



BELONGING CULTURE

Values, Identities, and Community Agreements

ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED



90 minutes – 110 minutes

OVERVIEW

This session highlights how our values and identities can influence how we experience belonging and inclusivity at any given time. In this session, your service year corps members will be guided through a reflection of their individual and collective values and identities. The session will conclude by co-creating community agreements for the service year that are supportive and inclusive of one another.

LEARNING OUTCOMES



By the end of this session, your corps members will be able to:

- Understand the importance of inclusive spaces that foster a belonging environment
- Understand the differences and similarities of their personal and collective values
- Identify and reflect on identities and factors that influence and shape identities
- Create community agreements that will be used throughout their service year experience

TRAINING SESSION RESOURCES

Before getting started with this training session, you should review the Preparation section below as well as familiarize yourself with this guide's Session Script. This session should be presented directly to corps members using this downloadable presentation:

- **Downloadable Presentation:** [*B1: Training Session: Values, Identities, and Community Agreements*](#)

The downloadable presentation includes speaker notes for program staff who are facilitating this session directly to corps members, making it easy for staff to walk through the presentations efficiently and effectively.

PREPARATION

Trainer Expectations

Throughout this training session, trainers will be asked to facilitate the group through multiple activities, small group discussions, and full group discussions. Some of the topics may feel challenging for your corps members to engage with, and they may not want to engage in conversations on these topics at first. Part of fostering a belonging environment is making the space equal with corps members and program staff. Therefore, we recommend you, as the facilitator, complete the activities in advance and prepare responses to the questions posed to the corps members throughout the session as a strategy to help spark conversation if needed. Before beginning this session, review the Session Outline & Script below and ensure familiarity with the content to be prepared to facilitate activities and answer potential questions from corps members.

	TIME ESTIMATE
	LEARNING OUTCOMES
	VIRTUAL MODIFICATION
	ACTIVITY
	HELPFUL TIP

Necessary Materials

- Presentation/chart paper or a whiteboard for values and community agreement activities
- Pens
- Post-it notes
- Markers
- One printed copy for each corps member:
 - Values Worksheet ([B1: Resource: Examples of Values](#))
 - Identity Map Worksheet ([B1: Resource: Identity Map Template](#))
 - [B0: Glossary](#)

Virtual Modifications

If you plan to facilitate the training session in a virtual environment, we recommend the following modifications:

- Use a whiteboard that can be displayed on camera or share your screen and work in a word or google document
- If you have group break out sessions, set up the groups in advance via your video conferencing software
- Don't forget to send an email with any necessary handouts in advance of your remote session

SESSION OUTLINE


The following outline walks you through what to expect throughout this session and how to prepare.


I. Belonging Sessions Overview


In this section you will introduce the Belonging sessions that you will engage in with your corps members and provide an overview for this initial session. You will also distribute the [B0: Glossary](#).

II. Values

In this section you will introduce the concept of values and learn how to understand the differences and similarities of personal and collective values

ACTIVITY: Our Personal Values - full group discussion 


ACTIVITY: What Makes You, You? - small & full group discussion 

ACTIVITY: Our Individual Values - worksheet & full group discussion 

Preparation needed: Complete the Values Activity in advance of the session - start by circling the top 10 values on the [B1: Resource: Examples of Values](#) worksheet, then reduce to the top five, and then the top 3. The focus should be on what values are most important to you.

Necessary materials: This activity requires the corps members to have the [B1: Resource: Examples of Values](#) worksheet, 3 Post-it notes, and a marker. They will ultimately place their Post-it notes on a piece of chart paper. That should be prepared in advance and have the word VALUES on the top of it.

NOTE: If you are conducting this session virtually, a word cloud is a great way to visually represent the group's values. [This website](#) helps you create word clouds for free (spend a few minutes on the site before the session to be comfortable using it).

ACTIVITY: Our Collective Values - full group discussion & journaling 

III. Identities - in this section you will explore and reflect on identities and factors that influence and shape identities

ACTIVITY: Our Identities - full group discussion



ACTIVITY: Identity Mapping - worksheet



Preparation needed: Create your Identity Map in advance. You will be prompting your group to create their own Identity Map using the [B1: Resource: Identity Map Template](#). You should create yours in advance to give them an example. Here is an example for you to refer to as you create yours. B1: Resource: Example of Identity Map

Necessary materials: Each corps member will need a copy of this worksheet - [B1: Resource: Identity Map Template](#).

ACTIVITY: How Do Values & Identities Go Together - full group discussion



IV. Community Agreements - in this section you will develop a shared understanding for how your group will interact with one another

ACTIVITY: What Are Community Agreements? - Full group discussion



ACTIVITY: Co-Creating Community Agreements - small group work



Necessary materials: The corps members will break into small groups and create community agreements on chart paper. Each group will need a blank piece of chart paper and a marker. These will eventually be inputs to a full group community agreement so you will also need a blank piece of chart paper to use for a full group discussion.

Preparation needed: This [B1: Resource: Community Agreement Example](#) may be a helpful resource to review in advance of the conversation.

ACTIVITY: Accountability - full group discussion



V. Close out - you will lead a close out discussion to end the session.

SESSION SCRIPT

The following script should be used for presenting this session directly to your corps members. It is recommended that you review this script before beginning the session. Italicized prompts are intended to be guidance for you as the trainer rather than part of the script you will communicate to your corps members.

Slide #1

Welcome to our first training session – *Values, Identity, and Community Agreements*. Today we will work together to: understand the importance of inclusive spaces that foster a belonging environment, understand the differences and similarities of our personal and collective values, identify and reflect on identities and factors that influence and shape identities, create community agreements that will be used throughout your service year experience.

Take this opportunity at the top of the session to distribute the [B0: Glossary](#) to your service year corps members and have them review the key terms for the Session B1 so they are able to become familiar with the terminology used throughout the session.

Slide #2

Our agenda for today is to:

- Review the sessions that will guide our journey into understanding and practicing belonging in our time together this year
- Explore our personal and core values
- Examine our collective values
- Understand the concept of “Moral Compass”
- Name and reflect on our identities and what factors influence or shape those identities
- Create community agreements
- And then we’ll wrap up

Slide #3

Before we dive into today’s session on values, identities, and community agreements, it’s important to understand how all the belonging sessions come together. Together, they create inclusive spaces that facilitate belonging for all corps members. Just one of these alone does not create the conditions that all of these sessions create together. Creating the conditions for all people to feel they belong is multi-faceted and the belonging sessions combine to bring the necessary pieces together for everyone to feel they can show up as their authentic self.

I am about to give a statement. As I talk, consider how this makes you feel, any questions you have, and what resonates with you or doesn't.

Statement: "As human beings, we are all genetically wired to seek places and feelings of belonging through our relationships and the spaces we are part of. Creating a space of belonging – one where we feel affirmed, heard, seen, and supported for who we genuinely are as a person and do not feel unsafe or uncomfortable being our authentic selves – is impactful. It biologically creates the conditions in our brains to feel safe, and when we feel safe we are more readily able to engage, to learn, and to persevere because we feel included and centered. There truly is power in the feeling of belonging – not only does it signal to our brain that an environment is safe and welcoming, but it also is scientifically proven to increase our own capacity to learn, to perform tasks, and to support others in feeling a sense of belonging as well. And when we feel like we belong to a space, we are less likely to leave or abandon that space when challenges arise because we do have a sense of ownership in the space, and we are more likely to have a positive perception of the space as a whole."

How did this statement make you feel? What resonated or didn't with you? All of these reasons are why it is critical to do the work of belonging and understand how it supports us in achieving goals.

The six sessions you see listed are the trainings that will guide our journey into understanding and practicing belonging in our time together this year. Are there any questions before we begin?

Slide #4

As we go through the sessions, here are some ways to engage. We will revisit these at the top of every session as a reminder.

- Take note of terms and concepts that resonate with you during the workshop. These can be reviewed later for further reflection
- Consider your lived experiences and how they influence your understanding of the social identities we will be discussing.
- Stay open. Some of the information we share might challenge your ideas and that's OK.
- If you are more knowledgeable on a topic, challenge yourself to do some deeper reflection.
- There is always room to learn and grow.

Any questions before we dive into today's session on values, identity, and community agreements?

Pause for questions.

Slide #5

Let's start today's session with values.

Slide #6



We will begin our conversation on values by first reading this quote by Mahatma Gandhi (*pronounce like: Muh·haat·muh Gaan·dee*).

"Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words. Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior. Keep your behavior positive because your behavior becomes your habits. Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values. Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny."

When you hear this quote, what comes to mind for you? What do you think he is saying about the influence on one's values? *Summarize responses after share outs.*

Be prepared to share your own thoughts on the quote first if nobody initially volunteers to share out. After sharing, ask for volunteers again. You only have a few minutes here so if you aren't getting a lot of engagement, it's okay to move on.



If this activity is being done virtually, you can also ask the participants to share their responses in the chat box, and ask if anyone wants to unmute to talk more about what they wrote.

Slide #7



In small groups, you are going to take about 5 minutes with each other to discuss the following question: How would you respond if someone asked, "who are you and what makes you, you?"

Break into small groups for discussion. Start a timer for 5 minutes.

Bring the group back together and start the conversation: I would like to share something that makes me, me. Share your answer to the question.

Then prompt the group: Is there anyone who would like to share with the full group what you shared about who you are and what makes you, you? Did anyone in your group share anything with you about who they are that resonated or connected with you?

Summarize corps members' responses and identify trends, themes, or connections you're noticing and transition to the next slide.

HELPFUL TIP



You should be prepared to answer the question too. Part of belonging is making the space equal with corps members and program staff answering the same prompts. It will help build a team together.

Slide #8

The next two slides summarize what values are and how they help guide us through the different decisions and paths we take in life. So what are values?

- Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide attitudes and actions.
- They help us determine what is important for us to grow and develop.
- Values are that which is good, desirable, or worthwhile.
- The decisions we make are reflective of our values and beliefs.
- Example values are: Dependability, Reliability, Loyalty, Open-Mindedness, Honesty, Family, Fairness, Faith, etc.

Remember back to the exercise we just did on what makes you, you. Think about the value or values that guide you and write them down. Next we will talk about how our values then guide us through decisions and paths.

Slide #9

Values are important because they show us what we hold to be true and they also guide our actions both consciously and unconsciously. The common term for how values guide us is called our “moral compass.” A moral compass is a set of personal values that guide one’s decision making. Each of our moral compasses have some similar characteristics. The values that drive moral compass reside deep inside each of us and tend to be the values that are deeper in meaning to us than our other values. They have been formed over our lifetime and continue to develop as we grow.

How this impacts a person can be summed up by a quote from Michelle Obama: “I have learned that as long as I hold fast to my beliefs and values – and follow my own moral compass – then the only expectations I need to live up to are my own.”

Think about the deepest values that drive your moral compass. What do you think those are? The next exercise will help identify your values and the ones that are core to your moral compass.

Slide #10

Now, let us focus on exploring our individual and collective values.

Slide #11

We will now begin an activity to define our individual values. You will have 4-5 minutes to identify your top 10 personal values from the list provided to you. If you have a value or values that are not on this list, you can write those in as well.

Hand out a physical copy of the values list and 3 post-its. Have them put the post-its to the side and prompt them to review the worksheet and circle their top 10 values from the list. Set a timer for 5 minutes.

Make sure everyone has selected their 10 values before transitioning to the next slide.

Slide #12

Now that you have identified your top 10 values, remove 5 values from the list you created to narrow your list of values down to 5 values that are important to you.

Give them about 2 minutes to narrow down. Ask the large group how they are doing with the process as they are narrowing it down. Make sure everyone is down to 5 values before going to the next slide.

Slide #13

Finally, remove 2 values from your list and leave just your 3 deepest values.

Give them about a minute to narrow down. Make sure everyone is at 3 before moving on.

Slide #14

We are now going to share our top 3 values in order to get a sense of what the collective values are in this space. Please write your top 3 values on the post-it notes – 1 per post-it – and place them on the chart paper.

Instruct every corps member to write an individual value on the Post-It (1 value per Post-It) and place them on the chart paper. Once everyone has placed their values on the chart paper, organize and group them. The key is to look at everyone's values. Find the most common/repeated/similar ones and group them together, and keep an eye on others that seem to be a little different.



Have participants type their 3 deep values into the chat. As mentioned in the session prep, you can use this information to create a Word Cloud of all the values as they're placed in the chat. If you don't have access to the Word Cloud software, you can paste them into a google or word document on a shared screen.

Summarize what values seem to be emerging as the most common values to the group. Pay attention to values that are not exactly the same but are similar to or complement each other.

These collective values of the group will help inform how we engage with each other throughout the year, which we will talk about shortly when we set community agreements.



Slide #15

Let's take the next 10-15 minutes and debrief this exercise and hear what you all thought as you went along. I am going to go question by question and take about 2 minutes each as a group to answer them.

1. Why did you choose the values you chose? Who wants to share?
2. How did it feel to cross off values? Was it hard? Why or why not? Who wants to share?
3. Do you live your values? Can you think of times when your actions have and have not reflected your values? Who wants to share?
4. Have your values changed as you have gotten older? Who wants to share?
5. Looking at the collective values in this group, what stands out to you about who we are? Who wants to share?

Now, let's take the last couple minutes and journal or jot down any reflections you have about your values, your top 3 values that are your moral compass, and the collective values in the room. You do not need to write anything extensive, just a couple thoughts. These will be valuable as you continue your journey during your service year and beyond. This is part of what makes you, you.

Allow for a few minutes of reflection time. When it seems like most or all are done, transition to the next slide.

Slide #16

Now, let's transition from reflecting on our values to spending some time to reflect on our identities.

Slide #17

"We are nothing but bricks from our cultural molds." -Bangambiki Habyarimana (*Learn how to pronounce this name [here](#).*)

"Looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what you are so that you more wisely build the future." -Paulo Freire (*Learn how to pronounce this name [here](#).*)

Prompt the group to share their thinking about these quotes: What do you think these quotes have to do with the topic of exploring our identities? Let's talk about what influences our identities.

Be prepared to share your own thoughts on the quote first if nobody initially volunteers to share out. After sharing, ask for volunteers again.

Understand that one's identity is shaped by the society we find ourselves in. We are shaped by our past and how the past shapes the current society. It doesn't mean that everything we are is shaped by the past, but it is a big influence on the identity we occupy.

Slide #18

What influences our identities? Ask for volunteers to share examples about what might influence our identities.



If virtual, they can also write a response to this in the chat box.



Be prepared to share an example from your own perspective if nobody volunteers, then ask again for someone to share. Some examples of what influences our identities might be: our families, our friends, our hobbies, etc.

Summarize any connections in the share outs and transition to the next slide.

Slide #19

In addition to the different influences on our identities, our identities are complex and are made up of many components.

- There is our given identity. The aspects of our identity that are given to us and we have no control over (e.g. birthplace, first language, age, ethnicity).
- There is our chosen identity. The aspects of our identity that we have chosen. These are often things that might spark excitement in us and/or bring us happiness (e.g. activities, where we live, non-familial social groups, hobbies, and interests).
- And lastly, our core identity. The aspects of our identity at our core, who we believe we are, and how we define ourselves. So how does this all come together, to make us, us?

Slide #20

We can use an identity map to see how these pieces make us, us.

Make sure everyone has a copy of the handout.



Ask corps members to use a pen and notebook to draw a replica of the 3 rings on the slide and fill-in their identities.

Using the identity map handout provided to you with the 3 rings labeled “given, chosen, and core,” begin to input your identities into the corresponding ring, based on the descriptions of the components of those identities that we discussed a moment ago. For each ring, think about the following questions when considering about the identities within them:

- Why is this part of my identity?
- When did this become part of my identity?
- Who in my life knows most, or all, of my identities?
- Who in my life doesn’t really know about any of my identities?



Share your identity map in advance of the exercise as an example before they begin.

You have 8-10 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers here, this is about mapping your identity using these indicators. Any questions?

- *Set a timer for 10 minutes. Bring the group back after 10 minutes for a debrief.*
- *Ask for 2-3 volunteers to share their map*
- *Ask follow-up questions using list of questions on the slide to help guide the conversation*
- *Summarize themes and learnings about the group then transition to next slide*

Slide #21

Let’s discuss as a group:

- How do you think values and identity go together?
- What are similarities and differences between the two terms?
- How do these two terms interact with one another?
- How do values and identity make you, you?

Try to get more than a couple people to answer; and if people are stuck, share what you think.

It's important to understand that values and chosen identity can change over-time as we grow and learn. Additionally, values will impact chosen identity and core identity and, at the same time, our core identity will influence our values. They go hand in hand to make us, us.

Slide #23

What are community agreements? They are agreements co-created by a group (community) as a shared or mutual understanding for how individuals in a group setting will agree to interact with one another. They are based on being supportive and inclusive of all community members. Community agreements are also a useful tool for setting expectations when challenges and conflicts may arise between participants.



Slide #24

Our values and identities will help influence how we can be in community with one another throughout the year. We are going to be together a lot over the next year and I want to ensure that this space is inclusive and meets the needs of everyone.

Read one question at a time and facilitate full group conversation about community agreements:

- Can you think of some examples of community agreements?
- How can community agreements be important or useful to our group this year?



Make sure you have examples of community agreements for the group to start the conversation if you don't have any volunteers. Some common ones include "be respectful" "use I statements," "assume positive intent," and "own your impact."



Slide #25

For this next conversation, we are going to break into small groups and create community agreements. You will have 5-6 minutes to create your community agreements that your whole group agrees on. When creating your agreements, think about the values and identity conversations from earlier and how they can help us to uphold and sustain the proposed community agreements.

Break into small groups (3-4 per group). Have them write their community agreements on a large piece of chart paper. Set a timer for 5 minutes.



If virtual, encourage your corps members to write community agreement suggestions into the chat box.

After 5 minutes, bring the groups back together.

Slide #26

Now we are going to review each others' community agreements. The most important part of community agreements is that they are shared agreements. So, in a moment we are going to start passing community agreements clockwise until each group has reviewed the other groups' community agreements. I will set a timer for 5 minutes and when your group gets a new community agreement, you will read through it as a group, then put checkmarks next to the agreements your group thinks should be included in a final community agreement. Once you are done with one agreement, pass that agreement clockwise and review the next group's agreement. Keep going until you receive your group's community agreement back. Note on your group's community agreement, the top 3-5 agreements agreed to by the other groups.

HELPFUL TIP



If this is being done in-person, instead of passing the agreements clockwise, you could also do a gallery walk; they can move to each piece of chart paper as a group and write a check mark next to the agreement.

Now, let's have each group share out the top 3-5 agreements agreed to by the other groups to create our full community agreements for all of us. As we go through, if there is a duplicate, we will just put a +1 to the existing agreement and write down any new ones.

Now that we have all of them listed, what does everyone think? Are these agreements that everyone can abide by? Are there any of these that you want to discuss?

Make sure everyone can commit to these and there are no issues with these agreements; take the time to talk them through and make sure you have a final list before moving forward. Pay attention to the agreements that seem to be most popular, combine where there is overlap/similarities, summarize and list the top 6-15 agreements that emerge (depending on group size). Be okay with having a discussion if people want to include anything extra or clarify why certain ones are listed



If virtual, collect the suggestions from the chat box and pull them into a google or word document with your screen shared. You will need to sort the suggestions in real time and encourage your team to engage in a conversation about these suggestions to reach agreement on the community agreement.

Slide #27

Now we are going to talk about how we can keep each other accountable to these community agreements.

Prompt a group discussion: How might we hold ourselves accountable to the agreements we have listed in a way that is fair, inclusive, and restorative?



Make sure the group understands the terms fair, inclusive, and restorative. Fair is in accordance with the rules or standards. Inclusive is not excluding any of the parties or groups involved in something. Restorative is having the ability to restore health, strength, or a feeling of well-being.

We are going to write these down so we can determine ways to remain accountable to one another as we move forward.

Keep a list on chart paper or in a document of all the ways your group says they want to be accountable to one another. Share this with everyone after the session.

Slide #28

As we close out, let's consider: How might we use today's values, identity, and community agreements throughout the year? How can this build inclusivity within our group?



Use the chat box for virtual sessions.

Summarize any connections or themes and transition to the next slide.

Slide #29

Thank you for exploring your values and identities with us in this session today and using what we learned about ourselves and each other to shape our community agreements. We are excited to continue our service year journey together. Does anyone have anything else to share? Please take some time to journal and reflect on this session.