



BUILDING NEIGHBORHOOD AWARENESS

We invite you to participate in a simple walk to begin to explore some ways of “discovering” and listening to your local neighborhoods. Your neighborhood can be where you live, where you work, where you play, or where you worship. If the weather won’t allow for walking outside, try walking in an indoor location where people gather (e.g. school, mall, work place, etc.). Try doing this exercise a few times.

Part 1:

As you walk around the neighborhood, here are some questions to reflect on:

- Who is on the street?
- What are people doing?
- Are there things that surprise you?
- What raises your curiosity?
- What creates concern or questions?
- Is there anything that catches your attention in a way that you want to ask more questions or get more information?

Part 2:

While out walking in your neighborhood, take some pictures. From your pictures, choose:

- One that shows something new you have discovered from walking in your neighborhood.
- One that captures a story about your neighborhood you would like to share.

Key Question:

- Where might God be at work in your neighborhood?



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LISTENING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Walk your neighborhood three to four times a week at different times of the day. For example, walk early in the morning, early afternoon, late afternoon, and early evening.

Here are some questions to reflect on while walking:

- What does my neighborhood look like (buildings, parks, apartments etc.)?
- Are different people, groups, events or gatherings at these different times?
- What would this same community look like at: 7am? Noon? 6pm? 10pm?
- Who is on the street?
- What are people doing?
- Are there things that surprise you?
- What raises your curiosity?
- What creates concern or questions?
- Is there anything that catches your attention in a way that you want to ask more questions or get more information?

Here are some different reflection questions to consider:

- What kinds of residences are built?
- Why might my neighborhood have been built the way it was?
- How long ago was it developed?
- Do the original people still live here?
- If not, where did they go? Why?
- Where are the differences and stress points in this community?



- Who are the people groups here?
- Where did they come from? How long have they been here?
- How is difference dealt with?
- Who is invisible? Why?
- How does communication take place?
- Where is the church being heard (if at all)?
- What do the primary organizations and services tell me about the area?
- Who are the individuals who connect and bridge in this community?
- Who do I know in the neighborhood?
- Why do I know these specific people? What makes them unique?
- What stories can I tell about them?
- What three things would I do to improve my neighborhood?

While walking, use your senses:

- What do you see? Not see?
- What do you smell?
- What do you hear?
- What do you feel?
- What effect did any of these things have on you?
- Did you stop to listen to any one on your walks?



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Key Questions:

- *What am I learning about my neighborhood?*
- *What am I learning about my engagement in my neighborhood?*



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WAYS PEOPLE GATHER AND CONNECT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Consider the following about the ways people gather and connect in your community, and explore how you might join them.

- Young mothers may meet in certain spaces and carry on a rich discourse about the neighborhood. Perhaps some of us could join them?
- Seniors gather regularly in certain coffee shops to talk with each other about the neighborhood. They are open and eager for others to join in and listen to their stories.
- Teens and young adults do their communicating online. How might you join the conversations? What are the issues and themes these young people are addressing?
- Where are the local gathering spots in the area? Who gathers there? What would be involved in hanging out there sometimes?
- Which local stores are visited often?
- Who gathers at the bus stop each morning?
- Where are the clubs, gyms, community centers or other local places people gather?