



**Imagining Ourselves Global Gathering Guide:**  
**June, 2006: The Future**

This gathering guide is intended to give you a set of tools, activities, and questions to engage your guests in intimate group conversations on the monthly themes that are highlighted in the *Imagining Ourselves* online exhibit and book. Come join the conversation whether you're with work folks, family or friends. Remember that your attitude and preparation set the tone. Plan for a good time!

**Background:**

**About *Imagining Ourselves: A New Generation of Women:***

*Imagining Ourselves* is a platform for young women to create positive change in their lives, communities and the world. The project reaches out to a generation of women – the one billion women between the ages of 20 and 40 asking them to answer the question, “What defines your generation?” Launching on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2006, the *Imagining Ourselves* project will include:

- \* A published anthology featuring the photography, painting, collage, poetry and essays from women all over the world with an introduction by world-renowned author, Isabel Allende.
- \* An online exhibition, with multilingual, interactive options; and online educational curricula targeted for high schools and universities.
- \* Global gatherings around the world including launch, community, and on-the-ground events featuring prominent women participants.

**About the International Museum of Women:** The mission of the International Museum of Women is to value the lives of women around the world. With the aim of helping to change values, attitudes and practices adverse to women’s well-being, the Museum illuminates women’s history, amplifies the voices and contributions of women, promotes awareness of women’s issues globally, and inspires action through history, art and cultural exchange.

**Goals for Global Gatherings:**

- ✍ To begin a global dialogue on experiences affecting women in their twenties and thirties.
- ✍ To share and articulate your beliefs and attitudes with others around the globe, and learn what other women of the same age are thinking
- ✍ To learn from the wisdom of others who have come before and will follow after.
- ✍ To be motivated to take action to address the challenges of women and girls.
- ✍ To ... (additions from host are welcomed)

**Register:** Join the online community [www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org) to post your gathering in our list of *Imagining Ourselves* events, read about other gatherings, and communicate with your

peers around the world. (To register your gathering with us before March 8, 2006, please email Laura Kuo at [lkuo@imow.org](mailto:lkuo@imow.org)).

**Logistics:** Guests want to be comfortable, chairs/tables, cushions, food, beverages, potluck? These questions should be decided early. Also let your guests know how long the event will run. If you're taking pictures, let them know, and make sure they feel comfortable. Pictures are a great way to let other young women see what your group was doing.

**Image or Prose selected from IO site [www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org)** Please respect our artists' by including their name, country, and title of piece when sharing their work.

## Facilitation Tips and Exercises: The Future

### Facilitator Reminder:

The activities below are intended to serve as a guide. As facilitator, you are encouraged to adjust or mold the activities to accommodate the interests of the group. Each Global Gathering Guide will provide you with two different activities and optional icebreakers. You may choose between topics, use both, or create your own. Reference material and additional information is also provided for further insight into the topics. The main idea is that people gather together to discuss the issues/topics highlighted in each month of the *Imagining Ourselves* online exhibit and the corresponding chapters of the *Imagining Ourselves* book. We also encourage you to document the gathering. Please take notes and pictures during the event and share your experience online with the *Imagining Ourselves* community.

### Materials:

- ? Computer with an Internet Connection (if possible), to display images and work
- ? Paper
- ? Pens/Pencils
- ? Art supplies (art materials can be selected at Facilitator's discretion)
  - o colored paper
  - o paint
  - o markers
  - o scissors
  - o glue
  - o magazines
- ? Comfortable location/space to conduct workshop
- ? Camera, if possible (Take photos to report back and share with other young women around the world)
- ? Copies of pieces/works by IO contributors for participants
- ? Artist's biography and country information for participants

### Introduction: (5 Minutes)

Introduce the *International Museum of Women, Imagining Ourselves* and yourself as facilitator of the workshop. Please reference the Background Information for a description of the museum and the *Imagining Ourselves* exhibit. Inform the group of the purpose of the gathering and the agenda. Following the basic introductions, allow participants to introduce themselves to the group so they feel comfortable engaging in an intimate conversation with each other. Facilitators may use icebreakers to get people involved and energized about the gathering.

### Optional Icebreaker Activities:

- 1) Ask each participant to introduce himself or herself and share an important lesson they have learned from past generations of women.
- 2) Ask guests to choose a partner, preferably someone they do not know. Instruct partners to ask each other the following questions and share their findings to the group:
  - a. What is your name?
  - b. In a few words, how do you hope the future will be for the next generation of women?

## Activity 1: Generations

Each generation has the rich opportunity to borrow from the past, while simultaneously creating their own path for the future. This activity focuses on how our generation of women is similar and different from past generations. To start the activity, share the piece, *Two Wings*, by the mother-daughter team Olga Vladimirkaya and Aleksandra Kovaleva (Ukraine). Be sure to provide the group with the background information about the artists/piece, which is provided below. It is also encouraged that facilitators provide copies of the poem and image. Ask the following questions about the piece to initiate a conversation about the topic:

*What are some common characteristics and/or themes shared by the poem and drawing? What are some noticeable differences?*

*How has Aleksandra borrowed from the past to create something new and her own? In what ways have we borrowed from past generations of women to create something new and different?*

Once the discussion has concluded, the group will create two lists comparing their generation from past generations of women: one list will identify the differences, while the second will identify the similarities. Religion, ethnicity, politics, relationships, language are some examples for the list.

Use the information from the lists to create a Venn diagram; this portion of the activity should be done individually. Ask each guest to pick one influential women in their life, but this woman should be from an older generation. With this female in mind, create a Venn diagram comparing the similarities and differences each participant has with a woman from a different generation. The Venn diagram will consist of one circle designated for you. The other circle represents the characteristics of the women from the older generation. You will place all similarities in the space where the circles intersect. Once participants finish creating their Venn diagrams, allow them to share their work with the group.

Following the presentation of the Venn diagrams, ask the following questions to facilitate a deeper discussion:

What is surprising about the differences and special about the similarities we have with elder generations of women?

How can we use the commonalities between the generations as a bridge to understand each other's different experiences?

### Topic Facts:

- 1) In 1930, white women in South Africa were granted suffrage, by 1994 all women were granted the vote.  
(<http://womenshistory.about.com/library/weekly/aa091600a.htm>;  
<http://www.concourt.gov.za/constitution/const02.html#7>)
- 2) "Women are generally marrying later, but more than a quarter of women aged 15 to 19 are married in 22 countries---all in developing regions." – (From the 2000 UN Women Watch Statistics  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/ww2000/wm2000.htm>)
- 3) In 2002, the government of Vietnam banned dowries and polygamy. ("Reports from around the world : Asia & Pacific, *WIN News*, Autumn, 2002)

## **Two Wings:** Artists' Description of Piece

**Artist/Piece Information:** Olga Vladimirskaia and Aleksandra Kovaleva (Ukraine)

Olga Vladimirskaia and Aleksandra Kovaleva, a mother-and-daughter team, have worked with the concept of unity, linking poetry that Olga wrote before Aleksandra was born with Aleksandra's drawings. In this way they celebrate their shared identities as artists and women, despite their differences in age. Aleksandra would like to become a theater director, and Olga works as an editor.

### **Olga Vladimirskaia:** (Mother)

I think the women of my generation are too concerned with being "women". They wear high heels and uncomfortable clothes. By their thirties or forties, many of them feel disappointed because their youth and beauty have passed. Of course, this does not apply to all women. The information agency where I work has produced a special program titled "Women in Business". The businesswomen that we interviewed were happy and optimistic. Rather than blaming men, they spoke of harmonious and fruitful business relations with them. They also spoke about their happy families. I think that my generation has already come to terms with the necessity of becoming "new women", but many do not have the desire or the strength to do it. That's why my hopes are with the younger generation of women, with my daughter and those like her. I am proud that they gladly accept me into their circle. That means I too belong to the generation of "new women" and that our common traits transcend age.

### **Aleksandra Kovaleva:** (Daughter, then 18 years old)

In my opinion, there are many factors that define my generation. But I can say one thing: Girls my age have many opportunities and are taking advantage of them all. The doors are open. You can find your own way and stick with it. There's no need to seek out problems; they'll find you sure enough and make you stumble, make you think, "Perhaps I should stop, perhaps I should turn back?" Girls my age don't reflect too much; they simply go forward without looking back. We are confident in ourselves and our strength.

### *Wings*

The sky stabbed through the breaches in the ceiling  
But we, like silent pilgrims in a shrine,  
Exhaled instead of praying. The divine  
presence of freedom overwhelmed our feelings.  
To roam strange lands, or plunge into the abyss,  
Or let your reason burn in passion's blaze...  
Yet eagles cast their everlasting gaze  
from up above, where air is thin like bliss!  
A mountain white that wears a snowy crown,  
things redolent of life, so packed with lies,  
the truth that peers so hard into your eyes  
and air so vast the stars are tumbling down.



Olga Vladimirskaia and Aleksandra Kovaleva, *Two Wings*

## Activity 2: Charting Our Own Path for Change

This month's theme highlights the limitless ability and ambition of young women all over the world to take charge of their future and become agents of social change locally and globally. This generation of women not only has the tools and education to take the reins and become strong leaders, but has demonstrated immeasurable drive to take action in their community.

*Mayerly Sanchez is a prime example of the drive and determination of our generation of women. Mayerly, a peace activist and volunteer from Colombia, chose to take action in her community and writes about it in the *Imagining Ourselves* Anthology. At the young of age of twelve, she was inspired by the violent death of her close friend Milton and established the Colombian Children's Movement for Peace. The movement aims to provide children with the resources to promote nonviolence among their peers. Mayerly and her movement were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998.*



This activity is designed to encourage participants to think about how they intend to create a path for change and take charge of their future.

As facilitator, you can initiate the conversation by asking the group to think about local and/or global issues they consider important and/or problematic. Collectively, make a list of these issues. Keeping the list in mind, each participant will individually make a collage representing the issues they consider to be most important and urgent. The collage should creatively answer the following questions:

Which issues do you plan to change?

What path will you take (or have taken) to get there?

Be sure all supplies are available. A diverse selection of magazines is helpful. Before the gathering, you might ask each guest to bring a couple of magazines for the activity.

Once the collages are finished, allow each participant to share their work and action plans with the group.

This activity can be done collectively or individually. If you choose to create an Action Plan as a group, selected one issue and plan the steps the group will take to make a change.

### Topic Facts:

- 1) Women parliamentary representatives increased from 13 to 15.6 per cent between 1999-2004, and are increasingly involved in foreign affairs, finance and defense. In 2001/2002, more than 50 per cent of judges in six Eastern European countries (Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia and Lithuania) and 35 per cent of Highest judges in Poland were women (*Women's Employment Global Trends and ILO Responses*).
- 2) Despite major recent advances of women in politics around the world, women in positions of political leadership are still in rarity. In 2005, women comprise only 16 per cent of political representatives around the world (*Imagining Ourselves* Anthology 2005)

### Activity 3: Thematic Questions for “Future” Discussions

- 1) What are the most important issues that affect our generation of women?
- 2) How have the issues that affect our generation differ from the issues that affected the prior generations?
- 3) In what ways are we more or less empowered than past generations of women to be leaders and agents of social change in our communities?

### Wrap Up:

- ✍ Have your group share what they learned, and what may have surprised them about the conversation.
- ✍ Identify Next Steps: Based on what you learned or observed in the discussion, what might your group do to contribute to positive change in your own lives, in your community, or on a global level?
- ✍ Share resources: Encourage your guests to get involved with community organizations to guide/support other women, especially on themes related to the topic of Culture and Conflict. Below are a few suggestions, but feel free to provide your own local examples.

### Resources on Taking Action and Charting a Path for Young Women:

- ✍ International Museum of Women—[www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org)
- ✍ Global Fund for Women—[www.globalfundforwomen.org](http://www.globalfundforwomen.org)
- ✍ Association for Women in Development—[www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)
- ✍ UNIFEM—[www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org)
- ✍ International Federation of University Women—[www.ifuw.org](http://www.ifuw.org)

### Report Back:

**IMPORTANT**—Please take the time to log on to the *Imagining Ourselves* online exhibit, and create a short report about your gathering on our events pages. It only takes a few minutes, and it's important to share your thoughts with other young women around the world who are eager to learn from you! (This is separate—and possibly more important—than the evaluation form that follows, which is simply helpful feedback for us to improve our future gatherings.)



**Evaluation of Global Gathering:**

(Handing this form to your guests for additional feedback will help us improve our future gatherings. Responses can be mailed to: Gatherings, c/o International Museum of Women, PO Box 190038, San Francisco, Ca 94119, USA)

Date of Gathering: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Gathering: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of People at Gathering: \_\_\_\_\_

Please briefly answer the following questions:

- 1) Did you learn anything new from the discussion, and if so, what? Was there anything surprising that came up in the conversation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) Do you leave the discussion (or participation in the Imagining Ourselves project in general) with any new ideas that could be applied to your own life or to your community?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) What suggestions or constructive criticism would you have for the organizers of the gathering, or for the organizers of the Imagining Ourselves project?