FIND YOUR GROUP

Source

This activity is adapted from the activity "Odd one out", from the Education Pack "All different – All equal" (Council of Europe 2005).

Themes

- Identity
- Culture
- Stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination

Competences addressed

- Attitudes: openness and curiosity towards diversity
- Knowledge of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination
- Skills: solidarity

Complexity : Level 1

Group size : 16 or more people

Time : 30 minutes

Objectives

- To start discussion about different groups in society
- To raise awareness about prejudice and discrimination
- To encourage empathy with the experience of rejection or exclusion.

Materials

Coloured sticky paper spots. For example, for a group of 16 people you will need four blue, four red, four yellow, three green and one white spot.

Preparation

This activity can serve as a first introduction to a course on intercultural learning. It can also be used as a warming-up activity.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to form a circle and close their eyes.
2. Stick one spot on each player's forehead. Participants should not know what colour spot they have. One person gets the white spot and for each of the other colours at least three people should have the same colour.
3. Tell participants to open their eyes and give them the instruction "Find your group".
4. No one may talk, they may only use non-verbal communication.
5. Once they are settled tell them you will ask if everyone is satisfied with the composition of the group and if anyone is not they should raise their hand.
6. Ask if everyone is happy with the group composition and give a little bit of time to see if anyone comes forward. If someone is unhappy tell them to continue finding their group until everyone is happy.
7. When they settle ask again if everyone is happy and continue like this until they say they are all happy with the group composition or until you decide it is time to stop.

Debriefing and evaluation

Help the group explore their feelings about what they did and what they learned.

- How did you feel at the moment when you first met someone with the same colour spot as yourself?
- How did the person with the odd spot feel?
- Did you try to help each other get into groups?
- Did you realise that the instruction was: "Find your group" with no specific detail?
- Why did you think that finding your group means having people with the same colour spot, but not other aspects of your identity?
- What other groups do you belong to, for example a football team, school, NGO?
- Can anyone join these groups?
- In our society who are the ones who cannot find their group?
- What aspects of people's identity are most prevalent and what can limit their participation? What is the "coloured spot" in real life?
- Does being the odd one out always mean they have been excluded or can it be a choice to want to stand apart from others and be different?
- Do you have personal experience of being (voluntarily or not) the odd one out?

Tips for facilitators

Be aware of who gets the white spot. This should not be a participant who has already experienced exclusion or discrimination.

Initially participants will think that this is just a short exercise to form groups for an activity. Eventually they will realise that this is "the activity" and will start to understand its meaning.

You may decide to stop the activity at any point if there are no interesting developments or allow it to continue until the group decides they are all happy with the outcome.

Variations

A shorter version of this activity can be done by giving participants specific instructions on how to form the group, such as by having only people with the same colour spots in the group or only people with different colour spots in the group (no two people with the same colour).

Another variation can be made by adding another spot of a totally different colour so that two people cannot identify with any group nor to each other. A piece of tape can also be used instead of a spot.

Finally, another variation could be to stick the spots in different places (on the cheeks, nose or forehead) and see if that influences the group composition by adding an additional potential criterion.

Suggestions for follow-up

This activity can be followed by "From exclusion to integration", which addresses the relationship between the majority and minorities in society.