

MINISTERING CROSS-CULTURALLY

At the heart of GO Ministries is the desire for mutual transformation. Our hope is that all cultures are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. While we are working so closely with one another, and cultures intertwine, it's important to remember that North Americans will likely process and act differently than the Dominicans and Haitians. There is much we can learn from one another.

While we may not always understand each other's language, we are all experts at reading body language and facial expressions. Please be aware of how you may respond when you don't understand or agree with something you see. When we come into a situation with a posture of learning from one another the opportunities for transformation will be much greater. Our staff would love to share more with you on the field. Please show your team the short cross cultural communication video we created. It is located in the Resource Center on the GO Website at www.gomin.org. In the meantime, here's a short list of things to be aware of as you seek to serve in another culture.

A few helpful reminders:

- Understand that plans can change and to be adaptable
- Give yourself the freedom to fail
- Focus on glorifying God through your actions and speech
- Seek to understand differences in cultures
- Clothe yourself in compassion, kindness and humility
- Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit and not the temptation of the flesh
- Be transparent and humble
- Be respectful of other's viewpoints including their religious and political views
- Refrain from theological debates or criticizing denominations
- Be mindful to not spend too much time with a member of the opposite sex as they may view this as flirting
- Refrain from giving money or items to local leaders or kids and do not make promises to bring them to the states. If you want to help a Local Leader or kid, please speak to a GO Ministries Staff member



JOURNALING AND DEBRIEFING

It is very important for your team to set aside time each day to debrief. Being in another culture, with another language, and the brokenness you may encounter while serving may overwhelm, challenge, and push team members outside of their comfort zone. Debriefing is a wonderful opportunity to process each day's experiences – to share how you saw God at work, the challenges you encountered, to pray together, and reflect both individually and as a team.

Potential questions for debriefing:

- What was encouraging today? Share some highlights.
- What did you see that was discouraging? How did you deal with those things?
- What did you learn today?
- Where did you see God at work – in the community, in yourself, in another person?
- What were the stories of some of the people you met? How did their stories impact you?

Some teams have found this time is what builds and unifies their team – this time can also be used to share testimonies, share in worship, or have a foot-washing service.

The devotion GO provides includes pages for debriefing at the beach and once you arrive home. It is vital to gather a few days after returning to the US to process the emotions team members may encounter. These emotions vary from separation anxiety from the people they met and formed new relationships with, to having a negative attitude towards their home country, to feeling extremely guilty about returning to their “normal” lives. It is important that as a team you support one another and learn to take experiences from your time on the island and integrate them into your own culture. This may include praying for those who are serving in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, financially partnering with a local leader, begin planning a trip for next year, or sponsoring a GO Kid.