

## Loss Simulation<sup>1</sup>

### **SET UP**

Give four pieces of paper (use four different colors, if you wish) to each participant and make sure that everyone has something to write with.

Tell Them (demonstrate with one piece of paper):

- Fold paper in half 4 times
- Rip along the fold lines (will have a total of 16 pieces of paper)
- Divide the pieces of paper into 4 piles of 4 (divide up by colors, if using four colors of paper)
- In the first pile, write 4 activities you enjoy (on the four different papers); in the next pile, write 4 things you own that are important to you; in the next pile, write 4 of the most special people presently in your life; and in the last pile, write 4 roles you currently hold in your life (parent, sister, student, teacher, etc.).

### **SELECTED LOSS**

Tell Them:

- Look at the four piles of papers and quickly choose one from each category that you would be willing to give up first.
- Tear up the four pieces of paper that you selected and discard them in a pile.

Ask and Share:

- How does it feel to have to make a quick decision about what you are willing to give up, especially when everything you wrote down is special and important to you?
- Imagine what it might feel like to be a refugee fleeing a village and having to choose whether you take your Bible OR take your clothes. Consider what it feels like to have to decide whether you run by the school to see if you can find your son OR just flee with the child who is in your arms, knowing that between here and the school you could be killed.

### **UNKNOWN LOSS**

Tell Them:

- Turn the piles of paper over so you cannot see the words.
- Without looking, take one piece of paper from each pile. Tear up the papers and discard them.
- Do not look.
- Sit and wait.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from TucsonRefugeeMinistry.com.

Ask and Share:

- How does it feel to not know what you have lost?
- Imagine sitting in a refugee camp not knowing where your mother is or if your child is alive. Think how you might feel not knowing if your home still stands or if there will be anything to return to if you ever get to go back to your hometown.

### **LOSS OF CONTROL**

Tell Them:

- Keep all piles face down, sit quietly, and ponder your loss.
- Do not look at your papers to see what you have left.

Walk quietly around the room removing papers from in front of people. Take only a few papers from some people, take many pieces from others, and from a few, do not take any papers at all. You may walk past someone only to return and take papers.

Tell them:

- If you have any remaining papers, turn them over to see what you still have.

Ask and Share:

- How does it feel to have important people and things taken from right in front of you?
- How does it feel to lose more than others?
- How does it feel to not lose while others did?
- Image how refugees feel about the lack of control in their situations. In the refugee camps, people have few opportunities to make choices. They may sit for years in a camp waiting for someone else to decide if they get to go to another country, return to their own or keep sitting in the camp. Even when they arrive in a new country, they have little control over where they live or what they might do in their first few days or months. They must rely on a single case manager, or possibly a volunteer, entrusting their lives to a stranger.

Further Discussion:

- How has this activity changed the way you feel about refugees?
- What can you do to be a good friend to refugees?

Prayer

- Take a few moments for silent prayer or group prayer for the refugees and other displaced person struggling throughout the world and in your community.

*“The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself” (Leviticus 19:34)*