

A guide to navigating “What it means to welcome: refugee perspectives:”

Elapsed time marker	Speaker/question(s)	Key points
0:01	Pierre / introductions to panelists	
7:45	Khalil / What is inclusion? How have you felt welcomed in your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling comfortable in your skin, able to be who you are • Having people you can reach out to, having a community where you feel you belong – such as the veterans’ service organization he joined.
11:00	Bahati / What does genuine welcome for refugees look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure we have access to the knowledge and opportunities we need: understanding how to navigate the many systems, for healthcare, education, work, housing, etc. • Refugees need to be welcomed not only by resettlement agencies, but also by people in their wider communities. Connections with ordinary people are really helpful.
16:20	Isabel / For people seeking refuge in the U.S., what does inclusion look like? What has made you feel welcome in a new community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion means accepting cultural diversity and allowing us to form new identities, in this new phase of our lives. • Refugees are not a burden. We just need access to work and to opportunities to show how we can contribute. • What’s made me feel welcome are chances to get involved (as a volunteer, employee, neighbor). I also appreciate being able to ask questions – Americans are good at responding to them!
22:15	Bahati / How can we show new neighbors that they are seen? How can communities foster a sense of belonging?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure they are supported, not only by giving funds and items needed to resettlement agencies, but also by being a volunteer, a person who will listen to individuals’ needs and answer their questions, as they emerge over time. • Share guidance on things newcomers might not know about, like how to buy a home.
25:40	Khalil / How can we show new neighbors that they are seen, that they belong?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some refugees may not need resources, but everyone needs a community. Acknowledge them as who they are. Listen to their stories. Get into conversations with them.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Being seen” happens not just through giving things, but more importantly, through interacting: have conversations, share a meal, build a relationship. That is how a sense of belonging to a community is created.
35:25	Isabel / Anything you’d like to add about how to create community and foster a sense of belonging?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build reciprocal relationships. Listen to their stories and share yours too. Look for each person’s expertise. Let newcomers help or teach you something new, as much as you help them. • Help newcomers understand what they need to know to be self-sufficient. For example, they may not understand how health insurance works in the U.S. • When newcomers put themselves out there, by walking in the neighborhood or attending a block party, be friendly and get to know them by name. Encourage them in the efforts and risks they take.