

# BELONGING MATTERS CONVERSATIONS

## Why Belonging Matters (Session #1)

Roddan Lodge, Oasis – WESN  
Tuesday, March 11 2025

“Home is drumming, salad, and foo foo with cassava leaves—it’s where I can create new friends and learn cultures of others. When I feel I belong, I’m happy, not stressed, and I don’t have to go out for a beer just to be around people.”

Conversation Participants

“Home is attached to your self-worth—a feeling of safety within, no matter the circumstances.”

Conversation Participants

“Home is up north participating in a potlach”

Conversation Participants

“Home is socializing, hanging out, watching sports—it’s that repetition and familiarity.”

Conversation Participants

“Home is fiesta, parties, celebrations, knowing neighbors, and sharing meals—it’s where your heart is”

Conversation Participants

“Home is a place I long to go after a long, hard day—a place to relax where I feel happy, safe, and belong.”

Conversation Participants

### What *home* means to me...

#### Home is where ...

- ✓ I feel connected to a familiar place
- ✓ I am with family
- ✓ I can rely on different people
- ✓ I go to after a long, hard day to relax
- ✓ I can be myself
- ✓ I enjoy familiar foods
- ✓ There is drumming

#### For me, *home* is...

- ✓ Comfort food
- ✓ When I feel safe
- ✓ Where I smell the ocean and eat seafood
- ✓ A place away from the judging and rushed outside world
- ✓ A positive atmosphere

#### Food that creates a sense of *home* for us...

- ✓ Homemade bread
- ✓ FooFoo with cassava leaves
- ✓ Salad & good coffee
- ✓ Sweet spaghetti
- ✓ Sunday roasts

#### Values that create *home*..

- ✓ Honesty
- ✓ Acceptance & understanding
- ✓ Safety & connection
- ✓ Trust of self & others
- ✓ Non-judgemental
- ✓ Human-created culture Vs. consumer culture

#### Benefits of Belonging...

- ✓ I can be myself
- ✓ Not alone & happier
- ✓ Can get help easily
- ✓ Trust in those around you
- ✓ No stress, relaxed- improves physical and mental health

### What creates a sense of *home* and belonging to you

- ✓ Knowing neighbors and sharing meals with them
- ✓ Familiarity
- ✓ Freedom to speak up
- ✓ Sense of acceptance by others
- ✓ Positive atmosphere
- ✓ Connection
- ✓ Saying “no” instead of “yes” (autonomy in expression)
- ✓ Discernment

### What erodes a sense of *home*?

- ✗ Not feeling safe entering my own home
- ✗ Swearing & negativity
- ✗ Not being able to pay rent/lacking finances
- ✗ Being far from home and unable to return due to costs
- ✗ When there is a false story created about me
- ✗ Closed-mindedness & stereotypes

### Costs of not belonging

- ✗ Not feeling safe
- ✗ Makes you negative
- ✗ Fight or flight response from the body
- ✗ Anxiety/depression
- ✗ Withdraw, disengage from others
- ✗ You begin to not even want to go home
- ✗ Others around you develop a negative attitude
- ✗ Losing trust in others/strangers,

### OUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR BUILDING A SENSE BELONGING

1. How to keep safe at the front door
2. How to live and thrive in neighborhood adversity
3. How to engage people in informal ways
4. How to create safe spaces and supportive resources
5. How to build positivity in the face of negativity

