

Topic: Socializing With Neighbors

Let's get started...

Did you talk with a neighbor this week? What did you say? What did your neighbor say? Did you visit your neighbor? Did your neighbor visit you?

Background:

In the United States, in some neighborhoods, people are very friendly. They often greet each other when leaving the house, coming home after work, or while walking their dog or working in the garden on the weekend. Some people become very good friends. Some people have parties and invite their neighbors. Some neighborhoods organize "block parties" in the summer, or have pot luck parties on holidays such as 4th of July. Some neighborhoods organize winter holiday "open house" parties in December. Some neighborhoods organize "neighborhood watch" or "block watch" groups to watch out for criminal activity in the neighborhood and report it to the police. In other neighborhoods, people are very busy with their own lives, jobs and families. They are more private. They are not unfriendly, but they do not socialize with neighbors or even greet each other very often. In small towns or suburbs, people are often more open and friendly. In big cities, people often "stay to themselves."



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:

- Do you live in a house or an apartment? Tell about (describe) your home.
- Is your home in the city, in a small town, or in a suburb? Describe your neighborhood (the area around your home), and tell about your neighbors.
- Describe your relationship with your neighbors. How often do you see, greet, talk with, or socialize with your neighbors? What do you talk about?
- Have you ever been to a party at a neighbor's house? Tell about it.
- Have you ever invited any neighbors to a party at your house? Tell about it.
- Tell about any other social activities you have been to in your neighborhood.

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

What makes a good neighborhood? Name 3 qualities important to you.

What makes a good neighbor? Name 3 important qualities. Are you a good neighbor?

Do you know your neighbors now? Do you talk to your neighbors? Is it easy to talk to your neighbors? What kinds of things do you talk about?

Does your neighborhood have “block parties”? Do you have a “neighborhood watch” or “block watch” organization?

Where were you born? Where did you grow up? Did you grow up in the same town where you were born, or a different town? How was it the same or different?

Did your family move a lot when you were growing up, or did you stay in the same place for your entire childhood?

Where is your hometown? Describe your neighborhood in your hometown. How is it similar to or different from where you live now, in the Seattle area?

Did you know your neighbors in your hometown/native country? Did you talk with them? What did you talk about? How often did you talk with your neighbors? Did you visit in each other’s homes? Did you celebrate holidays, birthdays or special occasions together?

Did you socialize with your neighbors in your hometown/native country? How often? What types of activities did you do together? Did you visit in each other’s homes for coffee, tea, meals, or parties? Did you play sports with your neighbors?

Do children play together in your neighborhood now? Do children play on neighborhood sports teams? Do children go to neighborhood schools? Is it the same in your country?

In your native country hometown, did you exchange house keys and “watch out” for each other and each other’s homes? Did you take in each other’s mail or newspapers when one of you was away or on vacation? Describe your relationship with neighbors.

In your native country hometown, did neighbors loan or borrow equipment or tools, take care of each other’s children, form neighborhood “book clubs” or “garden clubs”?

In your native country hometown, did neighbors have “neighborhood watch” groups?

If you could live anywhere in the world, what would be your ideal neighborhood? Who would be your ideal neighbors? Why?

Do you think neighborhoods and neighbors are important? Why or why not?

New words and Idioms:

Block party, open house, pot luck, socialize, stay to oneself, greet, neighbor, neighborhood, ideal, book club, garden club, watch out for, special occasions, loan, borrow, block watch, neighborhood watch, hometown, take in, grow up, criminal activity.