



# CONOCIMIENTO\*

## ▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 15 minutes- 1 hour (depending on your goals for the activity)

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Reflect on some aspects of their cultural history and background in a new way.
- Identify some commonalities and differences with other training participants.

 **Materials:**

- Newsprint
- Markers
- Trainer's Guide- Alternatives

 **Preparation:**

- Prepare newsprint according to alternative #1 or #2 (see activity), as appropriate for your group and your goals.

## Instructions

**Note:** Two alternatives are offered to conduct this exercise.

Alternative #1 is best used for a small group whose members have already met. Examples: a group of co-workers, a community coalition, or a group of trainees on the 2nd day of training. Alternative #2 allows for more anonymity, and therefore can be used on the 1st day of training with participants who have not already met. (see Trainer's Guide)

1. During training: As participants enter, give them colored markers and direct them to the wall hanging(s). Several participants can work on the newsprint simultaneously. As participants complete their answers, they can hand their marker in, and go to their seats. Option: ask participants to complete 3-4 of the "easiest" questions, and then sit down. At some point later in the training, you might invite participants to answer some of the questions they didn't get to earlier.
2. Once everyone has completed their answers, trainer should introduce self, and discuss the purpose of the session, as s/he would normally do.
3. Process either version of the activity by raising questions such as these:
  - Which question was the easiest to answer?
  - Which was the most difficult? Why?
  - What did you learn about yourself?
  - About others?
  - Some questions specifically referred to cultural or ethnic heritage; others did not. What was that (ambiguity) like?
  - What was it like to walk into a workshop and complete this right off? (if that was the case)
  - How would your answers be different if we completed this earlier/ later in the training? If you were with friends and family rather than co-workers?

\* This module comes from the Lotus Women's Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

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## ► TRAINING TIPS

This activity can be set up and led as a simple, low-risk icebreaker, or can be used to delve more deeply into issues which can provoke some feelings and risk-taking on the part of participants. It can be used at the beginning of session for participants who have not met prior to the training or midway through a session for participants who know one another.

- How has “feeling different” affected you? If anyone is willing to share their story about feeling different, invite 3-4 stories.
- What do you notice that many here have in common?
- How do the differences impact our working together?
- What would this look like if your clients were answering these questions? Would there be more similarities with or differences from your answers? How do these similarities or differences impact your work together?
- The name of this activity is Conocimiento which means “knowledge.” Why do you suppose this activity is called this?

## Summary

Wrap up the discussion with the following points to consider:

- Knowing about our own culture may be new to some of us, or something we take for granted. It is important because it is primary to understanding others’ cultures.
- Knowing about other people’s cultures is helpful in avoiding misunderstandings, and even offenses. Sometimes, what we don’t know can hurt us, or others whom we have no wish to hurt. However, when we don’t know, we can ask, rather than assume.
- We also cannot make assumptions about each other’s experiences. What is fun and challenging for one person may be frightening and embarrassing for another. Again, we can only learn this by asking questions and being open to new experiences ourselves.
- By building on these differences, we can create a more rich and rewarding environment for ourselves and our clients than if we all tried to be the same.

\* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit [http://www.hdwg.org/peer\\_center/training\\_toolkit](http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit). This module comes from the Lotus Women’s Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

### ALTERNATIVES

#### Alternative #1

1. Tape 2 or more pieces of newsprint together to create a wall hanging that looks like this:

Name	Place of Birth	Favorite Food	Favorite Place	Etc.*

2. Choose questions from list below. Post the hanging on a wall.

#### Alternative #2

1. Choosing from the following list, write questions at the top of sheets of newsprint, one question to a sheet. Hang the sheets around the room.

2. Possible questions:

- Place of birth
- Favorite food . . . Favorite place . . . Favorite way to relax
- Your family heritage/ethnicity
- One thing you've learned about communicating with other cultures
- One change you've made in your life
- A hero/heroine of your ethnicity
- Greatest strength from your cultural background
- A barrier you've experienced to achieving your potential
- The 1st time you felt different
- If you could change your name, what would it be?
- One thing you've always wanted to do, but haven't
- The meaning of your name