



SWAP Guanacaste Reflection Topics in Host Country

While journaling isn't a required component of SWAP Guanacaste's programming, we highly encourage participants to do so as it can lead to a deepening of your experience abroad. Below are a number of thoughtful prompts for you to consider. A few of the below may additionally act as focal points of our processing meetings.

Journaling Topics

1. How did you feel when you initially interacted with the local people? Your homestay family?
2. How do you think your race/ethnicity and status as a person traveling from the United States are influencing your experiences in the host country?
3. What are gender dynamics like in your host family? How are these similar or different from your own home in the US?
4. What positive/negative transference and countertransference reactions are you encountering in the host country, if any?
5. How are SWAP members and your local field instructor or community leader supporting you in managing cultural differences, if any?
6. Have you experienced any ethical dilemmas thus far?
7. Mexico and Central American migration is characterized as South to North migration, or from developing countries to developed countries (United States and Canada). However, Nicaraguan emigration to Costa Rica is defined as South to South (developing to developing country). What explains the difference in migration trends between Nicaraguan migrants and migrants from Mexico and other Central American countries? Discuss some of the primary push - pull factors behind Nicaraguan emigration to Costa Rica. Why do Nicaraguans who decide or are forced to migrate often go to Costa Rica? Why is it important for social workers who work with migrant populations to understand the push-pull factors of their clients?
8. Conduct interviews with community leaders, your homestay families, and residents in all communities we visit in order to understand the opinions of Costa Rican opinions regarding the sociopolitical situation in Nicaragua and Nicaraguan emigration to Costa Rica. How does this compare to the opinions of people in your community regarding migrant populations? Why is an understanding of community perceptions important to social work and work with migrants and the community as a whole?
9. Briefly describe the state of migration and migration policy in the United States. What is the role of social workers under the current administration? What programs and institutions are in place to address migrant issues? Compare and contrast this to the position of the current Costa Rican administration and the role of social workers.