

What can we do as Christians?



1- Be ready for friendship: Friendship is an in-depth relationship combining trust, support, communication, loyalty, understanding, empathy and intimacy. Friendship requires meeting the needs of both friends. It is comfortable, fun and relaxed. There are certain aspects of life that all of us crave. Being able to trust and relax with your friend is a big part of friendship. Building friendships takes time. It is made, not born and it is ultimate. The friendship is with Jesus, and the formula for that relationship is described in warm words in *John 15:12-17*. It's a friendship based on the greatest love of all. If you haven't experienced it, and you should trust me on this my friend; you don't know what you are missing.

An important ultimate goal for Jesus was to make his disciples his friends. The friendship is with Jesus, and the formula for that relationship is described in warm words in *John 15:12-17*. Learn from scripture about friendship in *Proverbs 17:9; 18:24; 27:5; 27:17; in Jeremiah 33:2-3; and in Ecclesiastes 4:10; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; and in James 4:4*. Friendliness is being able to carry on a comfortable conversation with a social acquaintance and is a matter of practice and following certain procedures in communicating no matter how difficult it is for you to carry on a conversation with an international friend. Whether you are talking to a friend, best buddy, an international person (stranger) or a social acquaintance. These suggestions are helpful to get you started:

- 1- Always get the other person's name and always give your name.
- 2- During the conversation, use the other person's name at least once.

3- Minimize the focus on yourself and keep the focus of the conversation on the other person.

4- Ask open ended questions that cannot be answered with a Yes@ or No@ to keep the conversation rolling. Now, remember that it does get easier with practice and prayer. So do it!

Many people find it difficult to approach a stranger or someone they know very little about and begin by getting acquainted. Everyone has trouble establishing relationships from time to time. Not even the most successful people are successful every time. However, nobody is successful unless they try especially when you know that God is on your side and He wants you to do it.

2- Guidelines for Christians who want to befriend internationals:

1- Be sensitive, not only concerning their needs but toward them personally. Deal with your friends personally, one on one. Be sensitive to them as a person first, then to their needs. Make time for them as it affects your relationship with each other. Be alert to each person around you. When you see them, move toward them. Greet them and welcome them with a handshake, be cheerful and smile.

2- Learn to remember a person=s name and Agreet them by their name.@ (John 20:15-16), After the resurrection Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene. He called her by her name, “Mary”. Her eyes opened as she turned toward Him and cried out in Aramaic, ARabboni@ (which means teacher)... God names people according to their characters: For example, there is a big difference between Elie and Ali. AEI@ in Hebrew means “God”. AAl@ in Arabic means Athe@ Elie means AGod is my strength@ while AAli@ means my strength is Athe@. Most people called me Ali instead of Elie!

3- Ask them appropriate questions which reflect interest and acceptance.

4- Have a sense of humor and listen carefully to what they are saying (pay attention). Remind yourself of the interest God has for them. Be hospitable, friendly, generous, and have a servant heart. These things will make others feel good.

5- Don't depends on your own wisdom. Not all people are alike. For example: people ask me where am I from. When they hear that I am from the Middle East, they automatically assume that I am a Muslim, but I am not. Don't assume.

6- Don't judge all nations because of one you like or don't like. Each one has a different style, culture and personality. There are many who are open or closed, poor or rich, educated or non-educated, religious or not religious, experienced or inexperienced, old or young, female or male.

7- Create an environment of acceptance among your international friends. Be aware of prejudices. Don't talk down to them; instead, treat them as equals. Accept them, not because of someone else, but because of Jesus. If there is someone that you don't like who is from a certain country, it does not mean that everyone you meet from that country is the same.

8- Humble yourself so they can ask you questions.

9- Look the other person in the eye. This doesn't mean stare at the other person. It means moving your eyes within a triangle formed by the width of the forehead at the apex narrowing to the mouth at the bottom of the triangle.

10- Minimize focus on yourself and keep the conversation on the other person.

11- In the end, remember that there are other aspects of conversation that are also universal. Remember to smile, smile, smile, then smile some more, to be sincere, to be genuinely complimentary, to speak clearly and to be enthusiastic and positive and don't

mumble. Being able to carry on a comfortable conversation with a social acquaintance is a matter of practice and following these procedures in communicating. No matter how difficult it is for you to carry on a conversation with a social acquaintance now, remember that it does get easier with practice. So, practice!

3- What Christian friends can do to help internationals with culture shock & adjustment

- § Be aware of the process of cultural adjustment and culture shock. Share this information with your international friend as a form of encouragement and reassurance. Most incoming students are not aware of this adjustment process.
- § You can become the Acultural informant@ for your international friend. Help explain how things work. Discuss American idioms B Aoff the wall@, AI smell a rat.@ Speak slowly.
- § Work at better understanding your international friend=s cultural background. It will not only provide topics for conversation, but also show you care enough to engage in true cross-cultural dialogue.
- § Know the limits of your involvement. Financial, academic or psychological problems should be directed to the school=s international student advisor or especially, to his or her pastor.
- § Don=t always come across as the expert. Work toward a relationship of equals.
- § Allow for reciprocity in the relationship. It is easy to always be the one giving. Allow your friend to invite you for tea, a meal, or a movie.
- § Write your friend=s family back home with his/her permission.
- § Let them know there is someone here looking out for the best interests of their son or

daughter.

- § Be a good listener. Love & respect are the key. Trust is the bridge for cross-cultural communication. Forgiveness as a life style: If we are sincere in our desire to befriend someone from another country then try to become familiar with his country, culture, and family.
- § A person of the same sex holds your hands, or kissing. Arrive 15 or 30 minutes late to lunch or any appointment. No apology offered. To help to overcome culture shock be with him and explain the differences.
- § Help them to be flexible and not to put high expectations and not criticize, be angry or withdraw from fellowship.
- § Let them express frustration in order to understand the culture and how to adjust. Serve them out of a heart of love and humility and remember that they are a guest. Strive for Christ=s likeness, not America, to shine through you.

4. Make yourself available and get involved: Many opportunities are available. There are many opportunities available for us to help internationals. We can do that by using Jesus as our model. Internationals around us will be closely watching us. Christians have many opportunities to attend to the culture shock, physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of Internationals. Cultural sensitivity can allow Christians to earn a hearing from internationals rather than lose the chance for open communication. You have to get involved in the campuses and establish contacts: Get acquainted with the international advisors at various schools, colleges, universities, institutes, companies, and churches. Meet with other Christians for fellowship and pray. Encourage them to be involved with internationals. Motivate and train American Christians to get acquainted with internationals around them.

Encourage Christian host families to make direct contact with them to develop friendships with one or two individuals. Contact and motivate other Christians who have some access to meeting internationals. Prepare brochures and posters and a monthly calendar of events to be posted on the bulletin boards and in the campuses. Get involved using registration and orientation at various schools and get the Christians on campus to put up a table with your ministries information. Make literature, and have Bibles and Jesus films available in both English and Arabic. Internationals mostly are lonely, feel out of place, lost and anxious about understanding new Christian people, a new culture and situation. It is fun to relate to someone from another culture, but it can take a little effort for both parties to overcome their differences. If we want to approach friendship from our own experience and perspectives we fail, because it is easy for us to misinterpret actions, words, and customs. Your international friend is the best person to help you learn these cultural differences. As you seek to learn more about your international friend, it will draw you closer together and make your relationship more natural and more enjoyable. But all these personality and characters have one spiritual thing in common: In each one is an empty heart which no one can fill except Christ. Add to that the guilty feelings, loneliness and fear of death and destiny.

5. Meet their Physical needs: We can not only help internationals find a place to live, clothing and food but also help them become acclimated to life in a new country. Christians can be Jesus to them by helping them in many ways. We can show them around the area and where to find public rest rooms when is away from their residence. We can explain tipping in restaurants and other places, and show them how to use the Internet or help with public transportation. We can take them shopping, showing them where they can find the cheap brands that can save them money, and teach them where to find phone cards and how to use the pay phone.

6- Be hospitable: Hospitality is a way of life for most of them, and thus, it plays a very important role here. For example: If you are invited into the home of a family from the Middle East, they will almost always offer food and drink, no matter how brief your visit is. Your friends will look for the same hospitality from you, when you invite them into your home. Remember to offer refreshments or share a meal. You don't have to be elaborate in your hospitality, but simply offer whatever is available, such as fresh fruit, coffee, or tea. If you want to offer a meal with meat, you have to explain and remember most religious people don't eat pork, or lamb-based cooking and no shell fish and no wine or other alcoholic. Explain to your guests that you offer thanks before the meal. Don't be ashamed of praying in Jesus' name and when you pray don't to preach or evangelize just a simple thanks to your Lord for the food and for your friends.

Build a hospitable attitude and practice hospitality, for this is what the Bible asks us to do in *Hebrews 13:1-2* *Akeep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.* We are told again in *Romans 12:13* *AShare with people who are in need, practice hospitality.* This command to be hospitable occurs throughout the New Testament. (*3John 1:1-5; Gen 18:1-5; Hebrew 13:1-3; Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:5-7; Roman12:13; Matthew 25:35-40; 2Peter1:11*)

Friday and Saturday Hospitality Dinner: One of the goals of the Nations Ministry is to host and befriend internationals. God has provided a home near the university campus where international students can gather weekly on Friday evenings in a relaxed, loving atmosphere, share a meal together, and build genuine conversations. We believe that relationship is automatically deepened when a person is welcomed into a home. You'll find many of the nations represented every Friday night; in the last three years more than 120 countries were

represented. The home is a place of love and acceptance for many who are lonely and new to this country. After the meal there is a time of activities, outings and discussion of useful subjects. They can observe the Christian's relationship to God and consider the gospel for themselves. We envision this ministry of hospitality beginning with and extending back to the church. It begins by involving people who like to get acquainted with internationals in assuming responsibility for one meal a month or volunteering somehow in the life of people. This provides opportunity for many people to have a part in this outreach of love. Another opportunity to get internationals involved by having him bring food or cook a meal from his own country. Secondly, when an international or teacher comes to faith or desires to become involved with the church community, they will be funneled to the appropriate ethnic groups for ongoing connection and friendship. Thirdly, we will have a clothes bank, and also address the needs of the students such as renting homes, learning the language, and purchasing cars, clothes or household items.

Things to avoid in hospitality:

- Hindus and some Buddhists generally do not drink beer, while many Germans drink it as a regular beverage served with a meal.
- Some Hindus and Buddhists are strict vegetarians. They eat no meat, fish, poultry, eggs or dishes containing any of these ingredients.
- Muslims and most Jews do not eat pork of any kind.
- Some devout Muslims may not eat any form of beef, lamb, or poultry, unless it has been butchered in a specific manner. Fish is usually acceptable.
- Many international will not eat chopped and / or processed meats that contain unknown ingredients.

- Many Asians and Africans do not care for cheese or canned tuna.
- Some internationals avoid dairy products or are unfamiliar with them.

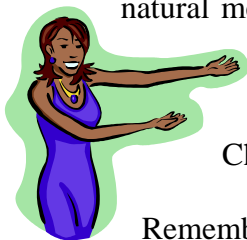
Do serve:

- In general, chicken, rice, fish, fruit, and vegetables are good choices to include in the meal. Many cultures prefer their food hotter and spicier than Americans.
- Rice is a staple food in many cultures.
- Vegetables and fresh fruit, canned or frozen are generally appreciated.
- In many countries, chicken is a favorite and is served with rice.
- Fish, seafood, lamb and cheese may be acceptable alternatives for those who don't eat beef or pork.
- Many prefer simple fruit desserts or ice cream to rich or heavy pastries.

7. Be a Host: Hosting is designed to assist Internationals and refugees in their initial settlement.

The purpose is to team up people from other countries with a Christian family as a host for their first few weeks in this area to ease the process of apartment hunting. Many of them would never set foot inside a Christian home during their stay in the country because they do not have any

natural means of social contact with American Christians. This could solve a real



life problem and remove the veil of hate and misinformation about

Christians that internationals might have brought from their country.

Remember, often Muslims view Christianity as a western religion.

In John 1:37-39 Jesus said to two of John's disciples, A...@What do you want?@ They said, >Rabbi=..., >Where are you staying?=@ >Come,= he replied, >and you will see.= ANow, Muslim students say to Christians, Ashow me where you live.@ We have the opportunity to show them

not only where we live, but where Christ lives in our homes. Hosting a special guest from another country is not just an act of hospitality and cultural exchange, it is an opportunity to have an eternal impact in a part of the world you may never see!

Hosting International Student;

This program aims to assist international students to settle in the country. The purpose is to team up an international student with an American host during the first week to ease the process of apartment hunting. The aims to solve a real life problem

Message to Prospective Host Families

Many international students have never set foot inside an American home during their stay in this country because they do not have any natural means of social contact with Americans outside the classroom. Many Americans like to befriend international students but do not know where to find them. As the world is getting smaller, we can either cross the oceans to go to mission or to open the door to invite mission into our home. Either way, the reward is both in this world and out of the world. Needless to say, it is easier to be a missionary in our own backyard.

Eligibility

The only qualifications are a roof over your head and a heart for international students.

Getting Started

1. Begin praying for the student right away.
2. You may wish to invite the student to dinner on the first day. Get acquainted. Be candid about house rules (smoking, noise etc) if any.
3. The student has most certainly crossed many time zones to get here. She will be jet-lagged. It is her first experience with jet-lag. Remind the student to sleep a lot during the first couple of days.

4. It is recommended that you do not give out your house keys for security reasons. The international student ought to be mostly gone during the day running errands. Try to coordinate your schedules so that you can meet together at some mutually convenient time.
5. Show interest in the student's progress on finding an apartment. Try to keep the student accountable to finding a place in the first week.
6. The international student is told that she is invited to stay with you for only a week. If apartment hunting is unsuccessful after the first week, you have the option to extend the stay or to refer the student to another family.
7. Invite the student to dinner again on the last night of her stay with you.
8. Take down the student's new address and phone number.
9. Keep in touch with the student. Invite her or his to your church activities if appropriate.

7. You can be a tutor without having a degree. Help them with English. The need to communicate and meet educational goals also provides us with opportunities to serve them. Without a doubt one of the hardest things to endure in a foreign country is the inability to communicate. Genesis 9 speaks of the confusion of languages. The reason we have many languages today was human pride and man's concern for his reputation. Men wanted to make a name for themselves avoiding God's commands to "fulfill the earth and make sacrifices". Instead they tried to reach God by their own ways, by deeds and not by faith.

In Acts 2 we find the opposite situation when God brought unity and understanding between the nations. God gave the people a clear message, that language here is not an obstacle

between the nations. This is the language of love from the Holy Spirit; the message is Jesus the Savior.

English is the official language of commerce. It dominates trade worldwide and is the single dominant language of the media. English is also the international medium of popular songs and films. It is the default language of at least 75% of all computer web sites and 95% of all commercial Internet servers. Language differences also create an extraordinary challenge. We have more than 100 different languages spoken in Milwaukee. Language schools provide opportunities but the availability of language schools in Milwaukee is not growing fast enough to meet the needs of the ethnic communities. Eastbrook Language Institute is an example of a program designed to help with the language needs of internationals. Offer to help them with any expressions or concepts in English, and at the same time learn from him how to say or write words of greetings or other expressions in his or her language. In addition to instruction in the English language, we can teach internationals how to be punctual, how to set priorities and how to face life realistically yet with a positive attitude. If he shows interest in the Bible you can teach him English through the Bible. We should not let the language be an obstacle to reaching out to internationals, but we must be willing to connect with them politely and explain grammar. When teaching the Bible, always remember that most non-native speakers of English don't understand the language of the Bible so it is important to use terms that are clear.

9. Be social: Befriending internationals necessitates being sensitive to different cultural expectations. It is important to address and greet people appropriately. *1Peter 5:14 says, AGive each other a warm greeting@ and similarly ITess 5:26 tells us to AGive the Lord=s followers a warm greeting@.* The Arabic tradition is to greet each other with a kiss of love and to greet brothers and sisters in Christ with a holy kiss. In most cultural contexts, and certainly in non-

western areas, one never greets internationals by shaking his left hand. In some culture the left hand is used for personal hygiene; it is offensive to offer the left hand in greeting.

When reaching out to internationals do not move too fast and do not get involved physically or emotionally. Be aware that touching may not be appropriate or may be misinterpreted by them, especially the females. Muslims who develop friendships with Christians move through levels of suspicion to trust.

Encourage Christians to participate in the social life of internationals. Some internationals never overcome their cultural shock. Even after being in the United States for years they still feel like strangers.

10. Be wise regarding money: Luke 16:9 Jesus says AMy disciples, I tell you to use worldly wealth to make friends for yourselves.@ Be generous, don=t invite your internationals to a restaurant and then let him pay for his or her own meal. Show him how much you care for them by paying his or her meal from your own money. For example: In the Middle Eastern culture, people talk freely about money. Unlike in the United States, it is appropriate in the Middle East to discuss how much money you earn, you give or you spend.

Do not be surprised if a person from the Middle East asks you personal financial questions. When this occurs, just explain to him that these issues are personal to you and that you would like to keep your financial information to yourself. Speaking the truth and being honest is the best policy when communicating with internationals. Am I secretive and sneaky or open and genuine? Be bold and share what is in your heart and don't be a hypocrite. You need to have patience in helping internationals to express their ideas and not just impose your ideas, customs, and convictions on them. Let them ask you similar questions. Internationals need to sense your

eagerness to learn from them and be assured of your respect for their ideas, customs, and convictions.

11. Be sensitive to their emotional needs: People from any country need to sense real love, not conditional love based on their response to the gospel. The purpose of nurturing a relationship is to remove the obstacles to the friendship and build good bridges of trust. *AGod knows what is in the heart of people@ (John 2:25)*. Starting a relationship with internationals isn't complicated or frightening. In 1Cor 9:19-23, Jesus made an effort to be a friend to people from different culture like Matthew, a tax collector, and the woman at the well who was a Samaritan. Through his acquaintance, Jesus Christ loved people into a relationship with God. We need to examine our relationships and ask ourselves if we want to have a close international friend, or if the person is merely a contact. Also help him to better understand his emotions by explaining that culture shock is a temporary and normal reaction to being in this country. What ever happens to them, encourage them that they are human beings with human feelings and they will have a perfectly human reaction to this environment. They should not, therefore, be unduly discouraged. Internationals have a normal reaction to a cultural change. It has nothing to do with their personality.

Practical Considerations

1. Do not get involved with any of the financial aspects, such as volunteering to be a co-signer for loans or to become a banker.
2. A fresh international student may encounter some difficulties in finding American roommates due to language and social barriers. In that case, a studio or a one-bedroom apartment is a reasonable starting point.
3. A newly arrived international student has not yet established any credit history. Some landlords may have had some bad experiences with foreign students in terms of cleanliness or property damage. Be prepared to knock on a few more doors.
4. Simple tasks such as finding the streets and learning the bus routes and interviewing with landlords can be intimidating to a newly arrived foreign student. It is a good idea to network friends, family or kinship groups to help with the apartment hunting process.

Prepare for the Follow up

1- Suggestions for Follow up

- Pray daily for your friendships.
- Visit with him in person once or twice a month.
- Make weekly contact by phone or letter or email.
- Ask about his or her birthday-send a card; plan a party.
- Invite him for Meals-entertain at different times, not only at dinner.
- Ask him or her about his concerns for his Family celebrations-birthdays, holidays, special events.
- Find out what are his or her activities and sports and go to athletic events, trips out of town, sight-seeing, indoor & outdoor concerts, lakes, parks, waterfalls, fly a kite, play catch or tennis, outings-picnics, visiting friends and family, shopping All these activities are essential in follow up a friend
- Overnight stays-during school breaks.
- Invite your friend to church but don't force or insist.
- Help with conversational English and writing skills.
- Give a Bible as a gift, preferably in the international language. Offer opportunities for study of the Bible.
- Share your challenges, struggles and needs, develop a good listening ear.
- Help him or her find warm winter clothing or other special needs.



2- Don't hesitate to invite them to your Christian community: Connect them to Church activities: Ask international first if he or she would like to attend church with you sometime.

Inviting them to the church aims at providing a natural environment for Americans and internationals to know each other through the American assisting. Try to facilitate the building

of friendship between the American Christian and internationals. Many internationals are either non-religious or have prior religious backgrounds. Offer a wide variety of programs ranging from recreational activities such as picnics, trips, camping, and pizza parties to the more spiritually based meetings such as hospitality Friday and Saturday night. The goal is to introduce internationals to the spirit life of the church in a natural and non-threatening manner. Remember, don't pressure your international friend to come with you. Religion can be a sensitive discussion topic to internationals.

3- Questions to help make contacts with Internationals

An American friend Handbook laid out very good questions for Americans who would like to establish relations with Internationals and it could be helpful to establish conversations.

1- I'm interested in what Internationals think about God. I would like to know your opinion.

Could we get together for a few minutes sometime soon and talk about this?

2- I'm interested in getting to know about your background and religion.

3- I know that you are interested in learning as much as you can about American life while you are here in the States. I would love to have the opportunity to share with you just what it means to me.

4- As a Christian I learned about Jesus= culture, You came from that region; can you explain a little about your culture? What does hospitality mean to you?

5- There have been many misconceptions about Christianity, and I'm sure you would like to know just why we believe what we do. Maybe you could share with me your experiences along this line too.

6- I'm interested in learning more about your country.

7- Ask to see any photographs internationals may have of their family, and share your own life and family photographs. Discuss issues like, how large is your family? And what is your position of birth?

8- Point out a map and ask him where his home is located and discuss the environments in the country.

9- What kinds of work do men and women do? Do married women work outside the home? If not, why? What about the husband=s responsibility at home? What are wedding customs?

10- How do you feel about the role women play in America=s culture? Do women hold political office in your country? Why or why not

4- Mistakes we often make with Internationals.

Don=t worry about making mistakes; learn from your mistakes. Nothing is wrong with making mistakes or failing, I don=t mind failing as long as I keep my long-range vision, regroup after failure, learn from my mistakes, move ahead once again and avoid making the same mistake twice. There are common mistakes that we make in working with Internationals.

1- One mistake is giving them too much at once and not narrowing your objectives for each time you meet him or her.

2- Asking for their opinion about our program but never giving them a chance to see it or be involved in it.

3- Another is talking down to them instead of treating them as equals or misleading them, such as telling them we will meet for a one hour, but then staying for half hour, or we will meet for short time and staying longer, this builds lack of trust.

4- Internationals need trust, understanding and love.

5- Not being sufficiently flexible with your schedule to meet with the internationals on weekends, evenings, and other times that suit their schedule.

6- When working with internationals, be sensitive to their cultural orientation of losing face. You may lose them if you bring up their inconsistencies. Just love them, and believe the best about them.

7- Being in the American habit of rushing can also be a problem. Be willing to spend more than one hour with them. Do not get caught in the appointment syndrome.

8- To follow up an international not only means spiritual counseling but also caring for physical needs. We need to be sensitive for their needs. Some are ready to change anything for the sake of money or to gain respect and protection.

9- One of the mistakes is to not prepare the community to accept internationals.

10- A major mistake we make is not sharing with them our hearts as Christians, not telling them who we are, and not allowing them to see what we do as Christians, how to pray, worship or live. There are two kinds of unaware Christians. The first group, when you ask them to talk about Jesus Christ, fall into silence and don't know where to begin. The second type steers every conversation in a spiritual direction without any sensitivity toward the other person's faith, religion or cultural background.

5- Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Be committed for the long term/trust takes time
- Be a genuine friend and don't base your friendship on the international's interest.
- Take an interest in the whole person and the variety of the person needs.
- Know your international friend (go out of your way to sacrifice and give).



- Learn from your international friend (culture, customs, religion and country...).
- Share your faith gently and respectfully.
- Do your part sincerely & positively. Be friendly.
- Find points in common for ongoing relationship.
- Remain faithful to your international friend in time of stress and personal trials...
- Have something to give.
- Pray for him and with him and trust God to work.
- Accompany the international to meetings or to church.
- Try to care for others.
- Be alert at all times, avoid unsafe places.
- Persistence



Don't:

- Make any assumptions.
- Argue, or give up!
- Pressure an international to make a decision
- Take the international only to Christian activities.
- Assume that church is the only place where the International will hear and understand the Bible.



