**TIPS FOR PEOPLE FROM THE U.S.A. – THINGS TO CONSIDER – BY A SMALL GROUP OF CUBANS IN HAVANA**

**DO:**

* Greet people, including strangers. Say “Buenos días. ¿Cómo estás?” or “Buenas tardes” or “Buenas noches.”
* When meeting people, extend your hand and/or hug and kiss the person if they are leaning in for a hug/kiss.
* Mix with people. Sit with Cubans at meals, on the bus, and in diverse contexts.
* Talk to Cubans. Show interest in Cuban values, music, dance, traditions, food, etc.
* Ask people about their families. (“¿Cómo está tu familia?”)
* Be punctual but expect your schedule to change and for people or events to be “late.”
* Be patient if things start late or if the schedule changes. Use extra time to chat with Cubans or write in your journal.
* Be open-minded and flexible.
* Be humble.
* Check out assumptions or hypotheses with a number of different Cubans.
* Learn about the complexities of culture, Cuban Spanish, and humor. Learn commonly used phrases and non-verbal ways of communicating, including what is funny.
* Ask permission before taking something (such as someone’s food or pencil, etc.).
* Ask permission before taking photos.
* Listen carefully.
* Strike up conversations with strangers.
* Say “con permiso” (excuse me) when needing to pass a group of people.
* Ask for advice and guidance.
* Walk in pairs or with at least one or more people.
* Carry a copy of your passport with you.
* Thank guest speakers, even if you disagree with them.
* Say “adios” when leaving. Shake hands and hug/kiss people when saying goodbye.

**DON’T**:

* Enter a room without greeting people.
* Just say “hola.” Say more, such as “Buenos días. ¿Cómo estás?”
* Wear headphones or listen to your iPod during a lecture or when sitting with a Cuban.
* Say negative things about Cuba, Cubans, or Cuban food or make negative comparisons to the U.S.A.
* Be too direct or assertive, especially if disagreeing with someone or criticizing something.
* Be condescending or arrogant.
* Assume that people are being dishonest or illogical.
* Offer half the price in bargaining. Be fair.
* Remove your shoes inside someone’s house.
* Slam car doors or house doors.
* Be offended by people who may point out your nationality or race or physical characteristics (such as “gordito”).
* Be offended if you are talking with someone and the person touches your shoulder or hand or arm.
* Give donations in public.
* Pet dogs.
* Carry your passport or other important documents and valuables when walking around.
* Leave a formal talk or gathering without saying goodbye to the Cubans present and shaking their hands and/or kissing and hugging them.