



CESLM Code for Conduct

Christian Witness in Church-Based ESL Outreaches

Cooperative ESL Ministries exists to multiply Christian people and places who will welcome newcomers to Canada, help with their acculturation, and assist in their integration. The ministry is built on goodwill and love, the distinguishing characteristic of God. —“If we love one another, God lives in us.” (1 John 4:12)

1. Church-Based ESL facilitators work with people at a vulnerable stage of life to help them make a new home, fit into a new community and make progress in learning the language and culture of Canada. Our worldview recognizes that **“God so loved the world,”** and, as His representatives, everything we do must be done in a **spirit of love, good will and respect**. Christians are called to conduct themselves with **integrity** and **humility** and to overcome all arrogance, condescension or disparagement.
2. Newcomers to Canada have many needs; they also contribute to our learning and the health of this society. Although we cannot meet all the needs, we can **listen, refer and work collaboratively with other groups/agencies**—working toward mutuality for the good of all. We should continue to build relationships of respect and trust with people of different religions to **facilitate deeper mutual understanding, reconciliation and cooperation for the common good**.
3. Spiritual needs are real. Religious freedom includes the right to publicly profess, practice, propagate and change one's religion. This flows from the very dignity of the human person, which is grounded in the creation of all human beings in the image and likeness of God. As Christians it is a privilege and joy to give an accounting for the hope that is within us; and to do so with gentleness and respect. **Conversion is ultimately a work of the Holy Spirit, but we share in the witness of Christ—in word and deed**. Acts of service, justice and advocacy are an integral part of witnessing to the Gospel (Good News). Just as the Father sent the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit, **so believers are sent in mission** to witness, in word and action, to the love of the triune God.
4. Christians are to acknowledge that changing one's religion is a decisive step that must be accompanied by sufficient time for adequate reflection and preparation, through a process ensuring full personal freedom. This is where the church leaders have a role. In addition to providing the ESL facility, prayer and practical support and a community for social interaction, soul care ought to be easily accessible. **Pastoral care is necessary**, not only for ESL facilitators but also for clients who desire it. **The church community needs to be prepared to welcome, listen to and accept newcomers at various stages of enquiry and involvement**.

To proselytize and to evangelize are not synonymous. Proselytizing is defined as “unsolicited, coercive, manipulative, and/or hidden persuasion that seeks to influence others to adopt another way of thinking, believing or behaving.” (From NAFSA: Association of International Educators). To evangelize is to make an open and honest statement of the Gospel, which leaves the hearers entirely free to make up their own minds about it.



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Our motivation comes from our Lord's example and command: to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength; and to love our neighbour as ourselves. We continue to affirm the seven points in the "understanding of love relationships" below.

Our understanding of loving relationships includes:

- 1. Freedom.** I will allow you to be what you choose to be and will not try to make you what I think you ought to be.
- 2. Responsibility.** Because I love you, I feel responsible to you. That includes my being open and honest regardless of how you relate to me.
- 3. Acceptance.** I accept you as a child of God and not someone who can do something for me. If your freedom leads you to disagree with me, I will accept your opinion. I only ask you to respect my freedom and accept my opinion.
- 4. See the human being.** I see you as a person of importance and worth, not as an "it" to be manipulated or used.
- 5. Involvement.** I am willing to become involved in your life—with your permission. I will take the risk of being turned away because I care for you. I want to serve God, by serving you.
- 6. Trust.** I will have faith in you. I will trust you to be responsible in your involvement with me and accept my openness, not as a sign of weakness but as an indication that I am willing to back my words with action.
- 7. Absence of possession.** I do not own you, nor you me. Our relationship is built upon respect—this cannot be bought or sold.

—Revised by the CESLM board on February 14, 2019