



Activity to Discern Gifts for Ministries of Welcome

Just as we are all members of the body of Christ, each of us having various gifts and skills to contribute to the whole, so too are we all vital citizens of our local communities, each with the ability to welcome and be in relationship with all of our neighbors, including refugees newly resettled to the community.

What do you need? Only the desire to be a presence of welcome, interest in being a learner and listener, and commitment to partnership and cooperation. With these assets forming the foundation of your approach, the gifts unique to your congregation and local context will find their place in the ministry of welcoming.

Before you engage in the ministry, a best practice is to engage in "Gifts Discernment," a process of exploration and discovery for the group. What gifts do you have to bring to the work that you may not have considered before?

What gifts are to be found in your wider community, through partnerships and networks you already have or could build? What talents, skills, and resources hide just beneath the surface, and would show themselves if we asked the right questions?

There are many exercises you can use to engage the process of gifts discernment. The activity described below is suitable for small and large groups.

Gifts of Hand, Head, and Heart

This activity invites you to an expansive, holistic view of the gifts that you and your faith community have to share in the ministry of refugee resettlement. This activity will ask you to list and describe your gifts in the following areas:

- Gifts of Hand: Physical and manual skills, like knitting, building, gardening, cooking
- Gifts of Head: Skills of the mind, like time-management, project-management, organizational skills
- Gifts of Heart: Gifts of the Spirit, like patience, pastoral presence, joyfulness, ability to calm, strong listening skills

This activity will lead you and your small group through an exercise in identifying and naming your gifts and those of others.

Materials

- Sticky notes in three colors
- Pens, pencils
- Several large posterboards or large piece of newsprint
- Assorted colors of markers

Set-Up

- Spacious room with good natural lighting, a warm and inviting environment
- Several tables so that individuals or smaller groups can have their own space in which to work



Steps

1. **Invitation & Centering:** Invite members of your group to gather with a prayer or devotion to focus energy and thought. The Prayer of Self-Dedication or the Prayer attributed to St. Francis in the Book of Common Prayer (pp. 832-833) might be a wonderful way to begin.
2. **Gifts of Hand:** Prepare the members of your group for the first phase of this activity. Invite participants to pair up into couples.
 1. Participants will take approximately three minutes to write their Gifts of Hand, one per sticky note. *(3 minutes)*
 2. In pairs, each person shares what they wrote and describes in greater detail the skills they named on the sticky notes. *(3 minutes)*
 3. Ask each participant to come to a central point in the room - a wall, a posterboard or newsprint - and post their sticky notes representing Gifts of Hand.
3. **Gifts of Head:** Prepare the members of your group for the second phase of this activity. Ask participants to pair up into new couples.
 1. Participants will take approximately three minutes to write their Gifts of Head, one per sticky note. *(3 minutes)*
 2. In pairs, each person shares what they wrote and describes in greater detail the skills they named on the sticky notes. *(3 minutes)*
 3. Ask each participant to come to a central point in the room - a wall, a posterboard or newsprint - and post their sticky notes representing Gifts of Head.
4. **Gifts of Heart:** Prepare the members of your group for the third phase of this activity. Ask participants to form another couple with someone new.
 1. Participants will take approximately three minutes to write their Gifts of Heart, one per sticky note. *(3 minutes)*
 2. In pairs, each person shares what they wrote and describes in greater detail the skills they named on the sticky notes. *(3 minutes)*
 3. Ask each participant to come to a central point in the room - a wall, a posterboard or newsprint - and post their sticky notes representing Gifts of Heart.
5. **Debrief:** By this time, there should be a beautiful, multi-colored array of gifts displayed for all to see. Circle all the members of the group up around the display of the individual and collective gifts. Together, move sticky notes around as you group gifts thematically, or by their similarities and relationships to one another (for example, gifts of sewing and knitting may be paired together, or gifts of organizing and social media/e-communications skills may be paired together). Ask one or more members of the group to collect this data into a document that you can later share with your local refugee resettlement agency as you meet and learn more about their needs and how you can be involved.
6. **Fun Extra:** Using www.wordle.net, you can create a "Word Cloud" to display your gifts in beautiful graphic design. This can be a fun way to recap the activity and share a memento with your group.
7. **Additional Activities:** Additional resources for Gifts Discernment may be found at Called to Transformation: www.calledtotransformation.org.