

“Walking Together to Flourish in Canada - Sharing Experiences of Canadian Culture and History ”



A program designed to:

- Create Spaces for new immigrants to share their experiences of Canadian Culture (including awareness of stereotypes and racism)
- Help newcomers to Canada learn some of the Settler/Indigenous history of Canada

Who:

Immigrants to Canada within the last 2-5 years. (Persons who are beginning to be shaped by their lived experiences of Canadian culture, including stereotypes they may have adopted without a full understanding of Canadian history and context). Limited to 10 -20 people including children.

What For:

Developed by Nobuko Iwai, Kwang Beom Cho, Dianne Hope at “Engaging Others! Facilitators Training” December 2016. Canadian Churches’ Forum for Global Ministries www.ccforum.ca (director@ccforum.ca for permission to copy or use)

-to provide new immigrants an opportunity to process their Canadian experiences (good and bad) in a supportive environment

-to help newcomers learn about the settler/indigenous history of Canada and to question any stereotypes they may have adopted

-to gather information so sponsoring bodies can learn how to be helpful to new immigrants

Time frame:

5 sessions spread over a six month period; time of day will be dependent on group needs

Format:

Each session to start with a Meal (participants contribute food and some to be provided). The Meal is followed by: Opening/Welcome, Programming, Closing

PROGRAM CONTENT

Session 1

1. Introductions

- Participants introduce themselves by name and place a push pin on the world map to indicate their country of origin (their choice - country of birth/country from which they have fled/place they considered "home").
 - Variation: for those whose route has involved many countries participants may want to use more than one push pin connected by

a piece of colored string.

- Continue introductions through Photolanguage technique using cards from Kaleidoscope Institute or other appropriate collection. **(Be aware that some will come with stories that are very painful and/or may not want to divulge much.)**
2. Outline programming and invite participants to share their input today or during Session 2.
 3. Closing

Session 2

- Video (a short film focusing on new immigrant/refugee experience)
- Response to film - your good & bad experiences of Canada (could be a small group/table activity with some responses shared with the large group)
- "Secrets of Canadians" Question Time. Have you ever felt left out? Are there things about Canada and Canadians that you don't understand? E.g. Where are the 'secret places' that Canadians go to in the summer, in February? Why is Tim Hortons such a treasured brand?
- Sharing resources (e.g., local family activities)
- Revisit program outline and seek additional input

Session 3

- Use an art form to explore/demonstrate participants Canadian experiences
- Discussion: Stereotypes/prejudices have you experienced or encountered.

(Group leaders would need to introduce this segment. For example, define terms, give examples of specific incidents of racism in inner cities, etc.),

- Introduce the Blanket Exercise¹ for next time.

Session 4: Blanket Exercise

- (open invitation to others—or adapt it for newcomers)

Session 5: Celebration

- (picnic/meal in one of Canadians' "secret places")
- what have we learned; gifts we have received from each other.

In developing a program such as this these are some important considerations:

- for each individual context it will be important to define Who? Why? (the current situation) What and How? (program content and activities) What for? (program objectives) So that? (anticipated change) Where? When?²
- language barriers - may need interpreters
- include companions – people familiar to the target participants (persons from the same language group also with immigrant experience (5-10) years); could act as interpreters
- may need a child-minder

¹ <http://kairosblanketexercise.org/about>

² This program design process is based on the "8 Steps of Design" model from Global Learning Partners at: www.globallearningpartners.com

Developed by Nobuko Iwai, Kwang Beom Cho, Dianne Hope at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016. Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries www.ccforum.ca (director@ccforum.ca for permission to copy or use)

- may need kids' play corner and supplies
- expectations of group (participants and leadership)
- how to create "safe space" for the particular group
- racism people may have encountered
- stories may be painful – be prepared and facilitate accordingly
- cost - budget for a 6 month program, assuming meeting monthly for 5-6 months

