

The intent of this program is for students to explore race/ racism by challenging them to step into the shoes of a different ethnicity. Assign students a race, by giving them self-adhesive name badges prepared ahead of time.

For the purposes of this exercise, use:

- African American
- Latino/a
- Asian
- Native American

Flip Side

Have participants sit in a circle—no more than 15 in a group, preferably. If there are more people in attendance, start another circle. Remind them that nothing said in the room leaves the room, and that confidentiality is to be respected.

- Have people introduce themselves around the circle.
- Introduce yourself as the facilitator, and explain the following:

“For the purpose of the exercise, each person in the circle will re-introduce themselves by saying “Hi, my name is _____, and I am an “state your ethnicity here”, REGARDLESS of how you self-identify.”

- Once introductions are completed, begin the discussion by asking questions which the participants are to respond to as if they self-identified as the assigned ethnicity

Example Questions:

1. “What, if anything, is different when you apply for a job than when your Caucasian friends apply?”
2. “Are you treated differently in public than the white majority? How so?”
3. “What is your reaction to the “English Only” movement?”
4. “What are some stereotypes you hear about your race?”
5. “Would you date a person of another race? Why or why not?”
6. “What is the reaction to a mixed couple?”
7. “Is there any thing you resent about being (African-American, Latino/a, Asian-American, Native American, etc) in this society? What? Why? What could make that different?”

Other questions will arise during the session, and will often bring the most productive discussion to the table.

After discussion seems to be winding down, or the time allotted for the program has nearly elapsed,(reserve 10 minutes at the end for processing), invite people to step out of their roles and take a few moments, in silence, to collect themselves.

Possible Facilitation Questions:

1. Ask the group how the experience has affected them.
2. What, if anything, do they have a better appreciation for?
3. What behaviors of their own do they take for granted, if any?
4. What are they most committed to changing?

It is helpful to have a second facilitator to take notes on a flip chart or white board, so that the processing has a visual component as well.

Please remember to be sensitive to any and all emotions that arise during this program!