

Identity Signs

👤 Large Group

🕒 201

🔒 High Trust

🕒 20 mins

📁 LGBTQ

This activity focuses on what are our salient identities in particular circumstances. How do our different identities intersect, interact, and affect our daily lives.

⚙️ Necessary supplies

- Identity signs to hang up around the room

🚩 Goals & objectives

- To allow a space for people in the participant group to discuss their different salient identities and to understand, on a more interpersonal level, the experiences of others
- To demonstrate that even people who identify in the same way can experience different levels of (self) consciousness around a particular identity
- To talk about how we experience our identities on a day to day basis

📋 Step-by-step walk through

If possible before the workshop beings hang identity signs around the room. If not hang them before beginning the activity.

1. Explain the activity. *Example:* “Ok, we’re going to do an activity called "Identity Signs". As you can see there are different identity categories hung up around the room - (name each identity category). In a minute I’m going to ask you all to stand up and I’m going to read out a question that has a blank in it. You will then move under the sign that best fills in that blank. Is anyone not clear on those directions? I’ll read out the first question and if you’re not sure what to do at that point we will discuss what to do.”
2. Get everyone standing up!
3. Read out the first question - clarify what you would like people to do.
4. Ask if anyone would like to talk about why they choose that identity or what their lived experience is like with that identity applying to that question. Allow for a few different people to share their thoughts. If everyone seems particularly eager then allow everyone to talk. Before you want to move on, let people know that someone will be the last one to talk, “Billy do you want to share before I ask another question?” This allows for a smoother transition.
5. Repeat with another question.
6. After you finish with the questions or the activity seems to be losing steam, close up with one last question and then do a wrap up of the activity.



Questions List

1. The part of my identity that I am most aware of on a daily basis is_____.
2. The part of my identity that I am the least aware of on a daily basis is_____.
3. The part of my identity that was most emphasized or important in my family growing up was _____.
4. The part of my identity that I wish I knew more about is _____.
5. The part of my identity that garners me the most privilege is _____.
6. The part of my identity that I believe is the most misunderstood by others is _____.
7. The part of my identity that I feel is difficult to discuss with others who identify differently _____.
8. The part of my identity that makes me feel discriminated against is _____.



Guiding questions

1. Debrief the activity. Ask what people found surprising about the activity, or if anyone had anything more to add.
2. Discuss what the activity was like to do - people often name that they didn't realize how much they have in common with one another or that they were surprised about how they answered the questions
3. Build off of comments that may address that it was difficult, or that participants don't often think about all the parts of their identities. Draw parallels to people and talk about how one person's frustration with people not understanding their sexuality can be a similar experience to someone else's frustration around their gender presentation. Do not use language that says one experience is harder than the other, the important element is that we can all have similar or shared experiences with our identities even when the identities are incredibly different. experiences but
4. Discuss how thinking about these identity categories affect us in our other identities as students self and what impact our identities has on being an educator, student, leader, team player, etc...



Make it your own

Add more questions! Or change the questions up!

You could also choose to focus on different identities - particularly if you're working with a group of individuals that all share a common experience/identity. For example: If you're working with the football team you might want to include "Athlete" as an identity sign.

You could do this silently and reflectively - asking people to write down their thoughts/experiences/choices on a piece of paper after every question. Then you could have people reflect in a small group on the process, or switch the papers and ask people to act out and read out a different individuals sheet.





Notes

It is important that this activity focuses talking on the different identity experiences and not on comparing the experiences of the different individuals. One person's experience is not less severe or more important than another's, and it is important to keep the questions to be about everyone's individual truths.



Sexual Orientation

Race



Class

Gender

Presentation



Ethnicity

Gender

Identity



Religious Affiliation Immigration Status

