



MOUNTAIN VIEW FELLOWSHIP

Cristocentro | Honduras

March 2026 Team Handbook

Project

Project Objectives

The goal of this trip is for members of Mountain View Fellowship to show the love and compassion of Jesus Christ to the community of Nueva Florida and to continue to build relationships with the Honduran people.

The team will be involved in construction and outreach opportunities such as children's ministry and home visitations.



Healing Nations Team Leaders

Your Healing Nations leader will be working with your group to guide your involvement in international compassionate ministry and will walk alongside you in trip planning. If you have any questions regarding the project or trip, you can direct them to the team leader Pete Krull.

They will travel with you to coordinate the daily schedule while in Honduras and manage the logistics and administrative details associated with the project.

Zak Harris works in Partner Engagement. They are working directly with your team leaders, team engagement, and the Honduran partner to prepare a tailor-made project for your team.

Suzy Wiebe works in Team Engagement. She will oversee and administrate all of your trip preparations in order to get you to and from Honduras safely. She is working directly with your team leaders and the partner to prepare your trip.

Lodging and meals

The team will be staying at Hostal del Valle, a hostel located in San Pedro Sula and about 30-45 mins away from the church. At the hostel, there are individual rooms that the team will be split up into, and each room has a bathroom with hot showers. The hostel also has a pool and group meeting area. Breakfast will be provided by hostel, lunches provided by the partner, and dinners a mix of restaurant and local cooking. Food will be a mix of familiar and local cuisine.

Weather

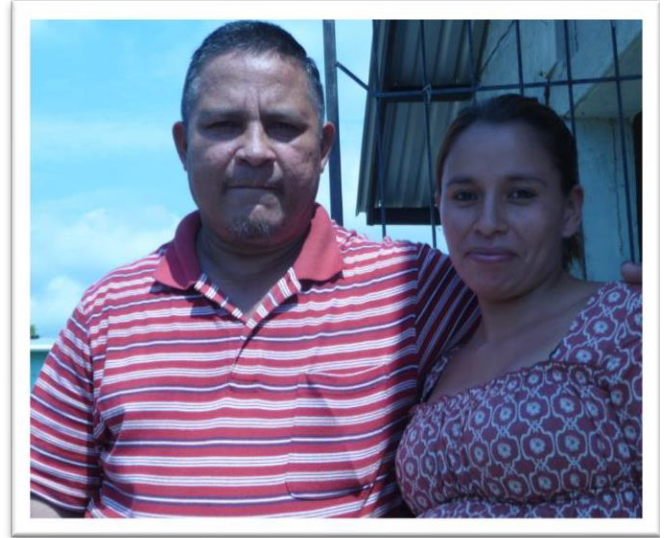
Honduras's climate varies according to altitude. The coastal regions and the northeast are hot throughout the year with an average temperature of 77°F sometimes rising to 98°F. Generally, nights are clear year-round. In higher altitudes, near the center of the country, the rainy season, running from May to September, is characterized by clear skies followed by abundant rainfall in the afternoons and evenings.

Cristo Centro Nueva Florida (Peñasquitos)

Mission

Cristo Centro Honduras is part of a worldwide network of churches in 24 nations. Since its inception in 1985, it has grown from its birthplace in San Ignacio to plant daughter churches in the heart of some of the poorest areas of San Pedro Sula. Their vision is to reach out socially to all without discrimination and to restore lives holistically, guided by Luke 4:18 - 19:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”



Background

Pastor Mario Arriaga Jimenez serves in Nueva Florida, a very impoverished community in northern Honduras. His aim is to see wholistic transformation throughout the community by providing a spiritual presence and meeting physical needs. The church runs a gospel-based children’s program daily, with sponsorship opportunities through His Hands For Honduras, another Healing Nations partner.

Your Trip

Planning Checklist

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check expiration date of passport (passport cannot expire within 6 months of departure from Honduras) | Today |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for passport if necessary | Today |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopy two copies of page 2 and 3 of your passport <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Send one copy to the Healing Nations office (by mail or e-mail to teams@healingnations.net)> Pack one copy in your carry-on | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit doctor | 6 Weeks Prior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receive immunizations | 4 Week Prior (or more) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase US cash | 1 Week Prior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leave itinerary with family | Prior to Departure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leave provided emergency contact cards with family | Prior to Departure |

Financial Info

The trip cost is approximately \$2,000-2,500 USD*.

This is subject to final bookings.

**We endeavor to keep the team cost as affordable as possible. This price is based on our best budget estimates; however, this price is subject to change in the event of unforeseen fluctuations in trip costs.*

Included:

- > Flights
- > Insurance –baggage and trip cancellation, if humanitarian fare is not available (Note: *Baggage insurance coverage is minimal; please keep any items of value in your carry-on baggage.*)
- > Airport and transit fees
- > Food, lodging and transportation within Honduras
- > All project related expenses in-country for your team

Not Included:

- > Souvenirs & tourist activities
- > Church offerings
- > Meals while traveling (in airports, during layovers, etc.)
- > Immunizations (Approx. \$100 - \$200)



Project Itinerary

This schedule is a very tentative overview of what may be happening and is not set in stone.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Thursday, March 12 th	Travel to Honduras
Friday, March 13 th	Work with field partner
Saturday, March 14 th	Work with field partner
Sunday, March 15 th	Attend church, community visits, time with field partner
Monday, March 16 th	Tourism day
Tuesday, March 17 th	Work with field partner
Wednesday, March 18 th	Work with field partner
Thursday, March 19 th	Travel home

Country



Facts about Honduras

Area:	43,278 sq mi
Capital:	Tegucigalpa
Population:	9.46 Million
Country Code:	504
Famous For:	Mayan Sites
Head of State:	President Iris Xiomara Castro de Zelaya
Money:	US \$1 = about 24.71 Lempira (HNL); US dollars readily accepted (no marks, tears, or major folds)
Time:	GMT minus 6 hours, minus 5 hours in daylight savings
Visas:	North American citizens need only a valid passport. Passport cannot expire within 6 months of expected departure.

Information about Honduras

Present Realities

Honduras is the second-fastest-growing Central American economy, COVID-19 and two hurricanes crippled that activity (CIA factbook). Today, more than half of all Hondurans live below the poverty line and per capita income is one of the lowest in the region. Poverty rates are higher among rural and indigenous people.

Education

Children from families belonging to the wealthiest 20 percent are more likely to attend secondary school than children from the poorest 20 percent of families. Public education is free, but parents are responsible for books, uniforms, supplies, and transportation; making it difficult for poorer families to afford to send their children to school. The literacy rate is reported at 83 percent, but it is hard to calculate due to enrollment issues. It is reported that the primary enrollment rate is 97 percent, but completion rate is hovering around 40 percent.

Health

According to the World Health Organization, access to medical care is quite low due to a small number of practicing medical personnel as compared to surrounding countries. Many Hondurans – specifically indigenous people-- lack regular access to health services.

Malnutrition continues to be an issue faced by many Hondurans and affects the children in the region. Diarrhea, fever, and Dengue are primary issues faced by the people in the region.

The Honduran Language

Spanish words & Phrases

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
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The Simple Stuff

Yes	Si	SEE
No	No	NOH
Please	Por favor	Pore fah-VORE
Thank you	Gracias	GRAH-see-ahs
You're Welcome	De nada	De-NAW-da
No, thank you	No, gracias	No GRAH-see-ahs
Sorry	Lo siento	Loh see-EHN-toh

Greetings

Good morning	Buenos dias	BWEHnos DHEE ahs
Good afternoon	Buenas tardes	BWEHnahs TAHRdh ehs
Good evening	Buenas noches	BWEHnahs NO chehs
Good bye	Adios	Ah dhee OHS
Hello/Hi	Hola	OH lah
See you later	Hasta luego	AH-stah LWEH-go
What is your name?	Como se llama?	KOH-moh say YAHmah
My name is...	Mi nombre es	Mee NOMBreh ehs
How are you?	Como esta usted	KOH-mo ehs-TAH OOS-THE-dh
Fine, thank you.	Muy bien, gracias	MOOay bee en GRAH see ahs

Language

Do you speak English?	Habla ingles?	AH-bla een-GLASE
I'm American.	Soy norteamericano	Soy nohr the ah meh ree KAH noh
I don't understand.	No comprendo.	No kohm-PREHN-dho
Please speak slowly.	Hable despacio por favor.	HAHbleh dhehs-PAH-see-oh, pohr fahBOHR

Family

Husband	Esposo	Ehs-POH-soh
Wife	Esposa	Ehs-POH-sah
Son	Hijo	EE-hoh
Daughter	Hija	EE-hah

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
Questions		
Where is/are...?	Donde esta/estan...?	DHOHN-dheh ehs-TAH
When?	Cuando?	KWAHNdho
Who?	Quien?	Kee-EHN
Why?	Por que?	Pohr kay
What?	Que?	Kay
How long...?	Cuanto Tiempo?	KWAHN-toh TYEHM-po
How much does it cost?	Cuanto cuesta?	KWAHN-toh KWEH-stah
How far?	A que distancia?	Ah kay dhees-Tan-syah
Can you help me?	Puede ayudarme?	PWEH-dhe ah-yoo-dh-AHR-meh
What time is it	Que hora es?	Kay OH-rah ehs
Useful Statements		
I (don't) like it	(No) me gusta	Meh GOOS-tah/No meh GOOS-tah
I don't know	No se	NOH say.
I'm hungry	Tengo hambre	TEHN-go AHM-breh
I'm thirsty	Tengo sed	TEHN-go SAY-dh
I'm tired	Estoy cansado	Ehs-TOY kahn-SAH-dho
I'm ready	Estoy listo	Ehs-TOY LEEsto
Right now	Ahora mismo	Ah OHR ah MEES mo
Just a minute	Un momento	Oon mo-MEHN toh
Come in!	Entre	EHN-treh
It's cheap	Es barato	Ehs bah-RAH-toh
It's expensive	Es caro	Ehs KAH-ro
It's cold (weather)	Hace frio	AH-say FREE-o
It's hot (weather)	Hace calor	AH-say kah-LOHR
A little	Un poco	Oon POH-ko
A lot	Mucho	MOO-cho
Tomorrow	Manana	Mah-ny-AH-nah
Next week	La semana proxima	Lah-say-MAHN-ah PROK-see-mah

Travel

Packing Guidelines

Checked Luggage

The checked luggage limit for flights is one piece not exceeding 50 lbs per bag and with a maximum linear dimension (length + width + height) of 62". Team members will be responsible to ensure their luggage is within the weight restrictions. Overweight luggage is prohibited unless cleared with your Healing Nations team leader.

Carry-on luggage

Passengers are permitted one personal item and one piece of carry-on luggage. **Keep important items, such as all travel documents, cash, identification, medications and glasses with you in your carry-on bag.** It is wise to pack a change of clothing in your carry-on in case your luggage is delayed or lost. Do not carry any sharp objects (e.g. pocket knife, scissors or nail clippers) in your carry-on, and keep all liquids/gels in containers of 3 oz or less and sealed in a zip-lock style bag no larger than 1 quart.

Liquids

The following TSA rules apply to all liquids, gels, and aerosols carried through security checkpoints:

- > All liquids, gels and aerosols must be in 3 oz or smaller containers. Larger containers that are half-full or toothpaste tubes rolled up are not allowed.
- > All liquids, gels and aerosols must be placed in a single, quart-size, zip-top, clear plastic bag. **Each traveler can use only one, quart-size, zip-top, clear plastic bag.**

There are exceptions for baby formula, breast milk, and other essential liquids, gels, and aerosols, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

Passport

A valid USA Passport is required for Americans intending to visit Honduras. The passport should be **valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected return to the USA.** There are no exceptions, this is a Honduran rule. **Please be sure to send Healing Nations a photocopy of page 2 and 3 of your passport.**

What to Bring:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| > Toiletries | > Prescription Medicine | > Work Gloves |
| > Hand Sanitizer | > Hand Wipes | > Sweatshirt for lodging |
| > Insect Repellent | > U.S. Cash (\$100-\$200) | > Camera |
| > Sunscreen | > Sunglasses | > Money Pouch |
| > Note Pad & Pen | > Rain Jacket | > Good Sun Hat |
| > Working Shoes | > Ear Plugs | > Snacks |
| > Bible | > Church Clothes | > Work clothes |
| > Photocopy of Passport | > Water Bottle | > Modest bathing suit |
| > Passport | > Spanish/English Dictionary | > Us cash (\$100-200, no \$20's) |

What Not to Bring:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| > Smart Watches | > Expensive Electronics | > Flashy/Excessive Jewelry |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|

Dress Code

While you are in Honduras, you will be representing the Lord Jesus Christ, the local church, as well as Healing Nations. We ask that you dress modestly at all times, remembering that, among the missionary community and the Honduran evangelical community, there are varying opinions on appropriate dress. Dress comfortably but conservatively.

- > While shorts are not discouraged, you won't see locals in shorts except when playing sports. All shorts should extend to the knees (men and women). Capri pants below the knees are acceptable.
- > Hondurans value looking good. Ripped or ragged clothing means you are likely an irresponsible person.
- > People never take off their shirts in public, even playing soccer in the hot sun or working in the hot sun.
- > Ladies can wear pants--no need to wear skirts unless you prefer to. Just make sure they are not too short. Capris are acceptable.
- > Ladies should wear modest tops (i.e. keep your shoulders covered, no cleavage).
- > Casual pants or shorts are recommended for your tourism day. Bring comfortable shoes as you may be doing a lot of walking.
- > Wear shoes or light hiking boots. Sandals are not a good idea. Definitely don't wear flip-flops (unless you want them for in the house or showering etc.).
- > It is always better to err on the side of conservative than risk offending people

On the Job

The following are suggestions for work clothing. Your team leader will have more specific information based on the location you will be working.

Outerwear A work hat is a must as the sun is intense even if the air is cool.

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Shirts: A shirt with a collar is recommended to keep the sun from burning your neck. T-shirts are also acceptable. No tank tops.

Pants: Jeans or other work pants are acceptable for both men and women.

Shoes: Sturdy shoes or boots are recommended for safety and comfort. Make sure your work shoes are broken in before the trip.

At Church

While in Honduras, you will be attending local church services. By following these suggestions, you should be dressed adequately for any church you will visit.

Men: Dress pants and a collared shirt.

Women: A casual dress or skirt and blouse.

A Note on Tattoos and Jewelry

In Honduras, tattoos are associated with gang membership. If you have visible tattoos, you will be asked to wear clothing that covers your tattoos for the safety of the team and church.

Multiple ear piercings are associated with a sexually active lifestyle. If you have multiple ear piercings, we ask that you remove most of your earrings during your trip. We also discourage wearing excessive jewelry.

Healing Nations Team Leader Responsibilities

Healing Nations is responsible for the comprehensive planning and execution of the team's project. Healing Nations staff or volunteers will manage and oversee all the planning and administrating for the project and the trip. In addition, they will provide resources to culturally orientate the group and prepare them for working on the field.

In-country Roles

- > Lead the team through all logistical details of traveling to and from the host country.
- > Manage all team and project finances and payments while on the field.
- > Be the liaison and point person with field partner to coordinate daily schedule and project activities, including group team leader in planning times. Healing Nations team leader is responsible for the final decisions on project activity.
- > Communicate to Healing Nations office upon arrival to host country and update tripblog as often as possible.
- > Shoot video and photos of project activity.
- > Interview team members and local people for changed-life stories.
- > Support the group team leader in providing spiritual leadership to the team, fostering interpersonal relationships, and facilitating a debrief time.
- > Ensure the daily preparation of the team for project activity, including briefing on daily schedule and assigning project tasks.
- > Work to keep the team physically healthy, monitoring hydration, food and sleep.
- > Work to facilitate relationship building between the team and field partner.
- > As much as possible, assist in project tasks.
- > Make all final decisions, as per the Healing Nations crisis policy, in the event of any emergencies, including evacuation.

Group Team Leader Responsibilities

The group team leader is responsible for the overall care of the team, including emotional and spiritual well-being.

Preparation Roles

- > Manage the selection process of team members (final decision subject to Healing Nations discretion).
- > Prepare the team spiritually.
- > Prepare the team for specific project tasks based on the project schedule provided by Healing Nations (e.g. children's ministry, sports camps, building, teaching session, etc.).
- > Organize the training times to include: - ensuring each team member is trained in sharing his/her personal testimony and the gospel - training in cross-cultural sensitivity (in consultation with Healing Nations team leader) - language training (optional) - preparation of project tasks - team building and interpersonal relationships.
- > Ensure that each team member has received all necessary immunizations.
- > Facilitate any and all group fundraising activities.

In-country Roles

- > Ensure and monitor discipline and the interpersonal relationships of team members.
- > Coordinate devotionals, worship, and prayer times.
- > Provide guidance and direction to team members in the following areas: - personal application of daily experiences - transference of experiences to re-entry (Healing Nations team leader available for reference) - conducting one-on-one meetings with team members during the trip - assigning project tasks and responsibilities (with Healing Nations team leader).
- > Be an example to team members by participating in project tasks, being culturally aware, and maintaining a flexible attitude in difficult situations.
- > Supporting the Healing Nations leader in keeping the team physically healthy, such as making sure the team is drinking enough fluids and getting adequate sleep.
- > Support the leadership of the Healing Nations team leader as he/she leads the team through logistical details of travel (e.g. airports, transportation, customs and immigration, etc.) and project activities.

Cell phone policy

1. Healing Nations' policy is to advocate for as little cell phone use as possible for the duration of the trip. The specifics of what limiting cell phone usage looks like on your trip will be decided by the HN Team Leader and the church. Most churches will decide on a limited window during the evening that individuals can use to contact friends or family back home via text, email, phone call, or video call. Typically, this is a shorter window—not more than 1 hour—and happens after all other team activity has finished for the day. Throughout the rest of the day, you should be keeping your phones on airplane mode if using them to take pictures or turned off.
2. The reason we encourage as little cell phone use as possible is so that you can engage more fully in the purpose of the trip. If you are constantly being bombarded with alerts from life back home through texts, emails, phone calls, and social media, you will be distracted from fully investing in your time in country. It also tends to isolate you within the team because you are not fully participating in what the rest of the team is experiencing. Your time in the host country is limited and your schedule will be busy. Attention given to the local people, other team members, and the work you'll be doing requires that you guard yourself against the distractions that are inherent with cell phone use.
3. Healing Nations does not allow team members to use social media of any kind while on the trip. Social media platforms are specifically designed to keep your attention engaged so you continue using the platform longer than for the intended purpose. Because of this, the only reason you should be on social media at all during the trip is to share a blog post link so your friends and family can access the blog and leave comments there.
4. The Healing Nations blog (the link will be provided before your final meeting) will be the primary means of communicating with people back home during the duration of your trip. Every evening, the HN Team Leader will take a few moments to compile the comments that have been left on previous blog posts to share with the team for encouragement.

Culture

You have taken the step to leave all that you know as comfortable and familiar to work in a place where you will feel at times like an alien in a foreign land. Understand you will be operating in a different culture.

What is Culture?

There are many specific definitions of culture but all of them include the same principles. All aspects of society, social institutions, belief systems, superstitions, art, folklore, music, language, technology, economics, history and geography work together determining why people act and react the way they do. Hence, culture is a collection of values and symbols whose meaning provides a set of orientations for a particular society. There are universal traits (characteristics that can be witnessed any place), cultural traits (characteristics that can be witnessed in a specific society), and personal traits (a collection of characteristics that make people individuals).

Below is a list of behaviors. Mark each according to what type of behavior you think it is: universal, cultural or personal.

- > Sleeping with a bedroom window open
- > Running from a dangerous animal
- > Considering snakes to be "evil"
- > Men opening doors for women
- > Respecting older people
- > Liking spicy food
- > Eating regularly
- > Eating with a knife, fork, and spoon
- > Being wary of strangers
- > Calling a waiter with a hissing sound
- > Feeling sad at the death of your mother
- > Wearing white mourning robes for 30 days after the death of your mother

Understanding Culture

It is important to understand culture because it helps to explain why people act the way they do so that you can react in a way that is inoffensive.

Here are some ways to go about trying to understand other cultures:

- > Do some analysis of the people and the area you are traveling
- > Know that there is no good, bad, or wrong culture
- > Understand your own cultural values

The decisions we make or conclusions we come to, even ones that seem automatic or our natural knee-jerk reactions, are determined by the values we hold. Probably, most times, we don't even think in terms of values or why we think what we think--we just act or react. We all have different experiences that factor into our lives. We see and do things differently, oftentimes even from applying the same value. It is natural to value certain things more than other people and exhibit different values in our day-to-day decisions and choices.

Below is a list of cultural categories. Mark each according to what value and beliefs you associate with them.

- > Attitude towards age
- > Concept of fate and destiny
- > View of human nature
- > Attitude towards change
- > Attitude towards taking risks
- > Concept of suffering and misfortune
- > Source of self-esteem/self-worth
- > Concept of equality
- > Attitude towards family
- > Attitude towards doing
- > View of the natural world

Obviously, differences aren't wrong. As a guest in your host country, you will be expected to do things differently and, likewise, you will see the differences of those you interact with.

Many things you think are innocent or normal at home can be seen as quite offensive and may hinder people from hearing the message of Christ. It is critical that you are careful of the impression you create as a representative of Christ. This trip is an opportunity to exemplify real empathy, to authentically and genuinely put yourself in other peoples' shoes, and to ask questions before making assumptions or conclusions based on the differences you see.

While there are universal and absolute values, there are many different applications of these values. While there are guiding principles, the reality is that life is ambiguous, and Scripture doesn't propose to be prescriptive in all day-to-day decisions. The best thing to do is know your own culture and pay attention to your values and live them out as best you can. Let others do the same and trust that the Holy Spirit is at work, forming all of us into the image of Jesus Christ—the perfect embodiment of all absolute values and truth.

General Guidelines

Know their history. To understand other people and why they are the way they are, you must know a bit about them. Prior to your trip, do some research about the area to which you will be traveling.

Express curiosity about their way of life. Your questions indicate an interest in their culture and the manner in which they do things. Make an effort to learn some of the language along with other aspects of the culture.

Body language makes up 90% of communication. Watch how you react with your body and with your face.

Regard your actions from the perspective of the people around you. Many of our actions can be misinterpreted by others. Make sure that you understand that others might perceive things differently (play fighting, flirting, etc.). Ask yourself: "Is what I am saying or doing in this situation building or undermining trust?"

Be flexible concerning time. Go with the flow of the culture and the ministry in which you are involved. Do not count on sticking to a rigid schedule of events or starting every program exactly on time. Be patient. (This will probably be the hardest thing for you.)

Be a learner. If you're not sure how to act in a situation, watch others. Are the other people laughing? How loud is the level of conversation? Is everyone else eating with their hands?

Be careful about taking pictures. Remember to ask permission before taking a photo of someone.

Guard your English conversation and judgments. You never know when you will be with people who can understand some English. Don't talk about how much money you have or the nice things you own such as jewelry, food, cars, etc. Especially don't talk about these things after just visiting a poor family.

Refrain from making too many comparisons between the host country and home. Comparisons that make the host country seem inferior will eventually lead to resentment. Avoid comments like, "That's not how to do that!" or "These are much cheaper in the U.S." or "We could do this a lot faster at home."

Both male and female team members must not flirt with nor be exclusive with the opposite sex outside of a marriage relationship. Avoid being alone with or talking at length with someone of the opposite sex (even within your own team) as this can be misinterpreted.

When offered something to eat, receive it and be grateful. Look to the leaders of your team or field partner for guidance in each circumstance. Be respectful of the fact that people often go to great lengths to prepare food, and it is very offensive not to accept it. Never give food to animals--throw it away or give it to other people. Your team leader will tell you when it is not safe to eat something.

Keep an open mind. Many aspects of the culture will interest, enchant, or puzzle you. Recognize these differences and accept them without passing judgment. It's not wrong, just different.

Practical Guidelines for Honduras:

The following are country-specific suggestions to help you understand the people and how to function appropriately within the culture.

- > It is common practice to always greet people formally with a handshake and use direct eye contact in your greeting. If possible, try to greet each person individually that you meet. Expect to see family and close friends greet each other with a kiss or touches on the forearm (women to women).
- > Titles are very important, and it is best to address people directly by using their professional title or Mr., Mrs., or Miss, followed by the surname.
- > If invited to a Honduran household, it is appropriate to bring a small gift. Flowers, candles, or tea are all suitable ideas.
- > Honduras has a macho culture and women are treated differently than men. Most women are expected to do all the housework and all the cooking. Women in lower socioeconomic classes are usually physically abused.
- > Women, be prepared. "Cat calls" are common toward women walking in the streets, but the advances usually stop at that. Try to be with a male team member if possible or in a group of three.
- > Hondurans value relationship building and harmony, so it is important to avoid hard selling, pressure tactics and any sort of conflict or confrontation.
- > Decisions are usually from the top down and can be lengthy before they are reached. Use your team leadership to discuss with the host partner leadership if you have conflict or questions about protocol.
- > Hondurans use and respond best to indirect communication style over direct.
- > Putting your thumb in between your middle and index finger while making a fist is an obscene gesture.
- > Loud voices in public are looked down upon.
- > It is important to try all the food that is served to you. However, Hondurans generally understand that some people are "hot" and "cold" with food and cannot all eat the same things. It is important to remember to not waste food.
- > Hondurans share in their culture. If you bring food or a drink to a public place, make sure you bring enough to share with others around you.

- > it is not good to give away things simply haphazardly to people or children. If you have items you would like to give out, it is very important to consult your team leader first and follow their direction.

The best way to adapt to Honduran culture is to be a learner. Remember that you are coming into their culture and are their guests. Watch, observe, learn, and imitate.

Summary

Healing Nations recognizes the impossibility of defining an absolute set of guidelines that would sufficiently cover every conceivable situation a team might encounter; however, Healing Nations staff and/or your field partner are available to answer any questions or discuss unknown circumstances. Insensitive or irresponsible behavior has a detrimental effect on the long-term ministry and could offend and hurt the very people you are trying to serve. Team members who adapt to the culture and love the people, however, will do much to further the work of the Gospel among the people they serve. The importance of this material cannot be stressed enough as, many times, it will determine how well people respond to the message of your team and field partner's ministry.

Culture Shock

"Culture shock" is the term used to describe a pronounced reaction to the psychological disorientation most people experience when they move for an extended period of time into a culture markedly different from their own. In a sense, culture shock is the occupational hazard of overseas living through which one has to be willing to deal with in order to have the pleasure of experiencing other countries and cultures in depth. Culture shock comes from being cut off from the cultural cues and patterns that are familiar—especially the subtle, indirect ways you normally have of expressing feelings. All the nuances of meaning that are understood instinctively and used to make life comprehensible are suddenly taken away.

Culture shock can happen in the following situations:

- > Living and/or working over an extended period of time in a situation that is ambiguous
- > Having values (previously considered as absolutes) brought into question
- > Being continually put into positions where one is expected to function with maximum skill and speed but where the rules have not been adequately explained

For some people, the bout with culture shock is brief and hardly noticeable. These are usually people whose personalities provide them with a kind of natural immunity. However, for most, culture shock is something that will have to be dealt with over a period of at least several months--possibly a year or more.

Culture shock is often mixed with frustration and, although they are related and similar in emotional content, they do differ. Frustration is always traceable to a specific action or cause and goes away when the situation is remedied, or the cause is removed. Frustration may be uncomfortable, but it is generally short-lived as compared to culture shock.

Culture shock has two distinctive features:

- > It does not result from a specific event or series of events. It comes instead from experiencing ways of doing, organizing, perceiving, or valuing things that are different and threaten the basic, unconscious beliefs that one's culture's ways are "right." It does not strike suddenly or have a single principal cause. It builds up slowly from a series of small events which can be difficult to identify.

The Symptoms of Culture Shock:

Not everyone will experience a severe case of culture shock, nor see all the symptoms. Some that may occur in more severe cases include:

- > Homesickness
- > Withdrawal
- > Psychosomatic illnesses
- > Boredom
- > Unexplainable fits of weeping
- > Compulsive eating
- > Loss of the ability to work effectively
- > Compulsive drinking
- > Need for excessive amounts of sleep
- > Irritability
- > Hostility towards host nationals
- > Chauvinistic excess
- > Stereotyping of host nationals
- > Exaggerated cleanliness

Stages of Culture Shock:

- > Initial Euphoria
Most people begin their new adventure with great expectations and a positive mind-set. If anything, they have expectations that are too high toward the host country, and toward their own prospective experiences in it. At this point, anything new is intriguing and exciting but, for the most part, it is the similarities that stand out. This period of euphoria may last from a week or two to a month, but the letdown is inevitable.
- > Irritation and Hostility
Gradually, focus turns from the similarities to the differences. And these differences, which suddenly seem to be everywhere, are troubling. Little, insignificant, seemingly problems are blown out of proportion. This is the stage generally identified as “culture shock,” and any of the symptoms can be experienced.
- > Gradual Adjustment
The crisis is over and most people are on their way to recovery. This step may come so gradually that, at first, it may not be noticeable. Once a process of orientation begins and there is the ability to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues and cues which passed by unnoticed earlier, the culture seems more familiar. The host culture becomes more comfortable and feelings of isolation lessen. Gradually too, a sense of humor returns and there is a realization that the situation is not hopeless after all.
- > Adaptation or Biculturalism
Full recovery will result in an ability to function in two cultures with confidence. Many people will even find a great many customs, ways of doing and saying things, and personal attitudes that they enjoy and will definitely miss. In fact, some people even experience “reverse culture shock” upon returning home. In some cases, particularly where a person has adjusted exceptionally well to the host country, reverse culture shock may cause greater distress than the original culture shock.

Minimizing the Impact of Culture Shock:

- > One of the best antidotes to culture shock—though it may not make sense at the time— is to know as much as possible about where you are.
- > By looking consciously for logical reasons behind what seems difficult, confusing or threatening, you will reinforce that there are explanations behind what you observe.
- > Don't succumb to the temptation to criticize the host culture. Resist making jokes and comments that are intended to illustrate your opinions of the stupidity of the locals, and don't hang around with people who do make such comments.
- > Identify a host national (a neighbor, a friendly acquaintance) who is understanding, and talk with that person about specific situations and about your feelings related to them.

Talking with team members can be helpful, but only to a limited extent; your problem lies in your relationship to the host culture.

- › Above all, have faith—in yourself, in the essential good will of your hosts, and in the positive outcome of the experience. Know that the above responses can occur, that culture shock is in some degree inevitable, and reactions are emotional and not subject to rational management.

Cross-Cultural Re-Entry

Cross-cultural re-entry is the process a short-term worker goes through upon returning to his/her home. Those who have been on a short-term trip for the first time are exposed to things they may have never experienced before, such as the plight and poverty of another culture and the shock of being in a culture so vastly different from their own. Upon re-entry, the short-term worker experiences a “high” as he/she is the center of much talk and attention. Soon after returning, however, this “high” drops quickly.

Common Problems:

- › Self-Concept
This major life-changing experience will often cause a short-term worker to ask many questions in order to re-evaluate who he/she is. A new identity often emerges from the trip, but the uncertainty of the answers to many of the questions may cause some stress.
- › Value Change and Choice
Clashes in inner values between the short-term worker and those back home may occur in several different areas: material possessions, family life, racial prejudice, priorities in ecology or politics and Christian community conflicts. Both parties must be sensitive to the other in order to avoid hurt. Some short-term workers can develop a “holier than thou” attitude as he/she tries to integrate what was seen while on the trip with what is seen upon arriving back home.
- › Expectations
A first-time short-term worker may not know what to expect upon arriving home. Re-entry may leave him/her with a sense of feeling like a stranger in his/her home country. Many times people who were not a part of the team show little to no interest in the changes that took place and the spiritual impact on his/her life.
- › A Sense of Loss
A short-term worker may sense the loss of new-found friends and the area where he/she ministered. There is the loss of being with the team in close conditions for a number of days or weeks. Upon re-entry, the short-term worker will feel loss in the sense of purpose. He/she had a definite purpose while on the trip; however, when he/she returns, that sense seems somewhat lessened.

The Four Stages of Re-entry Culture Shock:

- › Initial Euphoria: Excitement with returning home to welcoming friends and family
- › Irritability and Hostility: Frustration with the status-quo and the seeming disinterest
- › Gradual Adjustment: Slowly slipping into the way life was before the trip
- › Adaptation: Integrating trip experiences and lessons to create a new way of life

Surviving Re-entry Shock:

- › You may experience depression, loneliness, fatigue and illness as symptoms of stress.
- › Be alert to your own expectations and the expectations of others.

- > In preparation for telling people about your trip, create a one-minute (acquaintances), five-minute (friends), and fifteen-minute (family) response.
- > Be sensitive to a new discovery of self. See your ministry trip for what it was and be open to how God wants to use that experience in your life. Become involved in something that has a purpose, such as a local ministry through your church or in your community.
- > Allow for a time of rest and reflection. Go over your journal and ask God to show you what you can learn from different aspects of your trip.
- > Take your time in re-adjusting and be patient with others who do not understand. Once you have evaluated your trip, you will probably want to share your experience with others. You may also inspire some to go on a short-term ministry trip as well.

Re-entry culture shock is absolutely normal for you to experience coming back from such an experience. You have seen many new and different things. Use it as a learning experience to teach others about a broad worldview. Remember to be patient with the transition home and to stay in touch with others on your team as they help you through the process.

Talking About Your Experience

Coming home can sometimes be harder than leaving as you have changed dramatically by your experience. You may not have noticed the change until your feet hit American soil. Even though it may seem difficult to articulate your experience, do not shy away from the task— people need to know your story.

Here are some practical ways to help you with coming home. Excerpts are taken from a letter by Roger Randall and Ron Blue found in *Stepping Out: A Guide to Short Term Missions*, Moy Hawthorne. YWAM Publishing: 1992.

- > Record Stories
Write down the details of certain episodes you experienced. Write down some of the sights, sounds, smells and conversations. You'll be surprised how quickly your memory fades.
- > Be Ready
Don't forget to tell your story in casual conversations. Almost anyone who knows you went somewhere will probably inquire about your trip. Don't give them a reply they would expect like, "Really great," but also be careful not to give the entire saga of events. Tell a crisp, one-minute story from your experience.
- > Take Initiative
Arrange for settings where you can share your experience. Meet with your pastor to schedule a brief presentation or arrange an evening with friends and family. It will surprise you how much this means to people who have prayed for you or financially supported you.
- > Start Strong
When sharing your story, make sure to hook your audience, creating anticipation with your opener. Never start with an apology or a complaint.
- > Paint Verbal Pictures
As you move from the opening statement, weave details into the story so that the listener can visualize the scene. Select descriptions of primary importance. Be sure to answer the basic questions of who, what, where, when, and why. Focus on human interest stories.
- > Illustrate Your Story
Use pictures and facial expressions when telling your story. Make it interesting to listen to and watch.

- > Focus on People
Stories that touch the hearts of listeners and move them to a deeper commitment to missions are stories centered on people. Be sure to get 'up close' both in stories and pictures. Tell about thoughts and emotions and focus on people's faces.
- > Encourage Interaction
If possible, give opportunity for questions. The best communication moves on a two-way street. Listen intently to the questions, and do your best to answer as specifically and precisely as possible. You need not feel threatened. You have an answer for every question; "I don't know" is a valid answer.
- > Stop on Time
In our culture where time is of the essence, speakers are meant to contextualize, but don't let time be an obstacle. It is very important to communicate your experience.

Health

Changes in climate, time zone, diet and routine often have adverse effects on the human body. While many illnesses may not be entirely preventable, there are some precautions worth taking to allow for maximum enjoyment and effectiveness on the project. **Please ensure that you visit your doctor and/or dentist before leaving and bring your prescription medications with you.** Prescription medications must be in their original containers as unmarked medications can arouse suspicion.

With traveling comes a change in diet, which often leads to difficulties with the digestive system for a few days. Two common symptoms are constipation and diarrhea. Constipation can be very serious if it continues for more than a few days. You may want to bring a prescription of Cipro with you, as many travelers start Cipro if infection is suspected (after seeking medical advice). The best way to avoid Travelers Diarrhea is to use hand sanitizer and wash your hands with soap and water whenever possible. Another vaccine that may be helpful is Dukoral, which prevents mild Travelers Diarrhea and Cholera.

Medical Insurance

While away on the project you will be covered with IMG or Brotherhood Mutual medical insurance. The cost is included in your trip cost.

Staying Healthy

Do:

- > Wash your hands often with soap and water or, if hands are not visibly soiled, use a waterless, alcohol-based hand sanitizer to remove potentially infectious materials from your skin and help prevent disease transmission.
- > Keep feet clean and dry to prevent fungal and parasitic infections
- > Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants and hats when outdoors to protect yourself from insect bites
- > Use insect repellents that contain DEET (N,N-

diethylmethylnitrosamine) Do Not:

- > Do not go barefoot.
- > Do not handle animals, especially monkeys, dogs and cats, to avoid bites and serious diseases, including rabies and plague. (Consider pre-exposure rabies vaccination if you might have extensive unprotected outdoor exposure in rural areas.)

Helpful websites for Healthy Travel

- > www.cdc.gov/travel
- > www.tripprep.com
- > www.istm.org (abroad)
- > <http://travel.state.gov>

Immunizations

Each team member must take personal responsibility for their vaccinations. See your travel doctor at least four weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect. Healing Nations encourages, but does not require, vaccination for seasonal flu and Covid-19. You may refer to the following websites for more information:

- > <http://healthcare.utah.edu/travelclinic/> (University of Utah travel clinic info)
- > <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/honduras.htm>
- > <http://www.iamat.org/pdf/WorldImmunization.pdf>
- > http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/travelvaccines_e.html

Recommended Vaccinations and Preventive Medications

Healing Nations requires that all travelers are vaccinated against Hepatitis A & B and have an up-to-date tetanus shot. Discuss your travel plans and personal health with a health-care provider to determine which vaccines you will need.

- > Hepatitis A or immunoglobulin (IG)
Transmission of Hepatitis A virus can occur through direct person-to-person contact; through exposure to contaminated water, ice, or shellfish harvested in contaminated water; or from fruits, vegetables, or other foods that are eaten uncooked and that were contaminated during harvesting or subsequent handling.
- > Hepatitis B
Transmission of the Hepatitis B virus can occur through blood or body fluids (for example, health-care workers); sexual contact with the local population; or medical treatment. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11-12 years who did not receive the series as infants.
- > Tetanus
It is often associated with rust, especially rusty nails, but this is somewhat misleading. C. Tetani is an anaerobic bacterium; it will thrive in an environment that lacks oxygen. Rust itself does not cause Tetanus or contain more C. Tetani bacteria. Objects that accumulate rust are often found in the outdoors or places that generally contain more bacteria; any bacterial infected object can transmit Tetanus.

Zika Information

What is Zika?

Zika is a disease caused by a virus that is primarily spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. The incubation of the virus is 3-14 days. Many people who get infected never have symptoms. In people who get sick, symptoms (fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes) are usually mild and last up to one week.

The mosquitoes that spread Zika usually do not live at elevations above 6,500 feet (2,000 meters). People who live in or visit areas above this elevation are at a very low risk of getting Zika from a mosquito unless they visit or travel through areas of lower elevation. Because there is no vaccine or treatment for Zika, people visiting [areas with Zika](#) should take steps to prevent infection such as wearing mosquito repellent or lemon eucalyptus oil, sleeping in mosquito nets, and avoid standing water.

Zika can spread through sexual transmission. People with Zika can pass Zika to their partners even if they do not have symptoms at the time, or if their symptoms have gone away. Zika virus can live in semen for up to 188 days.

Zika can cause miscarriages, still births, and serious birth defects in babies born to women who were infected with Zika during pregnancy. Current CDC research suggests that Zika also is linked to Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Practice Safe Sex for Zika prevention

People with Zika can pass it to their partners even if they do not have symptoms at the time, or if their symptoms have gone away. Abstinence can eliminate the risk of getting Zika from sex. If you do have sex, it is extremely important that you use protection.

- People with pregnant partners should use condoms every time during sex or not have sex during the pregnancy.

- All pregnant women with sex partners who live in or have traveled to an area with Zika should use condoms or not have sex during their pregnancy, even if their partners do not have Zika symptoms or if their symptoms have gone away.
- All people who live in or have traveled to an area with Zika should consider using condoms to protect their sex partners.

For more information about Zika and sexual transmission, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>.

Pregnant Women and Zika

Zika virus can pass from a pregnant woman to her fetus during any trimester of her pregnancy. Zika can cause serious birth defects including swelling of the brain (microcephaly) in babies of women who had Zika virus while pregnant. Other problems, such as club foot, eye defects, hearing loss, and impaired growth, have been detected among fetuses and infants infected with Zika virus before birth.

Pregnant women should not travel to any area with a current Zika outbreak. If you must travel to one of these areas, talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider first and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites and practice safe sex during your trip.

For more information visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/>.

Discuss Pregnancy Planning with Healthcare Provider

As part of counseling with healthcare providers, some women and their partners who have visited an area with Zika might decide to delay pregnancy. The CDC has guidance to counsel women who have visited an area with Zika who want to get pregnant. The recommended times to wait before trying to get pregnant after visiting an area with Zika, based on whether either partner has had symptoms, are described below:

How Long to Wait Before Trying to Have a Baby After Visiting an Area with Zika		
	Women	Men
Zika symptoms	At least 8 weeks after symptoms start	At least 6 months after symptoms start
No Zika symptoms	At least 8 weeks after return from visit	At least 8 weeks after return from visit

Women who become pregnant within 8 weeks after visiting an area with Zika should talk with their doctor:

- CDC recommends testing at the first prenatal visit and a second test in the second trimester.
- If you have been exposed to Zika and have symptoms (fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes) at any time during your pregnancy, you should be tested for Zika. A healthcare provider may also test for similar diseases, like dengue or chikungunya.