



Serving as Sacred Siblings

Missionary Care 2026



Goals and Objectives for this session

Goals are broad, long-term, and often intangible desired outcomes

Objectives are specific, measurable, time-bound, and actionable steps taken to achieve those goals.

“Goals set the destination, while objectives outline the path.”





Goal:

Down the road: Diverse teams that intentionally value each member, regardless of marital status, seeking to understand differences/uniqueness/gifts that each member brings, which improves team relationships and effectiveness.

In this hour 😊: Start the conversation and begin to think more carefully about where we can grow in respect for our colleagues, no matter what their marital status may be.



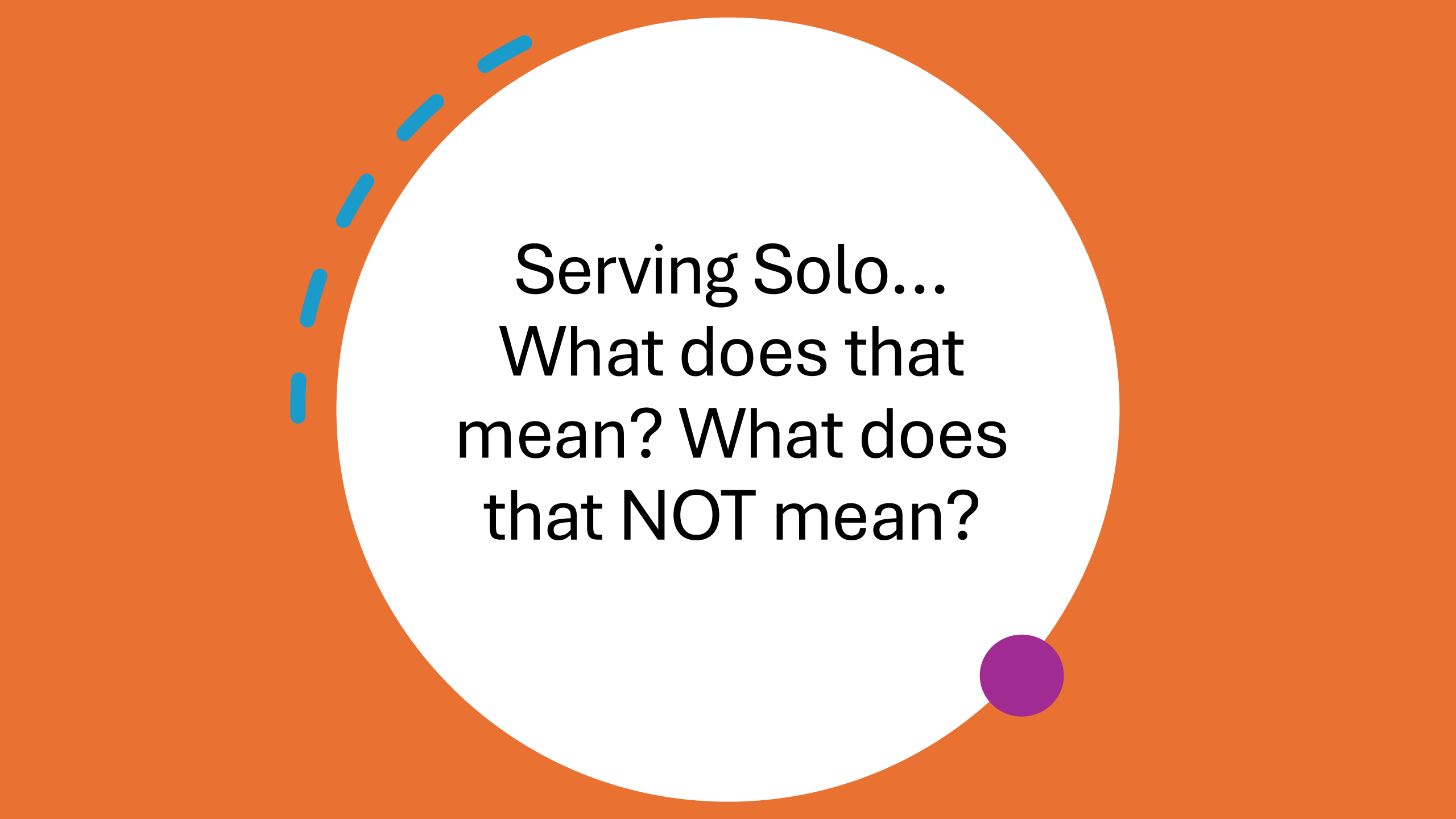


Objectives:

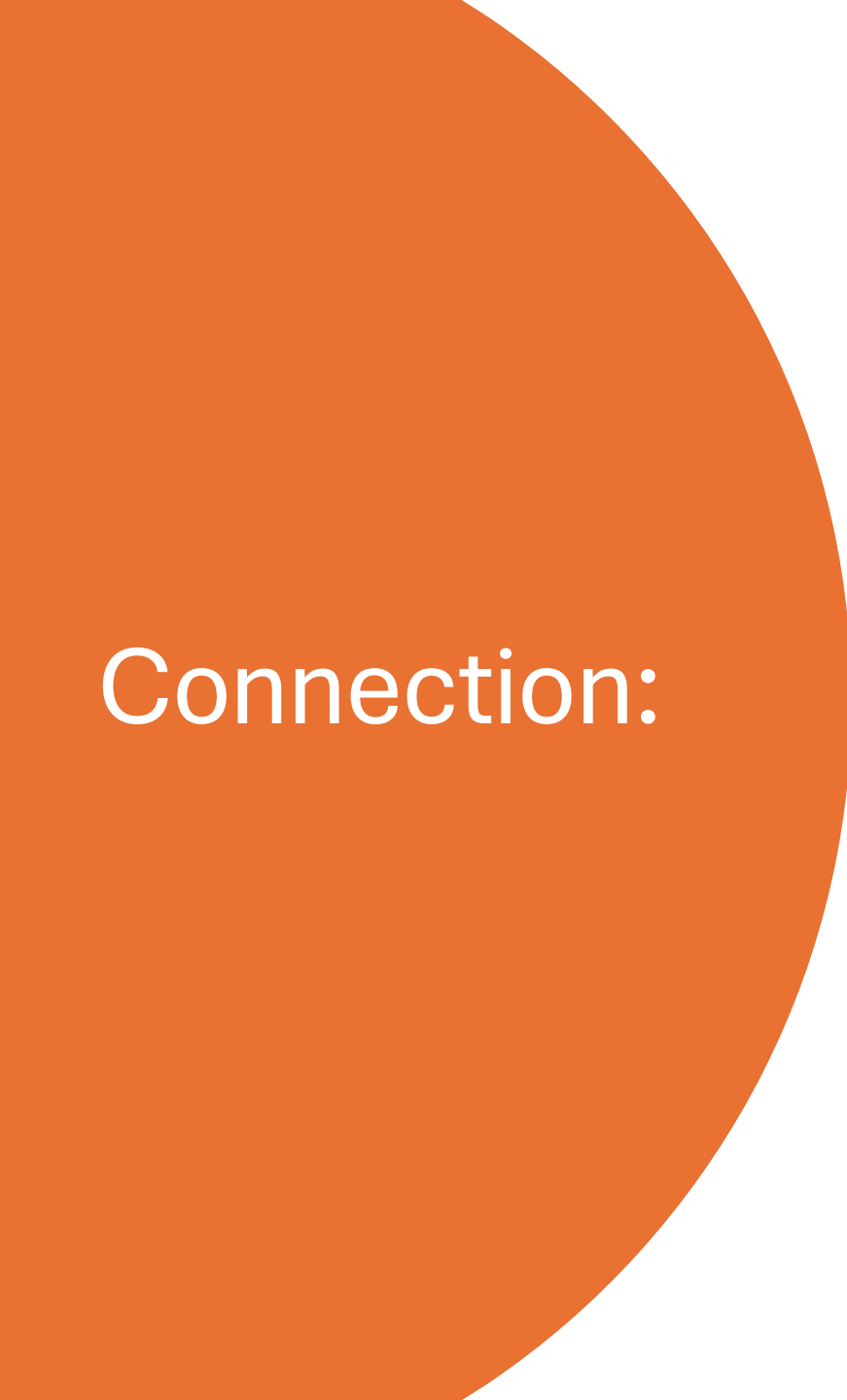
1. Create a space for beginning a conversation about Sacred Siblings (as outlined in the book by Sue Eenigenburg and Suzy Grumelot)
 2. Discuss four main points:
 - I. Connection
 - II. Communication
 - III. Culture and context
 - IV. Complete
 3. Interact with each other to hear personal experiences
 4. Reflect on what we do with this new knowledge
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A stylized graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a large orange semi-circle at the top, a solid blue circle below it, and a dashed blue arc above the blue circle.

Who are we, your two
presenters?
Why does this subject
matter to us?



Serving Solo...
What does that
mean? What does
that NOT mean?



Connection:

- Who is my family?
 - A three-strand cord is not easily broken.
 - Find a tribe wherever you go.
- 



Communication:

“Many times, life’s irritations and frustrations exist in the gap between unconscious, **unspoken**, unrealistic, and un-agreed-upon expectations.” – Chip Ingram



Open the lines of communication:

1. Communicate your expectations; they cannot be met or agreed to if you do not share them.
2. Recognize that perhaps, your expectations may not be reasonable.
3. We may not come into a team with the same ideals.
4. Don't assume you know what your colleagues do and do not want.
5. It's courteous to ask directly, and not to go around asking on their behalf.
6. If it's appropriate and possible, build friendships outside of your team and family members.
7. Our MK's **NEED** Aunties and Uncles. They don't care about your marital status.



Culture and Context:

Team culture and Local culture

- Validate teammates, regardless of gender
- Understand local cultural nuances regarding married vs non-married people
- Listen to each other!
- Honor each colleague and their ministry season
- Discover what cultural nuances may surround divorce or loss of a spouse
- Resist the urge to pressure!
- Solo and in a leadership role

Complete:

Marital status and calling to ministry does not need to compete with one another.

- We are complete as we are.
- God created us and redeems as whole individuals.
- We have a calling, no matter what season of life or marital status we hold.

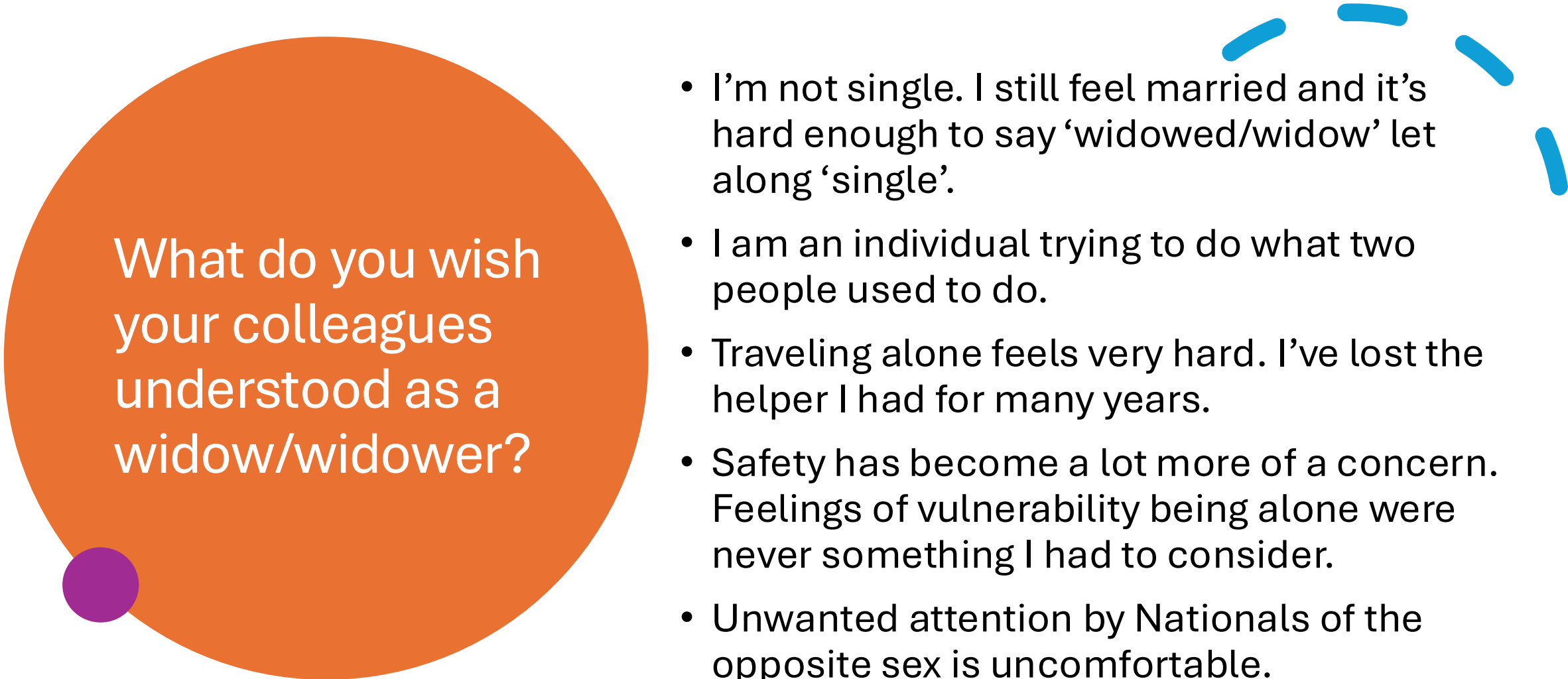


- I am an adult and would like to be treated that way.
- I enjoy being invited to meals, included in family traditions, and asked for my opinion.
- I am a complete person, not missing ‘my better half’.
- “Get with your family” stings a little when we are in large groups.
- Holidays alone are very hard, so please ask and include me in Holiday plans.
- After team, area, or regional meetings, I’d really value the chance to talk through the event.
- I may need a hug but ask first.
- I love receiving gifts, but please consider that if I live alone, bracelets that latch together are hard to do one handed!
- Navigating government offices in our country is hard, especially if the culture doesn’t typically respect me. Please offer to help!
- When we’re having conferences, I’d love to have a standing invite to sit with someone else.
- Ask before matchmaking 😊 We know you mean well, but your matcha-nations put us in awkward positions. It doesn’t feel respectful.

What do you
wish your
married
colleagues
knew?

What do you wish your serving solo colleagues knew?

- We love you! We're amazed at how you handle all the challenges of our missionary lives, alone!
- We don't expect babysitting - but we sure would appreciate it!
- In some ways, you're blessed because you are known for who **YOU** are. You're responsible for yourself; you own your entire reputation.
- We know you have the same calling as we do!
- You may have a lot of freedom (time, money, decisions), but yes, you also have a lot of closed doors - especially women. I'm sorry about that.
- We genuinely wish we could spend more time with you and invest in our friendship, but the demands of marriage and family really ARE overwhelming sometimes.
- Sometimes I'm jealous that I cannot spontaneously do something fun, due to having children's routines to work around.
- I feel overwhelmed trying to figure out work life and family life.
- The way you're able to advance the ministry BECAUSE you are single is so valuable to the team. You can invest in one-on-one relationships that we don't have time for.



What do you wish
your colleagues
understood as a
widow/widower?

- I'm not single. I still feel married and it's hard enough to say 'widowed/widow' let alone 'single'.
- I am an individual trying to do what two people used to do.
- Traveling alone feels very hard. I've lost the helper I had for many years.
- Safety has become a lot more of a concern. Feelings of vulnerability being alone were never something I had to consider.
- Unwanted attention by Nationals of the opposite sex is uncomfortable.

Reflection:

What questions might you have?

What is a take-away from this session that perhaps you hadn't considered before?

What will you do more intentionally now that you've heard these thoughts?

Anything else?

Thank you for participating!