

Better Together

Neighboring Diagnostic

Where are you currently on your neighboring journey?

1. Before hearing Becky's talk this morning, how would you have described *The Seattle Freeze*?
 1. Never heard of it.
 2. It's a term that describes what happens to your brain if you drink your Frappuccino too quickly.
 3. It describes an average day in Seattle from November through May.
 4. It's what happens to people at Microsoft during the annual review cycle.
 5. It's a term describing Seattleites as being aloof, introverted and not very friendly, especially to those who've moved here from out of state.

2. On the whole, I would say the bulk of my personal relationships/friendships come from:
 1. Old high school & college friends
 2. Faith-based community or health/social club
 3. Work
 4. Prison
 5. My Neighborhood

3. Of the neighbors that you can see from your front door, how many of them do you "know" (beyond an occasional 'hello' or quick conversation while doing yard work)?
 1. I know less than 3 people in my neighborhood.
 2. I'd say about 10% or less.
 3. About half.
 4. I prefer to NOT know my neighbors on the chance that one of them is a felon.
 5. My neighborhood is very friendly, very tight. I know them all really well. We often hang out at each other's houses.

4. How often do you have a neighbor over for dinner?
 1. Rarely or Never
 2. Once a year, usually for a holiday gathering
 3. Does sharing a beer while we're out mowing our lawns count?
 4. Once a month
 5. 3-4 times a year

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5. Which of the following statements most closely mirrors your own neighboring experience? (comments were actually left on EatPlayThaw blog)
 1. We've been here (greater Eastside of Seattle) 9 years and are still feeling like we are going to never really break through the "ice" here.
 2. Honestly, while it (The Seattle Freeze) does happen sometimes, it doesn't happen to me nearly as often as people outside of Seattle like to talk about. People need to realize that Seattle is a tech Mecca – this city thrives on industry and people; this makes for people that lead busy lives and have little time. Throw in the fact that we're a city that is very connected and in the wire – Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, texting, etc – it makes it easy for us to connect with friends without actually connecting.
 3. We've lived in the same house for over 15 years. So needless to say, we know our neighbors *quite well*. On our right in the yellow house is Kathleen. Or is it Katherine? (I can never remember) She's married to the guy that drives the blue BMW, and they have two kids that I could not recognize on the street. On my left is the guy from the East with his wife and two or three kids. They are the third or fourth "neighbors" to live in that house. (My cat once "peed" on a couch in their garage, but that was a few owners back.) Across the street are Phil and Karen. They have lived there since before we moved in and we have at least one annual conversation. Very nice folks, but they have never been in our house nor us in theirs. You might say they are our closest "friends" in the neighborhood.
 4. I decided to join the club and invite some neighbors over for dinner. We had three couples over and it went pretty well. I realized that we don't always have a lot in common with our neighbors which makes it interesting but still worthwhile.
 5. The Seattle Freeze was totally a thing for us when we first arrived, and I didn't get it... but now, I've been here for 5.5 years, and in that time at least two really good friends moved away. There is a definite time investment involved in making friends, so it's hard when people move away. Now I find myself cynically asking how long people have been here and if they're planning on staying before deciding whether I can safely be friends without losing a part of myself when they leave.
 6. Even though we're the new kids on the block, I chose to reach out with Christmas poinsettias & cards for those on our street and then I created a contact list of everyone. The response has been lovely. We may be grown-ups, but I think we all still feel like the awkward kid at the middle school dance – and taking the risk to say "hi" first (or invite to dinner, or take cookies) is often a surprising relief to the other person, who wasn't sure how to reach out.
 7. I smile to think that I could introduce you to any of my neighbors within a block radius and share an introductory conversation starter as well. My neighbors rock!