



WINDS OF CHANGE – A Refugee Education Simulation

15 minutes

This activity explores the emotional consequences of becoming a refugee.

LEADING THE ACTIVITY:

Ask participants to list the five things they value most. The list can include people, material items such as a home, health, etc. If time is limited, this exercise can be done mentally, but it is more effective to make a tangible list.

Invite them to share some of the items they've listed.

Now, ask them if they had to give one of those things up, what would it be? Cross it off the list. If they had to give up something else, what would it be? Cross that off the list. Repeat the question/action one more time.

Ask them to share what they eliminated. How did it feel to do that? If time allows, ask when they have had to give up something precious in their lives. Where did they find support in that process?

REFLECTION (you can either read this or paraphrase):

As human beings sharing this world, we all seek our own ways of creating a secure environment. Due to circumstances beyond our control, some of us find ourselves facing situations that we could never have imagined.

This is especially true for the 70 million people who have been uprooted from their homes because of war, poverty, human rights abuses or natural disaster. 25.9million of them are refugees, living in another country; the rest are known as IDPs, Internally Displaced Persons. All are struggling to make a new life in an unfamiliar place. All have had to give up much of what is most precious to them simply to survive.

It can be hard for those of us accustomed to our peaceful lives to imagine what it must be like to be a refugee. And yet as the UN High Commission on Refugees said, "Refugees are just like you and me, except they have nothing." What would it be like to be a refugee?