

Label activity

Summary

This activity helps you experience the effects of inclusion or exclusion.

Aims

To learn more about inclusion/exclusion.

Participants

Anyone

Method

non-verbal communication, examination, discussion

Source

Patreese D. Ingram (2017). *More Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults*. Retrieved from:
<https://extension.psu.edu/more-diversity-activities-for-youth-and-adults>

Keywords

culture, inclusion, exclusion

Contributor

Qualed

Description

Begin the session by asking participants if they think we sometimes label people because they belong to different cultural groups. Tell them that the labels we put on people often limit their participation in society.

Tell participants that you are going to give them each a sticker. Tell them that you will put it on their foreheads so that they cannot see what it says. Distribute the labels randomly. Ask everyone to remain quiet and not reveal to each other what their labels say.

When everyone has a label, ask participants to get up and mill around as if they were on a walk, or in the store, or at a party. Remind them that they should not reveal what is on anyone else's label. Let participants mingle for 4 to 5 minutes, then ask them to return to their seats without looking at their labels.

Discuss with the participants the following questions:

1. How were you feeling?
2. Without looking at your label, do you know what it says? How do you know?
3. All of you who think you have the "Turn away from me" label, please come and stand

together in front of the room. How did you feel?

Allow participants look at their labels now. Explain that all of us have experienced times when we felt like we were wearing a “Turn away from me” label — when we felt left out or targeted. However, some cultural groups might experience this more than others, even regularly. What groups in society seem to have a “Turn away from me” label on them? (Some examples include people with disabilities, people of a different religion, people of a different race, people who speak with an accent, and underprivileged people.)

Remind them that no one said anything negative to them; it was just in our nonverbal communication—our body language and our expressions. Without words, they got the message. Point out that 94% of all communication is nonverbal. We need to pay close attention to our body language and nonverbal expressions as well as our words.

Material

Prepare labels/stickers as many as participants. On the labels write: “Smile at me,” Say, ‘Hi,’” “Pat me on the back,” “Shake my hand,” and “Give me an “okay” sign.” Use other responses that are typical for the group. On 10% of the labels, write, “Turn away from me.”

Advice for Facilitators

You may add some following additional questions:

- What can we do to change our nonverbal behaviour to help everyone feel included?
- What do people from groups that are left out or excluded sometimes do? (Sometimes they get together and form their own groups and isolate themselves; perhaps this happened during this activity.)
- Any new thoughts about why members of excluded groups act in society the way they do?
- Any new insights on how being in an oppressed group feel?

Category: Social Learning, Group size: Small group, Duration: 15 min

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