

## PREPARING THE TEAM BEFORE YOU LEAVE TO COME HOME

Re-entry is one of the most difficult parts of going on a mission trip for most individuals. Returning home after being in a place that is culturally different and often much more challenging than home is a challenge. We believe it is incredibly important for our team leaders to begin equipping their team members to return home beginning while you are still in country, while you are traveling home and then after you return home and have had some time to process your experience.

We recommend starting to talk about the Re-entry process and what this will look like for each of your team members during your last several devotional or team discussion times. We also recommend having your team members spending a few minutes preparing their answer to the question “How was your trip?” that they will be asked over and over again when they return home. It is important to have this answer prepared to avoid being too vague. Encourage them to write down a short synopsis of a powerful moment for them on the trip that would be a great way to answer this question instead.

You can also ask your team members to write a letter to themselves about the trip on the flight home. This letter should include the answers to the following questions:

1. How have you seen or experienced God in a new or deeper way?
2. How will your life be different when you return home?
3. How can you contribute to the ongoing effort after this trip?
4. What will you do to solidify the growth and enlightenment of this week?
5. What commitments or promises are you making to yourself today that you want to hold yourself accountable for 6 months from now.

Ask them to put the letter in a sealed envelope (you will need to have copies of the letters and envelopes with you when you leave for the trip) and give it to you before you arrive home. Make a note to yourself to mail these letters to everyone 6 months after the trip as a reminder of the incredible work God did in them and through them on the trip.

We will provide this letter as well as additional resources on the website for you to review and cater to the needs of your team, so please look through these prior to leaving for the trip. We will also include a list of suggested reading on this particular topic that you can share with your teammates. Finally, we encourage all teams to get together to debrief a few weeks after you return home as this will allow you to discuss some of the challenges you may be facing together. Please take time to plan a date for your team and their families to come together for fellowship and sharing.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

The level of communication you will have while on the ground varies from trip to trip and country to country. However, we do want to hear about your experiences and see pictures whenever possible. With the popularity of social media now, we would love for you to use these platforms to share about your trip. Encourage your team members to post pictures on Instagram while you are gone or when you return using **#seacoastmissions**. You can also have them post these pictures to our Seacoast Missions Facebook page. Any pictures placed on our social media accounts will automatically become part of our photo gallery on our website. You and your team members will be asked to sign a waiver allowing the Missions Department to use your pictures if you chose to place them on our social media sites.

### RE-CONNECTING WITH THE MISSION DEPARTMENT

Upon returning home, each team member will receive an email communication from the Missions Department. This communication will include a survey that we ask each person to take about their experience. It will also include ways to

stay connected with your host missionary and the Missions Department. Please encourage all of your team members to take this short survey which will assist in making sure we providing the best possible support for your short-term mission trip in the future.