**A heart with a cross and a cross

Description automatically generated**

**Leading Diverse, Multi-Cultural and Inter-Generational Teams and Small Groups**

***“Careless words stab like a sword, but wise words bring healing.” Proverbs 12:18***

We want to take advantage of the full range of experiences and skills that reside in our teams and be sure that our small groups are safe for all women. This means inviting difference, not fearing it. It means struggling to understand one another. It means being aware of our own cultural preferences and the preferences of others and developing a heart to see things from different perspectives. What are the various ways we will be different from the women we meet, serve alongside, and minister to?

**Dimensions of Diversity**

* Age
* Caregiver status
* Communication styles
* Denominational background
* Economic Class
* Educational background
* Ethnicity
* Family status (birth order, if they are married, if they are parents)
* Geographic location
* Group identity/affiliations
* Languages spoken
* Physical abilities and strengths
* Thinking styles
* Work experience

We want to create safe, inclusive, teams and small groups where everyone knows and feels they are valued because God calls us to do this. We can all agree this is hard work and we won’t always get it right. It won’t always feel good, and we may want to quit. But we are committed to staying on the course because we value every person. We want people to feel safe and understood so they can be vulnerable and open before the Lord. We aspire to love each person well and treat each other with grace and respect because this is what Jesus has done for us.

**Paul’s Exhortation**

We will need to help each other to see things from each other’s perspective. Paul writes to the Philippians that instead of being motivated by what is important to us, “each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests but about the interests of others as well” (Phil 2:2-4). He goes on to write that our attitude toward each other should model Jesus’ attitude when he gave up everything, completely emptied himself and died on the cross. So, as we learn to lead diverse teams and small groups, we are following in the way of Jesus.

**When the Golden Rule Doesn’t Work**

**Research and experience show that we all think we are better than we actually are at communicating and working with people from different cultural backgrounds.** As Christians, we try to follow Jesus’ teaching: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" and “love one another.” We ask ourselves what we would like, and then seek to do that for others. This approach works great when it comes to ethical or moral questions. However, when we work together with a diverse group of Christian women, everyone does not share the same values, beliefs or preferences when it comes to their approach to *decision-making, conflict resolution, or even task management*. We all tend to look at our preferences and assume they are shared, when in fact, they are not. So, if I ask myself, *How would I like decisions to be made in this group*? and then assume that’s how everyone else would like them to be made, I can think I’m following the Golden Rule, when in fact I’m acting in my own self-interest. This means we cannot approach things as we normally would. We will need to become more sensitive to the cultures of others in order to work to build a truly inclusive organization.

Intercultural sensitivity is about appreciating the deeper impact of cultural differences in how we interact with other people and the effect this has on our own perceptions of others.

We can see how developing intercultural sensitivity is relevant for missionaries who are going into a foreign country. However, it can be challenging for us to see how intercultural sensitivity applies to leading small groups or teams. In addition, we may be unaware of how diverse we actually are. Most likely we have different **life experiences**, **communication styles** and even **work habits** and our individual preferences and assumptions **regarding being recognized, organizational hierarchy and dealing with uncertainty** probably vary.

Young Christian women (20 to 40-year-olds) are drawn to organizations that have an attractive, joy-filled common community identity that meets their core needs and provides a place of belonging. They are asking, *Who will be my people? Who am I? And what is my purpose on this earth?* Older Christian women (60 to 80-year-olds) are asking different questions.

**Where Might Cultural Differences Cause Challenges?**

Anytime communication is involved, we can run into challenges. Talking with the group at the beginning about these differences and deciding how we are going to agree to work together can be very helpful.

**Differences that May Be Challenging for Teams**

Communicating, Evaluating, Leading, Deciding, Trusting, Disagreeing, Scheduling, Persuading

**From Erin Meyer, Cultural Maps**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFP6IoxI17k>

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Low Context |  | Communicating |  | High Context |
| Say it, say it again, say what I just said. |  |  |  | Pick up the communications that’s in the air; pick up the signals |
| Direct |  | **Evaluating** |  | Indirect |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Egalitarian |  | **Leading** |  | Hierarchical |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Consensual |  | **Deciding** |  | Top Down |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Task-Based |  | **Trusting** |  | Relationship Based |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Confrontational |  | **Disagreeing** |  | Avoids Confrontation |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Linear Time |  | **Scheduling** |  | Flexible Time |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Principles First |  | Persuading |  | Applications First |

How trust is built and how we make decisions in different parts of the world vary significantly.

**Differences that May Be Challenging For small groups**

* Directness of communication (calling on people vs letting people volunteer)
* How we react to ambiguity (how explicit the directions need to be)
* Time management (beginning and ending on time or being flexible with start and ending times)

The challenge becomes clear: We need to develop competence in communicating and working with people from different cultural backgrounds and ages. Ideally, we should become as comfortable and effective interacting with women from different backgrounds as we already are interacting with women from our own culture. This is a good working definition of what we mean when we say someone is “interculturally competent.”

**What Can We Do Individually?**

Know that we are all learners in this process. Becoming interculturally competent will take years of being intentional and learning from our mistakes. We have to stay engaged over time, so we need to be sure to celebrate even small wins along the way. Remember we all overestimate our intercultural competence and perceive that we are further developed than we are. We tend to think that because we are Christians, we will automatically love people well, and that is usually wishful thinking.

**First. Become more aware of other people’s cultures.** Check out ethnic food and talk about customs. Read *In the Beautiful Country* (a children’s book),or Sarah Lanier *from Foreign to Familiar,* or watch movies about other cultures. Ask questions and learn. Get to know people.

**Second.** **Look for commonalities.** Have lunch with a friend. Talk about growing up. Seek to see what you have in common (experiences from school, food, grandparents, etc.) Be curious to get to know what life was like for your friend as she was growing up. Ask questions like: *Where did you grow up? How many siblings do you have and where do you fall in that order? Describe a unique or interesting challenge or experience that shaped who you are.* Get to know the whole person.

**Third.** **Learn about your culture.** Try to identify what are the underlying values and beliefs of your way of doing things, and then compare your values and beliefs with others to deepen your understanding of your similarities and differences. Where do your cultural artifacts (food, clothes, terms, music, art) come from? Understand their underpinnings. Share these with your friends and ask them what they see. Is there anything about your cultural artifacts which is difficult for them?

**Fourth**. **Learn more about another’s first language**. Language shapes how we see the world. For example, if your language doesn’t distinguish between male and female, it will shape how you perceive life. When you learn another language, you can put yourself in the frame of mind of people from that culture.

**Fifth**. Decide if you would want to **integrate into your own way of being** in the world something that comes from someone else’s culture. Perhaps you like the custom of greeting every person as they arrive and depart like people with a ‘group identity’ (Italians) do. So, make it part of your family’s practice to greet people as they arrive and leave.

**Sixth.** Work on becoming **more self-aware**. Openly admit and reflect on the mistakes you’ve made. Share what you are learning. Take a risk and try something new from a different culture. Go out with a friend to a new-to-you ethnic restaurant and try Ethiopian or Burmese food. Acknowledge and continually try to surface and address your own biases and stereotypes and where you are the beneficiary of privilege and power.

**Seventh**. **Go deeper.** As you look at your team or small group, consider to what extent you are similar to, and different from, the other women in various dimensions (see page 1). Realize that similarities between us tend to create a sense of connection. We will feel like we understand each other. (Are there some women you quickly connect with?) Differences between us can feel alienating and lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication. (Are there some you think don’t like you?) Just being aware of our own responses to individuals is helpful. Initiate spending time getting to know the women you feel don’t like you or that come from different cultures. See if you can go deeper in your understanding of where they are coming from.

As we begin to see each other with new eyes, our perspective shifts. We’ll gain a deeper understanding and come to truly value the ways other people live in the world. Rather than seeing our way as being right and their way being wrong, we’ll be able to appreciate the values and beliefs they hold, and see how their values lead them to do things differently in their culture compared to how we do things in our own. But this process will be disorienting. It can feel risky and we may sense resistance within ourselves. It can be humbling. In Phil. 4:1-3, Paul encourages the Philippian brothers and sisters, his dear friends, to help Euodia and Syntyche “to agree in the Lord.” The church community is intended to support our growth as we hit bumps and need help working things through. We need each other to support and encourage us as we grow. And when we feel internal dissonance and want to blame others for it, STOP. Take a deeper look. We encourage you to keep talking with a trusted person about your feelings as you seek to become more and more at home in intercultural settings.

*“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else.” Col 3:12-14*

As we increasingly find ourselves leading diverse teams and facilitating small groups of people with varying cultural backgrounds, it is the Holy Spirit who opens new perspectives for us and teaches us how to love well.

**How to Help Resolve Differences BEFORE They Arise**

**First Meeting**

**Share your Stories**. What brings us together is our **shared love for Jesus** and desire to work toward the **common purpose** and achieving a mutually embraced set of goals. Share your conversion stories and why you’ve joined the team. As a leader, set the tone for being real and sharing on a personal level the challenges you are dealing with.

**Acknowledge Differences Exist.** When working on a team with women of different ages, we need to have conversations around areas that tend to be challenging**: the use of technology, communication, feedback, time management, work/life balance and organizational structure**. We cannot assume our way is the right way. Seek to understand what underlies your own preferences and theirs. Come up with ways that will work for both/all of you.

**Establish Ground Rules.** As a group, discuss what rules you want to live by. For a new team, just spending an hour talking about direct/indirect communication, time management, recognition, use of technology, etc. can help everyone to agree to common expectations. For a new small group, spending an hour talking about the rules that are needed to establish safe boundaries can go a long way to helping people know how to participate and ensure no one gets hurt. Agree on how to accommodate the different approaches. Consider discussing these areas:

1. *How much silence would the group like between speakers in conversation?* Is it okay with the group to talk over each other, or do you want to wait until one person is done, then, right away the next person can begin, or would you prefer to have a second of silence after one person is done before the next person begins?
2. *How do you want to ask questions in the group?* If the leader asks if anyone has a question, will you feel comfortable answering Yes if you have a question? Is it okay if she calls on you? Does she need to “read the air” and take nonverbal cues like “bright eyes”?
3. *Will you document the meeting with a summary?* Some cultures (like the English) want everything written down. Other cultures (like the French) believe it’s been said and that’s all that’s needed. “Et Viola!” Let people know if you’ll be sending out a summary so it doesn’t feel rude to people.
4. *How will we get assignments?* In some cultures, younger women won’t talk, or feel comfortable taking initiative unless they are directed to. It would be very rude for them to do that. Do you want people to volunteer, or do you plan to be direct and assign tasks?

**Appreciate Your Diversity.** Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses. Focus on developing a highly relational culture. Believe people with different perspectives and experiences and life stages can work together well. Communicate humble and authentic leadership—share your mistakes and challenges. Be willing to learn from one another and be stretched.

**Leverage.** Share your desire to maximize the strengths of each person. Talk about this.

**How Cultures Vary—From *Foreign to Familiar* by Sarah Lanier**

**California is very diverse[[1]](#footnote-1).** In 2021, more than a third (35%) of adults in California (25 to 54 years old) are foreign-born. Almost half (46%) of California children have at least one immigrant parent. Among immigrants who arrived between 2012 and 2021, more than half (51%) were born in Asia (Philippines, China, India, and Vietnam) while 34% were born in Latin America (Mexico). This means that the women who love Jesus and are coming to NEWIM for retreats, relationships, and resources and who will join forces with us to strengthen others are coming from diverse perspectives.

**Countries tend to have cultural differences along at least 7 different continuums. Becoming self-aware about our own cultural preferences helps us to be sensitive to the perspectives of others.**

**1. Relationship Focused vs. Task Oriented**

People who are **relationship-focused** value making others feel good no matter what; they value being friendly; feelings are most important; they don’t want to talk business until after they’ve checked in with others in the group and have nurtured their relationships).

People who are **task-oriented** are focused on efficiency, especially being efficient with the use of time. If you don’t take time and tasks seriously, they feel you are being disrespectful. Things must be accurate and logical.

**What this means for a Team:**

1. Agendas need to include time for relationships. Leaders need to invest in relationships.
2. Talk about time and how the group wants to manage it.

**What this means for a Small Group:**

1. Leader must express friendliness and always be sensitive (reading) the non-verbal cues for how people in the group are feeling.
2. Talk about managing time.

**2. Direct (say what you think, know where you stand) vs Indirect Communication (friendliness and politeness, don’t want to impose or offend with directness)**

“I’ve been lonely since moving here, and now I know why. When people in the office would ask me if I wanted to go to lunch, I would say ‘no’ to be polite, fully expecting them to ask me again. When they didn’t and left without me, I thought they didn’t really want me alone and had asked only out of politeness. In my culture, it would have been too forward to say ‘yes’ the first time.”

Avoid yes and no questions.

Avoid embarrassing people.

**3. Individualism vs Group Identity (don’t expect to have to stand alone—look for direction from the leader)**

May need to call on people, because they won’t assert themselves. May need to give them a role.

The loneliness of being left to oneself can be overwhelming at first . . . making individual decisions can feel rude to those with a strong sense of group identity.

“Does my music bother you?” is the wrong question. Culture will not permit him to say he doesn’t like something and he does not even mind suffering an inconvenience for the sake of the group. It’s a normal thing for him to do. Harmony of the group and doing what the group wants is important.

Individual-identity Americans are used to looking out for themselves and letting their preferences be known. They think people need to know how to make their own decisions.

**4. Inclusion vs Privacy**

All is shared – all conversations, possessions, clothes . . .. it’s not rude to join in. Food is to be shared. Cannot leave anyone out. Impossible to be lonely.

Never desirable to be left alone.

Rude to hold private conversations.

Assume children are included in every invitation.

**5. Different Concepts of Hospitality**

Hospitality always includes food and drink.

It’s great to drop in, spontaneity is fine.

The host pays for everything.

**6. High Context (formal, protocol for everything) vs Low Context (informal)**

High Context:

* Dressing up, high heels
* Bring gifts.
* There are subtle ways to signal when it’s to leave (coffee means it’s time to go)
* Address with Mr. or Mrs.
* Expect to be greeted individually.
* Who you know matters.

It’s helpful to be explicit about dress code.

Never, ever consider correcting a leader or teacher.

**7. Different Concepts of Time and Planning**

* Responds to what life brings.
* Event-oriented, spontaneous, and flexible in approach to life
* Saving time is not as important as experiencing the moment.
* Have informal visiting as part of the event.

**Ask Yourself These Questions to See Where Your Preferences Are**

**How important are the following statements to you? Answer from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 strongly agree). Try not to answer with a 3.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 1. It’s important to be efficient |
|  | 1. Consideration for people’s feelings is a priority. |
|  | 1. I say what I feel. |
|  | 1. It’s okay to go through a third person to get information or get something done. |
|  | 1. Everyone should learn to stand on their own two feet. |
|  | 1. My actions and words will affect how people perceive my family. |
|  | 1. Ask first if you want to borrow something, then return it in good condition. |
|  | 1. People should not be left alone so they don’t feel excluded by the group. |
|  | 1. It’s rude for visitors to show up unannounced. |
|  | 1. I insist on paying the restaurant bill even if my friend says she will pay. |
|  | 1. A public event should start and end when announced out of respect for those attending. |
|  | 1. I’ll wait for my friend, even if s/he is 20 minutes late for a lunch appointment. |

**Identify then share with your team where you think you fall on the continuum:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Relationship** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Task** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Direct Communication** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Indirect Communication** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Individual Identity** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Group Identity** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inclusion** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Privacy** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **High Context** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Low Context** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**When We Feel Triggered**

**If we are facilitating a small group or chairing a meeting and begin to feel annoyed or distrustful or fearful or competitive with a specific group member**, it’s tempting to use our feelings as evidence that **something is wrong with the other person**.

**An Unhelpful Response**

Although it’s not helpful, it can feel like the best thing to do is to:

* Take them aside and try to support them to change.
* Offer them feedback, so they can understand why they bother you so much.
* Freeze them out. But don’t be too obvious about it—you wouldn’t want to appear to have lost your neutrality.
* Commiserate with others who are also made uncomfortable by this person.
* Ignore your feelings and hope they will dissipate.

**A More Effective Response**

Feeling irritated or fearful or competitive with someone is a natural human response. We need to take responsibility for those things that “trigger” us. In the moment **1) call a break and take time to calm yourself; 2) catch up with the person later and make an effort to learn more about her personally.**

**To genuinely become more accepting of others, it will require a commitment to personal growth and self-awareness**. This calls for personal work with the Holy Spirit and prayer, possibly spending time in self-reflection, journaling, talking with our spiritual director, life coach, or therapist.

**When Someone Makes an Offensive Comment**

**How can we deal with the situation if someone makes a comment in a group, we are leading that someone else might find to be offensive?** This is a challenging situation because no matter what you do in response, someone will probably not be happy.

If you *don’t confront* the offending remark directly, you may be perceived as being too passive.

If you *do confront* the remark directly, others will see you as advancing an agenda or bowing to pressure.

Depending on a group’s culture and values, one of these responses might be useful:

* “Are there any responses to what Jane just said?”
* “Jane, are you open to feedback on what you just said?” (This works only in groups who practice giving and receiving feedback.)
* Wait to see the impact of Jane’s comment in the next 15 minutes. If there is one, point it out and have the group discuss it.

**Dealing with this issue probably won’t be pleasant, but you do want to deal with it.**

**Practical Ways to Be Intentionally Inclusive and Connect with Younger Women**

**Greet everyone with the same exuberance.**

1. Know that women may be watching to see if they are truly welcome to be at your event. They will notice if they are welcomed as others are. Be sure that everyone experiences the same warm greeting that nonverbally communicates, “You belong here.” This can be challenging in a group where some women coming are close friends and others coming are meeting people for the first time.
2. During the first hour, be sure everyone on the team is communicating, “Welcome!” If you are too busy running around putting out fires and dealing with details, you may be communicating that people are not welcome.

**Names are Important**

1. Ask what name people would like on their name tags.
2. Listen and learn how to correctly pronounce names. If 2 names are given ask if they want to use both names always (ex. Jo Bell, Emily June).

**Getting Comfortable in Small Groups**

1. As the group begins, invite women to share their conversion stories. This helps to build a common identity and fosters inter-generational and multi-ethnic friendships.
2. Make sure everyone is given time to talk in their small group. As a leader, don’t rely on the same person to answer all of your questions. Intentionally seek to hear from everyone.
3. Talk about giving silence after a person talks, to allow space for another person to begin to share. Ask if it's okay to call on people to share.

**Honor Cultural Differences**

1. Recognize people may have snack preferences. Ask when they register what their favorite snacks are…and include them in your shopping list (ex. Some women may love chocolate M&Ms, while others love seaweed or tangerines or black licorice.)
2. Ask about favorite songs for worship and musicians/bands. Use them. Have a playlist that includes them running before or after group sessions.
3. Have a multi-cultural commentary so you become familiar with how various cultures interpret and apply Scripture. Read *Reading While Black* by Esau McCaulley.

**Pay Attention to Advertising**

1. Be sure to look at what photographs and visual cues you are using when you advertise your event. What do your photographs and time of the event say about who is welcome?
2. Advertise where women of color and younger women will see the advertisement. To do this, you need to know their online and reading patterns. Ask people where the best places are to advertise to reach their demographic.

**Value the contributions of others**

1. The way you’ve always done something isn’t the only right way to do it. Be open to new ways and be flexible.

**Learn from Each Other**

1. Create inter-generational, multi-ethnic education opportunities where women can get to know each other and hear each other's stories. We tend to sit with our friends, so be intentional to mix the group at times, so that small groups represent the diversity of the whole group.

**Intentionally Include Younger Women[[2]](#footnote-2):**

* Young leaders bring a fresh perspective, energy and creativity. Actively initiate with them. Actively invite them to serve. Value them. Listen to their ideas. Rely on young leaders to inform the decisions the group is making. Help them to develop a sense of “ownership.” They are “us.” (Don’t shut down their ideas or pull up a policy that says why you can’t do something. Listen well and see if you can find a way.) All of us like to belong. This is certainly true of younger women. They like to have fun, have a good laugh, and spend time together.
* Affirm and mentor young leaders and cheer them on as they take on responsibility, develop confidence and grow spiritually. This will require that older women provide space for them to make mistakes, which is more important than appearing to be perfect. As older women, agree to reflect to each other when you hear criticism implied is what is said.
* Include younger women in the planning process of your events. They want to know there is a point to what they are doing. They want to make a difference in what they do–it is a driving factor in life for them. Don’t give them superficial or minimal tasks because you are afraid they won’t follow through.
* Don’t call anything “women’s ministries.” It connotes something that they feel is not for them (a perfect women’s tea, with a perfect speaker). They may filter out opportunities if they think it is associated with “women’s ministries.”  It feels irrelevant to meeting their needs.
* Younger women are very experiential in nature and like multi-faceted and hands-on experiences (ex. nailing on a cross, use of candles, fabrics, art).
* **Young women want to be seen and known. So, when you are working together on a team, a**sk questions like:

What role would you love to do (whether it exists or not)?

What do you need from me to do your best work?

What is your biggest frustration and what can I do to help you deal with it?

What have you been trying to tell me that I’ve not been hearing?

How would you like to be recognized?

Are you satisfied with your current work? What would you like to change? What is the best part of your work?

* Young women hate anything inauthentic–so admit your mistakes. This can be a challenge. Older women want to look good. Their generation was taught that they have their life together in order to “be a good witness and not cause others to stumble.” Yet, the younger women want to hear our mistakes and how we navigated the challenges we faced in life.
* Host talks on topics that matter to younger women–include a variety of people who have different perspectives. Use panel discussions. Younger women are drawn to experiences that provide opportunities to walk through doubt and provide help for navigating difficult cultural issues.
* Host an informal lunch that allows friendships to begin. During the lunch, be intentional to create space for friendships to form. Help older women learn to authentically share their life stories in vulnerable ways in order to reduce the image that they are superior and help them to be encouragers who can come alongside others. Younger women ask themselves, “What would other people I know do in this situation?” and they’ll remember the stories that the older women have told.
* Recognize that typically 50 to 70-year-old women want control, but instead of controlling things, they need to mentor. However, mentoring is different for younger women than the mentoring model used in the 1980s and 1990s. Younger women want to be mentored (which means they want to be encouraged, affirmed, cheered on) as *they* lead.

**Scripture to Reflect on**

Lev. 19:34 The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Luke 14:12-14 Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the cripples, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Heb. 13:1-3 Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

I Peter 4:9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Deut. 10:17-19 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.

Romans 12:13 Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

I Tim. 3:2 Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach . . .

Titus 1:7-8 Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless...he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

3 John 5-8 Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

**Conclusion**

Research shows that being on a diverse team or small group is a wonderful opportunity for personal growth. It can also lead to greater innovation, creativity, and new insight for the organization. A culturally competent leader possesses **the skills, knowledge, and attitude necessary to create authentic relationships with those from different cultures**. That’s what we all want. As we develop trusted friendships, we’ll develop the skill to be able to temporarily shift to experience a situation from another Christian woman’s cultural perspective. This skill is so helpful. Being able to see things from someone else’s perspective does not involve stereotyping or giving up your own cultural values and beliefs. But it can give you the wisdom to know how you might modify your usual approach in order to be inclusive of others. You might choose to adjust your body language, demeanor, use of language, and personal space in order to welcome women of another culture. No one is ever culturally competent in every way with everyone. What we are hoping is that we will grow in our intercultural skills.

Multicultural groups are a foretaste of heaven where we will gather with people from every tribe and every nation to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who created us in his image and gifted us that we might be able to serve each other as one body with Jesus as our Head.

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1. [Immigrants in California - Public Policy Institute of California (ppic.org)](https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Insight from Dr. Julie Smestad, doctoral dissertation*: Change process for Traditional Churches to Spiritually Form Millennials While Retraining Older Generations*, Smestad, May 2020, Dallas Theological Seminary. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)