

Some Hurricane Relief Trip Reflection Questions to Choose From

Poet T.S. Eliot once said, "We had the experience but missed the meaning."

Reflection each night of our trip or during "down times" of waiting for a ride, etc. can take as little as 30 minutes to an hour-the basic idea is that we process each day's events to probe the lessons learned, the questions that remain, the personal significance of the time we spent that day . Here are some questions you can use with your group to discuss or to journal about.

You can even cut these up and put them in an envelope and ask your group members each to take one and to respond to that question or open it up to the group's discussion.

You can pair people up and ask them to respond to one another about one question or you can set up a "speed dating" type of set-up where everyone in 60 seconds, tells the person across from them why they chose to come on this trip or a moment that they don't want forget from the trip and then switch to the next person and so on..

What was a high point for you today? A low point?

How do you feel about what you are doing?

Talk about one small victory you had today that no one else may have noticed. Some way you overcame yourself or handled something personally difficult for you...

Why is there need for your service here?

How will this experience affect the way you are back in the IU Bloomington or home community?

Does our response in any way contribute to the problem?

Does our response do anything to mitigate the cause?

What do you know/not know about the situation you are encountering?

What would improve the quality of your contribution?

Why is it important to you personally to respond this need, or these persons?

How will your service affect you?

How will it affect your relationships?

How committed are you (or not) to what you are doing?

How does the community you serve perceive you?

What engages you most? Troubles you most?

What do you perceive to be the underlying issue here and why does it exist?

How does/will your service affect the paid people or other non-IU volunteers you are working with?

What resources does your service consume? Where do they come from?
What do they cost?

How can your efforts today help to change the situation in the long term?

How were you different when you started than you are today?

How are you different from other volunteers? How are you the same?

How are you similar to the people who live here or with whom you're working? How are you different?

If you were one of the people who owns the homes or businesses, how would you perceive you?

What connections are there between what you're doing here and what you're studying or preparing for a career path?

How does this volunteer experience compare to others you've had?

What questions does this experience give rise to?

How do you define community?

How would you do this differently if you were in charge?

How does this whole experience challenge your assumptions or stereotypes (about other IU students, about the people and situation you're encountering?)

What public policies are involved in this work and what are their implications? How could they be improved?

What are the spiritual dimensions to this problem?

What are the intellectual dimensions? The social dimensions?

Tell the story of someone you met on this trip.

Describe an internal or external conflict that arose for you on this trip. Explain the factors that contribute to it and brainstorm with another how you might cope with it or resolve it.

How did you try to make another person feel a part of your group?

How could this experience apply to other parts of your life?

Brainstorm all the root causes that contributed to the situation you are encountering and the problem your service is meant to address.

Whose responsibility is this?

What skills or personal qualities and gifts does this experience highlight that you have? What areas do you know you want to grow in?

How would you motivate someone who is overwhelmed or discouraged by this experience?

What can you do with the knowledge you've gained from this experience to promote change?

What would it take to positively impact the situation (from the level of individuals? from education, from government, from non-profits, from businesses?)

How do your lifestyle choices affect this situation?

Has your opinion of the situation changed since you've been here?