

## #2.1 Team Development - Discussion Guide

Questions to consider  
by every ministry team

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### Suggestions:

- Thoughtfully consider & discuss each question
  - Ensure that every team member has a chance to contribute
  - Make every effort to respect & protect every participant
  - Repeat periodically or when new members are added to the team
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#### Team relationships - Part 1

- ☐ What is our vision for team life?
  - ❖ How do we relate to each other as: colleagues, friends, community, spiritual family?
  - ❖ What are the elements of traditional or physical family that can apply to our spiritual family?
- ☐ How much time will we expect to spend together outside of ministry?
  - ❖ Birthdays, holidays, social events, free time
  - ❖ Involvement in family life, being auntie or uncle to children
- ☐ How can each of us demonstrate hospitality?
  - ❖ Who will take the initiative?
  - ❖ Is there an expectation to invite the others into our homes?
- ☐ How much will we expect / depend on each other to help with:
  - ❖ Housing issues: finding housing, moving, plumbing, repairs, gardening?
  - ❖ Admin issues: visas, driver's licenses, red tape?
  - ❖ Logistics: rides and transportation, auto repairs, safety when traveling in difficult areas?
  - ❖ Family and home related issues: help with cooking, babysitting?
- ☐ When a single lady needs help with something at her home late at night, who should she call?

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#### Team relationships - Part 2

- ☐ What do we consider healthy friendships, and how do we encourage them?
  - ❖ Male, female, single, married?
  - ❖ How do we encourage friendship between marrieds and singles? Will there be time without children?
  - ❖ How do we guard against unhealthy relationships on the team?
- ☐ Does our team have policies, guidelines, or understandings regarding dating?
  - ❖ Dating other team members, other missionaries, members of the host culture?
- ☐ What do we see as appropriate ways of expressing our maleness or femaleness?
- ☐ How much freedom and/or expectation do we have to hold each other accountable? How much input do we want or expect from each other?
- ☐ Realizing that marriage and parenthood touch deeply held values and desires, and realizing that different people have very different and very strongly held feelings in these areas:
  - ❖ How can we avoid assumptions and address these topics in a sensitive way?
- ☐ What do you wish your teammates understood about you?

## #2.3 Team Development - Discussion Guide

### Questions to consider by every cross-cultural ministry team

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#### Living in the host culture - Part 1

- ☐ What are the cultural perceptions or expectations regarding singleness?
  - ❖ In general?
  - ❖ In relation to maturity and responsibility?
  - ❖ Independence and living arrangements?
  - ❖ Assumptions or confusion regarding sexual orientation?
  - ❖ Is there a difference between the broader culture and the Christian culture?
- ☐ What are the cultural perceptions or expectations regarding marriage, regarding parenting, regarding men and women?
- ☐ Are obligations and expectations different for singles and married persons in this culture?
  - ❖ In the family – nuclear and family of origin?
  - ❖ In the church?
- ☐ Some cultures do not allow women or singles to perform certain functions (negotiations, travel, etc.); and in some areas it is not safe or wise to do certain things alone.
  - ❖ How will our team address these situations and ensure that every member can accomplish needed tasks and has appropriate protection?
- ☐ How will we ensure that all members can achieve the housing situation that is most beneficial for them?
  - ❖ Alone or sharing accommodation
  - ❖ Adequate resources and freedom
  - ❖ Do we believe any two singles can or should be able to live together?

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#### Living in the host culture - Part 2

- ☐ What are the cues in this culture that signal sexual purity or availability? (e.g., eye contact, dress, posture, touch, gestures)
- ☐ How do we plan to integrate into the culture?
- ☐ What is the difference between attraction and lust?
- ☐ What behaviors or practices are considered improper or unacceptable?
  - ❖ By our team / mission
  - ❖ Within our host culture
- ☐ How is our team culture similar to and different from our host culture?
- ☐ What would our team need to do differently to exemplify value and respect of every individual, regardless of marital status?
  - ❖ How do we affirm the Bible's high value of both marriage and singleness?
  - ❖ How do we model spiritual family to a watching world?

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#### Team ministry

- ☐ What is our vision for ministry?
- ☐ What level of risk or danger do we consider to be necessary, acceptable, or unacceptable?
  - ❖ With regard to all personnel, men and women, marrieds and singles, children?
  - ❖ In ministry, travel, living conditions or situations, isolation?
- ☐ Do we have a clear strategy for reaching out to the single population in our host culture?
  - ❖ For reaching out to those outside the majority culture, or the historical majority in the culture or church?
- ☐ Approximately how many hours per week (on the average) is each team member expected to be doing work/ministry related activities?
  - ❖ Will all of this time be spent doing “team related” ministry, or will some members count other ministries as part of their work time?
  - ❖ Does being single or married, male or female, with or without children make any difference?
- ☐ What is each team member expected to contribute to the team and ministry?
- ☐ What is our plan for vacation time and staying healthy?
  - ❖ How much freedom do we have to travel or be absent from ministry?
- ☐ What are the unique advantages and ministry opportunities in this culture?
  - ❖ For singles or marrieds?
  - ❖ For those with or without children?

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### Team roles and responsibilities

- ☐ How do we plan team meetings and activities to consider every member's marital or family situation?
- ☐ Do all groups within our membership have equal voice in meetings and decisions?
- ☐ Do we recognize the unique advantages and challenges of each person and each situation?
  - ❖ As a single person, do I believe life is easier for those who are married (because of shared workload, emotional and social support, help with decisions and planning, etc.)?
  - ❖ Do I believe that married couples talk about everything or always have someone to talk to?
  - ❖ As a married person, do I believe life is easier for the singles (because of less responsibilities for spouse and children, greater flexibility and autonomy, etc.)?
- ☐ How do we distribute ministry and leadership roles and responsibilities?
  - ❖ Does marital or parental status affect assignment of team roles?
  - ❖ Are there roles for which singles are either preferred or not considered?
  - ❖ Are there roles for which married individuals with children are either preferred or not considered?
  - ❖ Are there roles for which married individuals without children are either preferred or not considered?

## #2.7 Team Development - Discussion Guide

### Questions to consider by ministry team leaders

Adapted from Alice Hatch, Liz Meiners, Paul Meiners, MTW (Mission to the World); used by permission.

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## Suggestions:

- Thoughtfully & prayerfully consider each question
  - Discuss with team members and other team leaders
  - Seek feedback to identify blind spots
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- ☐ How have we recently shown that we value each team member of every marital status?
- ☐ As a team are we using all members' gifts well, serving, appreciating and listening to all members?
  - ❖ Are we making good use of the unique abilities of each one?
- ☐ Have we been careful to get input from each team member on recent team decisions?
  - ❖ How did we do that?
- ☐ Are we providing each person a good balance of safety and freedom?
- ☐ Is their personal time protected and encouraged, or is it threatened?
- ☐ Have we recently encouraged couples and singles to welcome each other into family life without presuming upon each other?
- ☐ Do we recruit with mutual openness about our expectations of each other?
- ☐ How have we provided for pastoral care for the singles on our team?
- ☐ Is there a third party or team evaluation tool we can use to check our perceptions?