

**Neighbor to Neighbor: Building a Stronger Asylum Hill Community
Facilitator Guide
May 4, 2013**

“Find a New Friend” Ice Breaker exercise to use during sign-in

The facilitators are encouraged to circulate the room to join the exercise and assist anyone who may have difficulty understanding the instructions, and to engage some of the shy folks who are hanging back.

It would also be big help if a few of the translators could be at the “welcoming” table to help explain the exercise to non-English speaking participants.

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The goal of the exercise is to encourage participants to have fun and meet new people from cultural backgrounds other than their own.

At registration we will have a second “welcoming” table that people will go to after they have registered. There they will fill out their name tag and get instructions on how to do the ice-breaker.

Instructions

1. Please write “Hello” on your name tag in your native language. Also write your given (first) name.

For example:

¡Hola	Hello!
Rafael	Nancy

3. Find someone else in the room whose name tag has “hello” written on it in a language other than your own.

- Say “hello” to them in your native language.
- If you don’t know how to say hello in their native language, ask them to teach you.
- You and your new friend may want to talk about a few other questions. For example:
 - How did you hear about this event?
 - Did any other members of your family or friends come with you? May I meet them?
 - How long have you lived in Hartford? Where did you live before you came here?

11:00 – 11:45 Getting to Know One Another

Part 1: Getting started (5 minutes)

Facilitator Tips

1. Introduce yourself and describe your role: “We are not teachers. We don’t take sides. Our job is to help us talk and work together so that everyone has a chance to contribute and so that every voice is heard.”
2. Introduce your group’s translator. Explain that they will be translating both ways. (That is, so that non-English speakers can understand what others are saying, and so that the English-only speakers can understand them.) Ask people to speak in short sentences and keep ideas simple so that the interpreter will have time to keep up.
3. Read the dialogue session goals to the group.
4. Direct participants to the handout on “Sample Guidelines for our Dialogue.”

Talking Points and Instructions for Participant

Our goals for today’s dialogue sessions are to:

- Get to know one another.
- Identify the personal strengths we can use to help improve our neighborhood. Personal strengths can include things such as skills, abilities, experiences, knowledge, and hobbies or other things that interest us.
- Think together about how we can work with the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association to help improve our neighborhood.

Part 2: Guidelines (10 minutes)

We need to agree about how to help our dialogue work well. Here are some ideas. Are there rules you would like to add? Talk about them.

1. Every voice is equal.
2. Listen to one another. Treat each other with respect.
3. Each person gets a chance to talk.
4. One person talks at a time. Don’t cut people off.
5. Speak for yourself. Don’t try to speak for "your group."
6. It’s OK to disagree. If you feel upset, say so and say why.
7. If you talk about people who are not here, don’t say their names.
8. Some of the things we talk about will be very personal. We will not tell these stories to other people, unless we all say it is OK.

Part 3: Introductions – Who are you? (30 minutes)

Facilitator Tips

1. Give each participant a piece of 8.5” x 11” card stock and a marker. Before the May 4 meeting, use the instructions below to create your own “Who I am” card so that you can use it to demonstrate what you will be asking people to do.
2. The group will have about 5 minutes to complete their cards. Emphasize that they don’t have to worry about drawing “perfect” pictures. More people enjoy this exercise if you joke about how so few of us think they know how to draw. Give them a 1 minute warning when you are about to wrap up the time to draw.
3. If you have time, use the follow-up questions to continue the conversation. It is OK if you don’t get to the third question about how long people have lived in Hartford. We included it in case you have time left over.

Talking Points and Instructions for Participant

Using the card and markers we have provided, please:

- Fold the card and print your name in large letters in the middle of the card. If you prefer, please feel free to write your name in your native language.
- In one corner of the card, draw a picture of the people in your family. (However you define your family.) Or if you prefer, you may want to draw a picture of one or more of your closest friends.
- It’s OK if you don’t think you draw very well. Most of us are probably like you when it comes to this!
- In another corner, draw a picture of something you like to do.

Next, we will go around our circle and share our responses with others in our group.

Follow-up Questions:

- What are some of the things we have in common? What are some of the big differences?
- Why are you here today? What made you decide to come?
- How long have you lived in Hartford? Where did you live before you came here?

12:45 – 1:30 Sharing our Strengths

Part 1: Identifying our Strengths and Skills (25 minutes)

Facilitator Tips

1. Describe the exercise using the suggested text below.
2. Refer people to the handout “What skills, hobbies or talents do you have?”
3. Next, walk people through Steps 1- 4. Use it as a script, or feel free to rephrase the instructions in your own words.

Talking Points and Instructions for Participant

Our goal is to begin to identify the personal strengths we can use to help improve our neighborhood. Personal strengths can include things such as skills, knowledge, hobbies, talents and experiences.

Sometimes we don't think of things we know how to do as personal strengths or skills. Here are just a few examples of what we mean by strengths and skills.

- cooking
- caring for children
- gardening and landscaping
- making art
- sewing
- organizing projects
- construction skills
(for example, carpentry, painting, plumbing)
- driving a motor vehicle
- teaching
- playing an instrument
- bookkeeping or accounting
- hairdressing
- athletic coaching

Step 1: Turn to the person next to you and talk about things you know how to do that have been helpful to friends, family, or your community. You will each have 2 minutes to talk to your partner. As you listen to your partner, try to pay close attention and say as little as possible.

Step 2: After you both have had a chance to talk, take a few minutes to identify the **two** skills that each of you would like to describe to the rest of the group.

Step 3: Draw a picture of each skill or write each one down on sticky note. ***Include only one skill per sticky note.*** If you feel comfortable doing so, please write your name at the bottom of your sticky notes. When you are done, attach your sticky notes to the newsprint at our table.

Step 4: Now let's all stand up and look at our list. We will go around the circle and describe your partner's two skills. Please keep it to only two skills per person so that we don't run out of time.

Part 3: What does this mean for all of us and our neighborhood? (20 minutes)

Facilitator Tips

1. Refer people to the list of “Topics We Identified at Our November Event” found on the flip “What skills, hobbies, etc.” handout. Describe the exercise using the suggested text below. Refer briefly to the “November Event” outcomes handout, but it has a lot of text so try to keep people focused on the easier-to-read “Topics We Identified” handout.
2. Ask someone in the group to help listen closely to the ideas people come up with in this part of the exercise and to write them on newsprint at our table.
3. Let people know that each group will report out the results of this part of the dialogue to the larger group at the end of this exercise. If your group includes non-English speaking participants, it would be good if the translator can provide the group’s report in their native language. After the translator is done, you as the facilitator (or another English-speaking member of the group) will then provide an English-language version of the report.
4. Next, walk people through Steps 1- 4. Use it as a script, or feel free to rephrase the instructions in your own words. The group may find it easier to see the notes if they stand up around the table.
5. Note for **Step 2:** The group may be a bit quiet after you ask the first question in Step 2. You may need to give people a few minutes to come up with ideas. Don’t be afraid of a minute or two of silence. If necessary, ask someone directly to say what they think, but don’t push them to speak if they seem uncomfortable doing so.
6. Note for **Step 3:** Once the group has identified its one or two top “Things We Can Do Together” in Step 3, circle those ideas with a marker.
7. After you group has reported out, ask one or two people to take the group’s list of “Skills” and their list of “Things We Can Do Together” and tape them on the wall. Don’t forget to write your group’s table number on your lists!

Talking Points and Instructions for Participant

Step One – Reviewing Ideas from last November: In last November’s “Welcoming Event” people made a list of things about our neighborhood that they would like to change. They also made a list of things they view as the neighborhood’s strengths.

Please look at the list of “Things We Identified at Our November Event.” You can find it on the flip side of the “What skills, hobbies or talents” handout. As you can see, people were most interested in creating:

- A Safer Neighborhood
- Diverse Small Businesses
- More Opportunities to Learn, such as ESL Classes and After-School Programs
- Neighborhood Spirit and Pride

Step Two – Generating ideas for things we can do together: Given the types of skills and interests we just now identified in our group, what are some examples of things we could do together to improve our neighborhood?

Here are two examples of what it can look like when we connect our skills and strengths to work together on neighborhood issues.

Example #1 of how to connect personal strengths with neighborhood action

- a. People at the November event said they were interested in creating more opportunities for learning.
- b. It could be that some of the people attending today’s meeting know how to teach art, music, or know how to coach sports teams.
- c. Maybe they could get together and work with the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association to figure out how to create an after-school program for young people.

Example #2:

- a. People at the November event said they were interested in creating more neighborhood spirit and pride.
- b. It could be that some of the people here today are gardeners or landscapers, and that others are good at organizing projects.
- c. Maybe they could get together and work with the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association to figure out how to create ways to beautify the neighborhood.

Step Three – Narrowing our list of things we can do together: Now let’s narrow our list to down one or two ideas to report out to the full group. Once we agree on our top two ideas, we will circle them.

- Which of these ideas really address the issues we care about?
- Which ideas might have the biggest impact?
- Which ideas seem most “doable”?

Step Four – Preparing to report to the other groups: In a few minutes our group will report the top 1 or 2 ideas we came up with about how we and our neighbors could work together to improve the neighborhood. If they are comfortable doing so, I’d like to ask [**Name of your group’s translator**] to start us off by giving our group’s report in his/her native language. After he/she is done, I will then report the same results in English. [Ask another English speaking member to give the report if you are not comfortable doing so.]

I’m also looking for two people to take our list of “skills” and our list of “things we can do together” and tape them to wall after our group is done giving its report to the rest of the room.

Although we will only have time to report out on two suggestions, none of the ideas will be lost. We will collect the notes from every table and share them with the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association. Everyone will also be invited to bring their ideas to a new series of monthly meetings that AHNA is going to begin hosting. There will be translators at these meetings for people who need them.

Don’t forget to thank people for their contributions to the group’s work!