

Stand Up For Diversity

GOAL: To highlight how some people have benefited from and others have been hurt by discrimination in our culture.

TIME REQUIRED: At least twenty minutes for this activity. It should be used as a part of a larger workshop on diversity, racism, or multiculturalism.

MATERIALS: None.

PHYSICAL SETTING: A room where people can both sit and stand comfortably.

PROCESS: This exercise can be somewhat threatening and is, therefore, best with a group that has had a lot of exposure to the topic of diversity or in which there is a high degree of safety.

Instructions. This exercise will be used to highlight some of the different experiences that each of us have had. It will point out differences in our cultural backgrounds as well as different experiences with discrimination. It will also point out that some of us have benefited from discrimination, whereas others have been hurt by discrimination.

As I read the following statements, I will ask you to stand up if the statement is true for you. If you are physically unable to stand, please identify that this is true for you in some other way. As people stand I would like you to remain silent but to look around and to see how many people in the group are standing and how many are sitting. As you look around silently, I would like you to pay attention to how you are feeling and to make note of your feelings in response to different statements.

Please stand up if...

- You grew up as a member of a minority group in your community.
- You grew up in a neighborhood that was not multiracial.
- Your family employed domestic help of a different race.
- You went to an elementary school that was not multiracial.
- You went to a junior high school that was not multiracial.
- You went to a high school that was not multiracial.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your race.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your ethnicity.
- You heard family members use derogatory terms for or made jokes about other racial and ethnic groups.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your religion.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your sexual orientation.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your disability.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your family income.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your gender.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your age.
- People have ever made derogatory comments to you about your physical appearance.
- Your family was eligible for food stamps or public aid.
- As a child your family never had to worry about money.
- You have ever been treated differently than other students by a professor and you believe this treatment was due to your race or ethnicity.
- You have ever been a victim of violence because you were different than others.
- You have ever confronted someone who made a racist comment or joke.
- You have ever confronted someone who made a sexist comment or joke.

- You have ever confronted someone who made a homophobic comment or joke.
- You have ever been questioned or challenged by family or friends about your association or friendships with people of a different background.
- You do not have any close friends of a different race.
- You do not have any close friends of a different sexual orientation.
- You are among the first generation of your family to attend college.
- You did not attend the college that was your first choice due to financial limitations.
- You have not or did not receive financial aid as an undergraduate in college.
- You were told by your family not to trust anyone of a different race.
- You have worked in a job setting that did not include people of different races.
- You have been told that you were hired for a job or admitted to a academic program because of affirmative action guidelines.
- You believe that you were not hired for a job because of your race or ethnicity.
- You have ever experienced fear traveling through a neighborhood which was predominately of a different racial background than your own.
- You have ever experienced anxiety being in a group where you were the only person of your racial group.
- You have experienced any discomfort answering any of the questions during this exercise.

Processing Questions

1. What were your feelings during this exercise?
 2. Were there times when you felt good about standing up? Were there times when you felt uncomfortable when you stood up?
 3. Were there times when it was difficult to stand up or when you chose not to stand when you could have?
 4. Were there particular statements that affected you in a strong, personal way?
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SOURCE: This exercise is a modified version of an exercise called Whites Stand Up presented by Paul Kivel and Victor Lewis of the Oakland Men's Project at the 17th National Conference on Men and Masculinity, July 1992, Chicago, IL. This exercise is also described in Men's Work, a book written by Paul Kivel (1992) and published by Hazelden Press / Ballentine. This outline was written by Jeff E. Brooks-Harris, Ph.D., Counseling and Student Development Center, University of Hawai'i at Manoa.