

Cross the Line

“Notice how it feels to cross the line; look who is with you, look who is not with you and cross back over.”

We live in a diverse world. This exercise will explore the diversity among us by thinking about our values, our backgrounds, our relationships, and our experiences. We might even discover that this fairly similar looking group is much more diverse than any of us would assume. This activity will involve labeling and personalizing some of this diversity. This personalization might prove uncomfortable at times. However, it will empower us to break down some of the stereotypes and assumptions that we have learned through our cultures, experiences, and lives.

Rules:

1. The first involves listening. Let’s have silence throughout the exercise. This means “no talking, snickering, giggling, gestures or facial expressions”.
2. It is imperative that we respect the dignity of each person who is here. All that is shared should remain confidential and nothing that is offered should leave this room. However, if after the workshop you really need to talk about something you’ve heard, please talk to a trusted adult.

This activity is fairly simple. Mark a line on the floor that is long enough to line your group along. Tape and rope will be provided. Ask everyone to gather on one side of the line and face towards its center. The facilitator will call out specific categories/labels/descriptions, and ask that all of those to whom this applies, walk to the other side of the line. Once there, turn and face the crowd you just left. Get in touch with your feelings and think about those people on both sides then return to the side you started from. After a few seconds, the facilitator will continue with a new question. Remember, there is no pressure to cross the line if you don’t feel comfortable doing so. That is a personal decision. At the conclusion of the activity, we will discuss what we felt and what we learned.

Debrief Questions

How are you feeling right now?

Is there anything you want to say to your fellow participants about why you crossed the room on a particular question(s)?

Cross the line if you:

- Have visited another country
- Have never flown
- Wear corrective lenses
- Practice a religion
- Feel like you know very little about your heritage
- Are the oldest child
- Are the youngest child
- Are the only child
- Or a friend or family member is LGBTQ
- Have been hurt by a relationship
- Have ever enjoyed a sunset
- Have ever been made fun of
- Plan on attending college
- Have ever had to make a tough decision
- Have ever said something you regret
- Or someone you know well has a disability you cannot see
- Know someone with a mental illness
- Know how to swim
- Have had a close friend or family member pass away
- Are the child of divorced parents
- Consider winter your favorite season
- Have ever felt lonely
- Have had a close friend or family member attempt or commit suicide
- Feel like you are important
- Feel that there is something about you that makes you unique
- Have ever experienced the effects of alcoholism in their family
- Have ever experienced the effects of drug addiction in their family
- Feel like most nights you don't get enough sleep
- Have ever been afraid
- Have ever felt powerless
- Have a power song
- You feel like someone believes in you
- Have a belief you feel very strongly about
- Want to make a difference
- Could use a hug right now