Guide

to the

Bridging Path

And the

Bridging Skills



By Rev. Dr. Jim Milley

The 12 Steps of the Bridging Path

ENGAGE

1. Discern
2. Explore
3. Move In
4. Join

PARTICIPATE

1. Learn
2. Help
3. Find
4. Befriend

INFLUENCE

1. Disciple
2. Gather
3. Equip
4. Send Out

Explanation of The 12 Steps

1. Discern Ask God, “Whom do you want me to love and serve?”
2. Explore Spend time with different peoples and see who responds relationally
3. Move Rearrange your living space, schedule, routine, shopping habits, and commitments to be with the people God has called you to love and serve.
4. Join Do whatever it takes for the group to call you one of their own. Identify with them.
5. Learn Spend lots of time learning their lingo, opinions, values, goals, hopes, fears, felt-needs, and just everything about them and their world.
6. Help Participate in doing the things that the group wants done.
7. Find Your Role Become recognized as having a skill or role that the community values.
8. Befriend Find some people to spend more time with on a regular basis both within and outside the group times.
9. Disciple Begin conversing about the big questions of life, connect with God through talking, listening, reading scripture and other people, and follow Jesus together in helping others to do the same.
10. Gather Once you have several disciples, begin meeting together as a group to practice the 12 characteristics of a Christ-following community.
11. Equip Equip each other to be Bridge Leaders that make disciples.
12. Send Out Send people out by starting at Step 1 again.

BRIDGING SKILLS

Organized by the 12 Steps of the Path

1. Discern

* Assessment of your current discipleship activities
* Assessment of your current use of time and opportunities
* identifying groups in one’s life path
* identifying language and people groups near by
* noticing responsive people in your life path
* noticing the networks of responsive people in your life path
* spending time with responsive people
* creating a praying group of friends to help you discern
* using the “well-conceived plan” document
* learning the 12 steps of Bridging
* learning the 101 Bridging Skills
* joining a Support Group for discerning your call to a people outside of church culture
* committing to a coaching relationship
* securing your base for ministry
* securing the support of spouse and significant others
* securing a variety of income sources of adequate amounts to total a secure financial base
* securing transportation
* securing a prayer team
* securing access to medical care
* securing medical and other appropriate insurance
* completing your Care Plan
* obtaining initial training in Bridging Skills (Cross-cultural skills)

2. Explore

* Scheduling for interaction
* Immediate interaction with locals
* Avoiding other outsiders
* Asking locals for help
* Choosing a local to trust for basic and everyday decisions
* Identifying the person of peace
* Identifying gate keepers
* Identifying responsive persons/groups
* Have words ready to define your purpose for coming

3. Move In

* Using local solutions
* Leaving your luggage behind
* Avoiding Comparison statements
* Finding the good and Affirming
* Adopting local patterns of behavior
* Allow their needs to become your needs.

4. Join Their Group

* Discerning Sub Groups
* Discerning Sub Networks
* Accepting invitations
* Discerning Group Responsiveness
* Volunteer in overlooked or unwanted

areas of serving. Say "yes."

* Discovering and Going Through Entrance Customs
* Submitting to local leadership
* Resist sharing ideas or leading change for period of time
* Develop answer for defining your role—what are you doing here?

5. Learn Their Language and Ways

* Curiosity
* Asking Questions
* Living in Ambiguity
* LAMP method
* Learning Posture
* Adopting local behaviors
* Choosing Informants
* Reflection on Daily Results of Actions
* Observation
* Failing Publicly without shame
* Learn and Adopt local lingo
* Learn and Adopt local non-verbals
* Learn and Adopt local dress
* Learn and Adopt local boundaries on behavior
* Learn what are the important questions
* Learn what questions are avoided
* Listen to the stories of the community and their leaders
* Learn what causes fear, sadness, jealousy, joy, Trust
* What gives hope?
* What takes away hope?
* Where is God working?
* Where are spiritual things experienced and named?
* Gift giving etiquette.

6. Help Add Value to Their Community

* Give and receive personally
* Participate in what is expected
* Join existing efforts to improve community
* Begin a dictionary of their vocabulary for Biblical concepts
* Begin identifying the Biblical stories that especially resonate with this group.
* Begin privately playing with words from their vocabulary that might articulate the gospel in their view of reality.
* Begin privately playing with words from their vocabulary that describe the problems in the world from their perspective.

7. Find a Role

* Accept first task offered regardless of fit or desire
* Follow local leaders
* Wait for invitation to add value
* Listening for felt needs
* Adopt idea of local leader
* Submit to local leaders
* Serve as a volunteer
* Be available to people
* Humble yourself and climb the ranks of leadership of local organizations, beginning at the bottom even though you feel overqualified
* Seek training in skills that the community senses the need for and values

8. Befriend

* Steps 5, 6, and 7 lead to developing friendships. The below list helps your transition from friendship to discipleship:
  + Identify between 2 and 12 individuals who want to be friends with you
  + Prioritize the needs of this smaller group of people
  + Intentionally spend more and regular time with this small group of people
  + Invite each of these people to spend regular time with you
  + Practice the Bridging Skills with these people related to helping them connect their life and their challenges to the stories of scripture
  + Begin discipling this small group through life on life modeling without calling it “discipleship”
  + When each person is ready, invite them into intentional discipleship.

9. DISCIPLE People to Live Like Jesus

* Creating Safe and Sacred Space
* Modeling Spiritual Practices
* Affirming existing spiritual practices
* Naming existing spiritual practices
* Creating new spiritual practices that fit with existing patterns of behavior
* Fist Analogy
* Shared Leadership
* Scout method
* Pray
* Listen
* Read scripture
* Community
* Holy spirit
* Modeling service in the community
* Mentoring
* Knowing when to refer
* Using real life images to explain spiritual truth
* Connecting life happenings to relevant scriptures
* Verbally sharing biblical stories without a Bible
* Affirming people with scriptural sayings and stories
* Model receiving input from friends. Ask for their perspective and follow through with action based on the advice of the locals.
* Invite others to move towards Jesus in places outside the walls of church buildings

10. Gather Groups

* Convening relationships
* Introducing like-minded folks to each other
* Setting up meeting times
* Facilitate people who host get-togethers
* Naming and encouraging 12 Group activities
* Helping group define and live outward vision for community
* Modeling best group practices
* Developing format & content
* Involving many in group in leadership of 12 practices
* Encouraging annual assessments
* Help group listen to Holy Spirit
* Setting up Advisory body
* Facilitate training of Advisory body
* Have by-laws written
* Arrange for accounting services
* Facilitate and encourage financial giving
* Ensure monthly advisory meetings and minutes are saved digitally with Bridges
* Host gatherings people actually want to attend and include the favorite beverages of your community.

11. Equip More Leaders

* Mentoring new people through the Discerning Step of the 12 Steps of the Bridging Path
* Help people recognize, name, accept and affirm their call
* Recognizing new leaders who are ready to be sent
* Slowing down leaders who are not ready to be sent
* Monitoring & evaluating good practice
* Advising

12. Send out Leaders

* Help new Bridge Leaders connect with Assessment, Coaching, Training and Support Groups and Support Accounting
* Connecting people with resources
* Functioning as a “supervisor” within Bridges for the new leader
* Seeing people being called on from your community due to job changes etc. as an opportunity to bless and send.