**NSTP CWTS 2: Community Immersion Requisite of the NSTP:**

**Community Immersion** is one important requirement of the National Service Training Program (NSTP) prescribed to students, male or female alike, in private and public higher education institutions and technical-vocational schools.

This serves as the practicum-based element of the NSTP where lessons learned and acquired in NSTP 1 are applied.

This practicum requirement is essential to all components of the NSTP. Community immersion is a strategy in community organizing that is sought to imbibe among the NSTP trainees a better understanding and realization of the different community concerns through the exposure on actual life situations specifically in the **deprived, depressed and the underprivileged (DDU)** communities.

The NSTP trainees are expected to initiate community-based interventions in the form of projects and activities meant to address the multi-faceted issues and concerns of the people in the area of service.

**Concepts and Principles of Community Immersion:**

**Community**

According to **Arlien Johnson**, a noted community development specialist, a community is a collective of people with similar interests and goals whether living in the same geographic locality or not.

**Geographical and Functional**

* **Geographical community** is defined in the purview of group of persons living in the same geographical location like a certain village, town, district, area or territory.
* **Functional community** is defined as the aggregate of people though not necessarily based on living in the same geographical location, is bounded by a common end such as fighting for the same cause, having the same interests and goals.

**Elements of a Community**

The important elements are the following:

1. **Demographics** – includes population distribution and density
2. **History** – events of the past that contributed to the development of the community
3. **Culture** – ways of living of the people
4. **Economy** – income level and occupation of people
5. **Structures** – physical, political and social structures in the community

**Community Immersion**

It is an essential strategy in community organizing work that entails understanding of the different community concerns, process, dynamics and lifestyle through exposure and engaging in different activities.

**Forms of Integration in Community Immersion**

1. Home visits
2. Living with selected families preferably with key informants
3. Informal discussions with individuals and groups
4. Sharing in household and community activities
5. Attendance in social gatherings
6. Assistance in production work

**Examples of Community Partners**

1. Parents
2. The youth (in-school or out of school
3. Differently-abled constituents
4. Professionals
5. Members of people’s organizations

**Personal Gains for Students in Community Immersion**

* Opportunity for students to comprehend people’s lives
* Gain social acceptance derived from community relations
* Enhance experience in conducting surveys and researches
* Establish rapport and relationships with different people
* Develop their conscientization ability
* Acquire first-hand experiences in dealing with community works
* Chance to learn life skills

**The Extension Creed by Dr. Y.C. James Yen**

Go to the people.

Live with the people. Learn from them.

Plan with them. Work with them.

Start with what they know.

Build on what they have.

Teach by showing, learn by doing.

Not by showcase but by pattern.

Not odds and ends but a system.

Not piecemeal but integrated approach.

Not to conform but to transform.

Not relief but release.

**Dos and DONTs in Community Immersion:**

* **Before**

1. Familiarize yourself with the basic information and theories regarding community life.
2. Secure a waiver from the NSTP office.
3. Always inform your faculty-in-charge of your destination, time table and plan of action.
4. Be armed with background information about the area of immersion.
5. Pay courtesy call to community leaders, whether formal or informal.
6. Secure documents pertinent to your stay in the community.
7. Be ready with personal provisions.

* **During**

1. Be courteous to everyone.
2. Act properly and discreetly.
3. Wear proper school uniforms and identification cards.
4. Keep your valuables secured.
5. Always document your visit.
6. Always ask permission from concerned people when you have to take photos.

* **After**

1. Validate and evaluate the programs and activities conducted.
2. Submit final documentation outputs to the NSTP Office for records purposes.

**Worksheets:**

1. Directions: Answer the following questions as a guide in your class presentation in depicting a community you want to live in.

* What makes an ideal community?
* What is the role of each institution/community participants in the establishment of peaceful and orderly community?
* How do you relate each community participant with the attainment of the common vision of the people there at?
* What are the aspirations/interests of the community participants?

1. Directions: Prepare a collage depicting the problems and concerns of a community.