or full of goodwill one may be, a series of props have been knocked out from under them. This reaction is followed by a feeling of frustration and anxiety.

People react to this frustration in much the same way, even though we all like to think we’re different. They reject the environment that causes the discomfort. If you or another group member is constantly griping about the housing, food, people, etc., this may be a sign of culture shock. This is the time to lovingly remind yourself, or the other person, to relax and try to enjoy this new way of life.

Another symptom of culture shock is excessive concern over cleanliness, or the feeling that everything is “dirty.” Some people become overly concerned with being cheated, robbed or injured. Others become excessively concerned with illness or rashes. Language frustration and the inability to communicate can create a tendency to try yelling or shouting in English to make yourself understood by the national. Keep this in mind, and ask others to pray for you as you pray for them, and your “case of culture shock” will probably be minimal.

Who Is a Potential Candidate for Culture Shock?

Culture shock may or may not become a problem for members of the group, and reactions may be different among individuals. This malady afflicts all missionaries to some degree, whether they are in another country for a week or a year. It may be very subtle or very obvious. Prepare for it, accept it and realize what is happening to you and others.
How to Prepare for/Prevent Culture Shock

Nothing we do can truly prevent culture shock from occurring. It does not only happen to the “first timers.” It can happen to the most prepared group member, and it can also happen to experienced group members. Really understanding what triggers it one time and not another is difficult, but there are some things you can do to prepare for it and lessen the possibility or severity.

Learn about Culture Shock

The four phases of culture shock are not sequential and are often repeated:

- **The romantic tourist**: Everything is quaint; the euphoria of your new experience blurs the cultural differences.

- **You’ve lost that loving feeling**: The new culture no longer fascinates you. Curiosity gives way to frustration. Feelings of irritation, anger, and helplessness join with fatigue to produce the classic symptoms of culture shock.

- **Recovery**: Local ideas and practices don’t seem strange any longer. Self-confidence returns, and negative feelings subside.

- **Acceptance**: Differences are understood and expected. Humor returns, and you relax.

Learn about Your Host Country

Read through all the country-specific information you can find. Go to your local library and research the country you’re going to visit. If you have Internet access, simply enter the country name in a search engine to display Web sites that you can visit. The more you know of the culture, the easier the transition.

Understand Yourself and Your Role

There’s only one of you, there’s only one group like yours and there’s only one mission like yours. We’re not in another culture to make them be like us! We’re to be learners of their culture. We’re not there to change their customs, habits or culture. We’re there to bring them the Word of God and to encourage them in their faith. We’re there as human representatives of Christ, to accept them and love them just as they are.
What Can I Do if It Happens to ME?

As with many things, it’s often difficult to see culture shock in ourselves. The ability to at least recognize the symptoms, face them and reach out for help and accept help from others is important.

- Be prepared to experience the symptoms.
- Look for logical reasons for the way things are done.
- Talk to someone about your feelings.
- Set realistic goals, but be patient with yourself.
- Get your eyes off yourself and the issues and onto others, the mission and, mostly, onto God.
- Trust God to help you. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, James 1:2-4 and Hebrews 11:32-34.
- Pray.

What Can I Do if It Happens to My Group?

- Take the person aside somehow, even if it is to a corner in a busy room, to provide some “breathing space” and a moment to gather his or her thoughts.
- Listen to the person and try to imagine what he or she is feeling.
- Avoid giving pat answers.
- Encourage the person.
- Pray with the person.
- Get the person involved.
Language

A major cultural difference is that in spite of English being called the “universal language,” many countries use very little English. You won’t be able to thoroughly learn the language in your host country. You can, however, learn some key words and phrases. You’ll find that any amount of language training you have before you depart will not only enable you to better function in that culture but also open doors for the Gospel.

Speaking to Those with Limited English

Remember that the national is attempting to understand your language. He or she may be practicing or may see a conversation with you as an opportunity to know you better. Often these conversations will be some of your best opportunities to build relationships. You’ll be better able to communicate if you:

- speak distinctly and do not exaggerate or speak too slowly.
- don’t raise your voice if you’re not understood.
- be patient and appreciative.
- don’t become frustrated, disgusted or blame the listener for not understanding.
- don’t use slang words or sloppy speech. Remember that nationals are often learning textbook English in the classroom.

Speaking through an Interpreter

Often in a mission context, you’ll be able to speak through an interpreter, especially if you are teaching or preaching. Interpreters often become necessary for doing your tasks effectively.

Here are a few guidelines for those situations:

- Be brief and to the point (it takes almost twice the time to deliver a message through an interpreter).
- Check with your interpreter on how to best handle your thought patterns.
- Remember to stop after each complete thought, not mid-sentence, for the interpreter to do his or her job.
- Be sure the interpreter is completely finished with the translation before beginning your next statement.
- Check proverbs, colloquialisms and anecdotes with your interpreter in advance.
- Be very careful about using jokes. Most humor does not translate well.
- Face the people rather than the interpreter when speaking.

Things to Avoid when Speaking through an Interpreter

- Poetry, puns, and the use of the phrase “the way we do it in the States.”
• Comparison between our country and that of the nationals.
• References to the military, political issues, and other religious groups.
• Words or phrases that might belittle or offend.
• Changing the messages or adding stories at the last minute.

Building Relationships

Being a volunteer is all about building relationships. Building these relationships will give you an opportunity to witness and share your faith. You may be the first Christian some people meet, so you want it to be a positive experience.

Four key behaviors help build relationships: be curious, respect privacy, show gratitude and show respect.

Be Curious

Remember your role as a learner. Be curious and ask questions. This is a great opportunity to gain new perspectives. However, also ask in a way that you don’t seem superior or judgmental.

When engaging in a new activity, such as dinner, observe and follow the lead of others. Then when appropriate, ask questions.

Respect Privacy

Respecting privacy is an obvious behavior. The key is to remember what’s considered private can be different in another culture. Typically you’ll find people more reserved than in the United States, making it more difficult to interpret what they feel or how they’re reacting to a situation. So be careful to not be too pushy or aggressive and be perceived as invading privacy.

Also realize that you may be asked questions that are commonplace in that culture but are considered rude to you. For example, in some cultures, commenting on personal appearance such as your size is not considered taboo.

Show Gratitude

Remember your role as a guest. Show gratitude for the work your host and the nationals at the mission have done to prepare for your visit. Thank people and pay compliments in a sincere and genuine way. Use this as an opportunity to express your Christian faith (for example, thanking with God’s blessing).

Regarding gifts, always learn the local customs of receiving and giving gifts. You may be encouraged to bring small items or trinkets to give away. Find out from your host the local customs and the specific protocol the mission uses for distribution of some gifts.
Show Respect

Show respect at all times for the people and the culture. You’ll be viewed as genuine, and people will be more open to meet and work with you.

Never downplay, judge or trivialize the life, customs and culture of the country. And never give the impression that how you live is better than the lives of the people you serve.

Many of these societies are centuries old and have been in the “business of human life” for a long time. Although some societies handle certain issues better than others, never think of your culture as superior.

Another part of showing respect is thinking how your actions reflect your Christianity. What may be acceptable as a Christian in this country may be something to avoid overseas so that it’s not a stumbling block to others’ salvation.

A simple example is dress. Although wearing shorts may seem acceptable in a tropical country, in some situations it could be a sign of disrespect and hurt your efforts to build relationships.

“Be careful how you use your freedom. Be sure it doesn’t trip up someone who is weaker than you. Suppose you who have that knowledge are eating in a temple of one of those gods. And suppose someone who has a weak sense of what is right and wrong sees you. Won’t that person become bold and eat what has been offered to statues of gods? So what should I do if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin? I will never eat meat again. In that way, I will not cause them to fall.” 1 Corinthians 8:9-10, 13 (NIRV)

More Ways to Build Relationships

Here are some other ways to build relationships.

- **Accepting:** Accept the fact that you won’t completely understand the people in just one trip. This is just a beginning, so don’t become too frustrated with yourself.

- **Awareness:** Be aware that at times you may feel your prejudices. You may become frustrated with the way things are or the way people behave. Don’t deny the feelings; own them. Only then can you begin to understand the reasons behind them. Why are you frustrated? Being aware will help you grow in understanding the difference.

- **Listening:** Listen more than you talk. You’re there to learn. Learning involves being a good listener.

- **Giving:** Give of yourself. Take the initiative to reach out to the nationals. Americans can tend to shy away from contact with nationals, especially if they aren’t fluent in their language. Take a risk and try to speak the language. People will really appreciate the effort. And don’t worry, they’ll forgive you when you mess up.

- **Enjoying:** Enjoy the people, their culture, and their language. If you don’t take yourself too seriously, you can have more fun. Help create an environment in which the nationals can enjoy you, your culture, and your language just as you aim to enjoy theirs!
Session 6: Sharing Your Faith and Returning Home

Notes

Opening Devotion

Activity: Fears – Part 1

View Video *Sharing Your Faith and Returning Home*

Activity: Fears – Part 2

View Next Segment of Video

Activity: Your Witness Message

View Next Segment of Video

Activity: Share Your Faith
Review Key Points: Part 1

Key Points: Part 1

What four common fears can prevent you from sharing the Gospel?

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________

What are four simple concepts that you can use when witnessing?

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________

• ___________________________________________________________________
Name some things you can do to initiate a conversation about your faith.

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

If you do witness to someone overseas, what’s the important next step?

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

View Next Segment of Video

Activity: Schedule Session 7

View Final Segment of Video
Review Key Points: Part 2

Key Points: Part 2

Your trip can provide life-changing experiences. To process these experiences, you need to go through something called:

________________________

What is the goal of debriefing?

______________________________________________________________________________

If you don’t deal with emotions in a healthy way, what can happen?

______________________________________________________________________________

What are tools for debriefing before, during or after your trip?

• ____________________________________________________________________________

• ____________________________________________________________________________

• ____________________________________________________________________________

• ____________________________________________________________________________

• ____________________________________________________________________________
Notes

When is the best time to think about preparing to return home?

___________________________________

___________________________________

Homework: Session 6 Journaling

Closing Prayer
Note: The material in “Witnessing: Fears to Overcome” is an excerpt from the Web site of Jim Found, a retired teacher who spent most of his career serving in overseas missions. For more information, go to: http://www.foundbytes.com/witness.htm

Witnessing: Fears to Overcome

Below are four common fears you may have in sharing your faith.

You’re Not a Good Example of a Christian

If the person sees that you’re a flawed person who’s accepted by God even though you don’t deserve it, you have presented Christianity in a very “apt” way.

This need not prevent us from witnessing because your message is that God has accepted someone like you, who does not deserve to be accepted.

We don’t want people to feel that Christianity is for people who are better than others. We want to make sure people know there is only one qualification for being a Christian: You must be a sinner. That is the kind of person that Christianity is for.

You May Be Rejected

It’s certainly possible that someone could reject you because you shared the Gospel. But if you are the kind of person who shows the reality of God in your daily life, that person would have rejected you eventually anyway. Why not at least make sure the person has heard the Gospel before your relationship fades away.

Sometimes we experience rejection and blame the Gospel, but in fact we were rejected for some other reason. Here are some reasons that cause rejection but are avoidable.

You might bring up the subject at unfitting moments. Some Christians have such a heavy burden of guilt about sharing the Gospel that they give the listener the feeling that they are dumping on them just to relieve their own guilt-pressure. When you have faith that God loves the other person and cares for that person’s salvation, then you can relax more and believe that God will open the door for you at a fitting moment.

Sometimes you’re rejected because you yourself are being judgmental—that is, you give the other person the feeling that you have already rejected them. Our model for avoiding this is Jesus himself. He had the ability to accept other people without accepting their sin.
You Can’t Address Objections

It is unrealistic for you to think you can answer all objections to everyone’s satisfaction. This problem can keep from being a blockade for you. Simply re-define your task to be sharing the reason why a particular objection has not kept you from believing in God.

For example, you may be someone who has not kept up with the creation/evolution controversy, who can spew reasons why evolution is inconsistent. But you still can show yourself as a person who believes in God even though there is a controversy about creation/evolution. You can ask to share your reasons why you believe in God.

You’re Not Sure What to Say

The Bible provides guidance about what to talk about with non-Christians in a way that avoids two opposite undesirable extremes (a “mechanical” presentation and a “shotgun” approach without clear focus). Five sections in the Book of Acts record what Peter or Paul said when they were addressing non-believers. Amazingly, each of the five contains the same four concepts, so they avoid the extreme of “lack of focus.” At the same time, they talk about the concepts using different words each time, so they avoid a “mechanical” approach.

Peter’s sermon in Acts Chapter 2 illustrates the flow of thought. Starting in verse 23, Peter accused the crowd of murder but announced that the person they had killed, Jesus, rose from death and is the promised Messiah. When the people asked what they should do, Peter invited them to repent and be baptized so that their sins would be forgiven and they would receive the Holy Spirit. In brief, Peter bought up a problem, showed how God solved it, answered their question about what to do, and proclaimed the benefits they would receive.

These four concept areas (PROBLEM, ANSWER, INVITATION, BENEFITS) are found in all five of the messages found in the Book of Acts. Following the apostle’s model, these are then the areas we want to talk about with non-Christians. We want to internalize them so completely that we can express them in the words most suitable for the person with whom we’re conversing.

We may be able to bring up all four in a single conversation, or different ones may be brought up in different conversations. If we know them well enough, we’ll know which important concepts have yet to be brought up in future conversations. After we know our friend has heard all four, we can ask “what do you think?” and from there can know how to continue the conversation.

Looking at the salvation message in terms of these four categories removes a lot of pressure from us. It is not a matter of getting someone to understand everything in the Bible so that they can become a Christian: rather, the salvation message—what Peter and Paul said to non-Christians—could easily be said in a few sentences. It is after someone becomes a Christian that he or she begins to learn the rest of the Bible’s teachings. Rather than looking at evangelism as complicated, then, our attitude should be that evangelism is not complicated because it only includes four concepts. It is the continued Christian growth after coming to faith that is complicated and has a huge number of topic areas.

Concentrating on this simple message explains why Paul could tell the Corinthians, “I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2), but he could tell the Ephesian elders, “I did not hesitate to proclaim to you the entire counsel of God.” Paul seems to be inconsistent, but actually he has selected the content that is correct for
the stage of the listeners. To the non-believing Corinthians, Paul concentrated on the salvation message. To the Ephesians, who had already become Christians, Paul taught the rest of God’s Word. This differentiation is reflected in the Great Commission: First there is the teaching that leads to baptism, and after that comes “teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.” One cannot teach “all I have commanded” before the person has become a Christian.

**How to Start**

After you’ve built a relationship with someone, you’ll be able to freely discuss secular topics. At this point, you can do several things to initiate a conversation than can lead to sharing the Gospel.

- **Ask many questions and be a good listener.**
  
  Ask questions such as “Whom do you say Jesus is?” or “What do you know about Jesus?” Asking simple questions in a non-threatening way can lead to a deeper conversation.

- **Never be pushy.**
  
  Relate to the person’s needs and always ask permission before talking about something highly personal.

- **Answer questions with a spiritual example.**
  
  You can demonstrate your faith by answering simple questions in a way that shows your faith. For instance, if asked why you’re so peaceful when things are bad, you can say your trust in God gives you peace. If possible, add that you may not deserve this, but Jesus has brought you nearer to God by his sacrifice on the cross.

- **Talk about times you felt God working in your life.**
  
  Talk about how your faith helped at a difficult time or about something simple in your day-to-day life. You’ll demonstrate that God is real to you.

- **Initiate talking about your faith as someone talks about himself or herself.**
  
  Share how you handled a similar situation as a Christian. You’re not ignoring the person’s issues, but by talking about yourself, you’re not judging him or her.

**The Next Step**

Witnessing is a powerful act. Yet it’s only one step to leading the person to God’s love and salvation. When you witness to someone overseas, it’s not practical to follow up and invite that person to church services or a Bible study. So it’s important to connect the person to someone at the mission. This person can then extend these invitations and continue to answer questions.
Preparing to Come Home

To understand and grow from the life-changing experiences of your trip, you need to process them before, during and after the trip. This process is often called “debriefing.” You begin debriefing by participating in this training and by journaling.

The goal of debriefing is to understand and take an active role in the transformations that will happen in your life and the life of your team. You need to think about the immediate and future impact it will have. You’ll be able to see how God can use and shape you by these experiences to His Glory.

“Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.” Isaiah 64:8 (NIV)

Why Debriefing Is Important

You will need to deal with your experiences. If you don’t do this in a healthy, thoughtful way, these emotions and attitudes can surface in an unhealthy way, at the wrong time. You may become upset at an incident at work or home, when you are actually experience feelings related to something that happened on the trip.

If you “stuff” your emotions inside and ignore them, they’ll simply compound.

Tools to Debrief

You have several tools to debrief and process your experience and emotions.

- **Team meetings**
  Sharing feelings, concerns and joys with fellow team members in daily team meetings allows you to discuss your experience with those who will really understand your highs and lows. It’s especially important to have a team meeting within a week of your return.

- **Daily personal time**
  Daily personal time for prayer, reflection and journaling gives you an opportunity to process your feelings in a healthy, thoughtful way. You can process the spiritual, emotional and the physical aspects of your experiences. You will take personal time on the trip, be sure to continue it when you get home.

- **Rest and recovery**
  Take the time you need to rest and recover from the physical demands of the trip when you get home.

- **Talk about your trip with family and friends**
  You’ll be asked a lot of questions when you first get back. Use the tips on the next page to have a good, short way to immediately address questions. However, don’t be afraid to take time before you talk in depth about your experience to others.
Notes
# Session 7: Welcome Home!

## Notes

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## Key Points

Develop a message for your team communications that is:

_______________ and ____________.
As you set team and individual goals, be sure they’re:

- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________

Homework: Session 7 Journaling

Closing Prayer
Welcome Home!

When you return you need to develop communications to share your trip with others. You should also set team goals.

Communications—What’s Your Personal Message?

As soon as you get back, family and friends will ask you about your trip. Be ready with one or two sentences that capture the trip for you. This will answer the question and, for those who are interested, open it up for them to ask more questions.

To think about how to respond, read through your journal for inspiration. Also consider the following:

- Be positive. Focus on stories that are full of hope, trust, and compassion.
- Keep it short. Remember, this should be a “teaser.” Whoever is interested can then ask more.
- Don’t be critical, angry, or judgmental. Don’t complain. Especially don’t “lead” with those thoughts. Don’t focus on things that went wrong, such as bad food or flights.
- Don’t complain about our culture in contrast to the one you’ve just experienced. You may very well think these things—such as Americans are too materialistic or we don’t know how good we have it here—but don’t talk about these things with those outside your team. It simply makes you appear negative and could offend your listener.

After you develop a short message, think about what to talk about if someone does want to hear about your trip in depth. When giving more detail, don’t avoid the negative, but be realistic. Always give a complete picture. “Yes, there’s poverty. But family relationships are very close.”

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Colossians 4:6 (NIV)

Communications—What’s Your Team Message?

You need to present a consistent, cohesive message in any communications (e.g., newsletters, brochures, presentations) the team develops.

For example, if you felt the call of your trip was to bring hope and encouragement, use the same images, stories, and Bible verses that relate to that theme. This will make your communications more effective.
Setting Goals

You’ll return from your trip with energy and enthusiasm. Mobilize that energy, and set goals as a team and as an individual. As you set goals, make sure they fit the “SMART” criteria.

Goals need to be:

- **Specific.**
- **Measurable.**
- **Attainable.**
- **Realistic.**
- **Targeted regarding dates.**

A vague goal is: “Let’s send some packages overseas.”

A SMART goal is: “Let’s put together packages with the items the missionaries requested, meet in 1 month to assemble the packages, and then mail them that week.”
Continue Your Journey

Although your short-term mission trip has ended, your work as a volunteer continues. Take the joy and excitement of this experience and continue to share the love and grace of Christ.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” 2 Corinthians 13:14 (NIV)