

GIVE IT UP!

By Kate Koski

Objective:

Participants will be able to state how it feels to give up something of themselves in order to make a life in a new country. In a broader sense, participants experience transition and will be able to state qualities of loss and gain as they go through the transition and move toward belonging.

Materials:

- A bowl of PayDay, Power or Gold candy bars: one for each person at a table.
- A bowl of “Lifesaver” candies for each table: enough so that each person could have sixteen.
- One piece of paper for every person

Time: 45 – 60 minutes

Number of Participants: 2 to 200

Instructions:

Ask participants to fold their papers and tear them so that they end up with 8 pieces of paper.

On their papers, ask them to write down the following: one per piece of paper

- Two skills that they possess
- Two values that they hold
- Two people they are close to – not immediate family
- Two activities which are meaningful to them or two projects that they are working on

Tell them that these are now their identity papers – (If time, have them turn to a neighbor and introduce themselves using their “identity papers”)

Then tell them to relax, close their eyes and listen to their story. Read the story to participants.

When the story is finished, use the following discussion questions to deepen the learning:

- Think about the various stages of the story. How did you feel at Arrival, Job, Language, Housing, and All Or Nothing?
- Which stage was the most difficult for you?
- Which aspects of your identify were easiest and most difficult to give up?
- What surprised you about any of the choices you made?
- What interesting things did you see other people doing?

- How are these choices similar to choices you've had to make when going to a new culture?
- If you were to do this simulation again, what would you do differently?
- How is this activity similar to when a new person comes to your organization or team?
- How might you react differently when someone new comes to your “culture?”
- What advice would you give to someone going to another culture or coming to your culture?

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Give It Up!

You live in a country in which environmental changes have triggered a sudden ice age; within three months, your area will be entirely covered with ice; no human or other living creature will be able to survive. Don't worry about the science of it; it's true. It has already happened in Canada and people have had to flee there to other parts of the world.

Your government has made arrangements for you to emigrate to a country south of the equator. You and your family are leaving immediately. You are very careful to pack the belongings that are most precious to you – especially your identity papers. You wonder how you are going to survive, but you know that you'll die if you stay here.

ARRIVAL:

As you arrive on the shores of your new country, you are a little disconcerted. Everything is so different – the weather, the foliage, the look of the people, the language – everything! You wonder how far you'll get with your identity papers here. In fact, you realize that if you are going to adjust, you are going to have to give something of your identity up. So, you have that opportunity now. Give up one of your identity papers and in exchange, you may receive two lifesavers toward a better life in your new country.

JOB:

You are now ensconced in Tent City – the residence of those who have fled from North Country. You realize you are going to have to get a job. At home you were a professional and decidedly middle class or above, but here you don't speak the language, and the skills and experience you bring aren't usable in this country. You know you are going to have to give up at least two of your identity papers in order to get even a menial job but survival is important.

You can decide whether you want to:

- get a menial job and give up one identity paper
- get a slightly better job and give up two identities –
- or don't work, living on the welfare of your new country and give up no identity.

For each identity paper you give up, please take two lifesavers: these represent the benefits you need to survive in your new country.

LANGUAGE:

You realize you will never become comfortable in this foreign country unless you learn the language. You also know that language is identity and you are reluctant to give up your own language for this new one. You have a choice:

- You can learn to speak the language well and give up 2 of your identity papers
- You can learn just enough to get along and give up only one of your identity papers
- Or you can only speak your own language and give up none.

For each identity paper you give up, please take two lifesavers: these represent the benefits you need to survive in your new country.

HOUSING:

Those of you who are working decide to get housing rather than continuing to live in Tent City. You find an apartment that you can afford and you are ready to sign a lease. But the apartment owner is reluctant to rent to you because you are so foreign. You look funny, you talk funny, you even walk funny. You quickly realize you are going to have to give up something more of yourself to even be able to find local housing. You have a choice here:

- You can move into an apartment you really like and give up 2 identity papers or
- You can move into a lesser apartment and give up only one identity paper.
- Or you can stay in Tent City and give up none of your identity.

Give up one and take two lifesavers – or give up two and take four lifesavers – give up none and you get nothing in return.

ALL OR NOTHING:

Time has passed and some of you are making a passable, though not exciting, life. You still don't speak the language fluently, your job is boring, you have a few local friends, but you don't get together much and you don't have much say over your life. You live day to day surviving.

The government of your new country makes a decree. All newcomers must make a decision about how they are going to live. Either give up all of your old identity and have the full benefits of life in your new country or maintain what you've got. There will be no further chances to exchange who you are for lifesaving opportunities. You have a major decision: how much do you want to give up?

Those of you with between 12 and 16 lifesavers are eligible for the full life in your new country and may take a "Power Par" (Or Payday or Gold).

Please turn to your neighbor and introduce yourself telling them who you are now.