

5 Aspects of Social Identity

ACTIVITY:

Process of Identification
and making conscious our identity

Time Needed:

10-15 minute online or 20-55 minutes
in person

Materials Needed:

1 Handout or invite virtual participants to have a paper and pen/pencil available

Group Size:

Individual to Large Group

Space Needed:
Work in small groups, pairs, or individually online

Participant Preparation:

Review definitions of social identity and groups of membership.

Facilitator Preparation:

Review Facilitation Notes

Review and select items to discuss

Make handout copies

Activity Summary:

This is an exercise to help individuals think about and identify their social identity. The exercise uses a self-generated list of aspects about identity within the context of socially constructed groups.

Goals of the Activity:

- To help participants think about the concept of social identity.
 - To provide a prompt for participants to list aspects of their own social identity.
 - To help participants understand that we all have multiple identities.

Facilitation Notes:

Share the definition: Social identity is your identification with the context of socially constructed groups. Some examples of identification categories are: age, ethnicity, economic level, gender, nationality, language, sexual orientation, etc. There is one handout used for this exercise:

- Process of Identification sheet

Process Steps:

- Distribute handout: Process of Identification (3-5 minutes)
 - Ask participants to list five aspects of their social identity.
 - Participants are not limited to the sample identification categories on the handout.
- Pose the set of discussion questions: (5-10 minutes)
 - *Reflect for a moment on what it was like to “choose” aspects of your identity.*
 - *How did you feel making the choice?*
 - *Did you have a difficult time coming up with five?*
 - *Did you have a hard time stopping at five?*
 - Engage the group in discussion about these questions. Invite 3-4 volunteers to share or have people discuss in small groups, or virtually come off mute and share in the chat.

Options/Variations:

- Participants can complete the Process of Identification sheet as pre-work and then engage in the group discussion face-to-face.

Tips: Identity facilitations can be difficult. Keep in mind that the goal is inclusion and not division. Be careful to make participants feel that they are in a safe environment and that no identity is judged as better or worse than another.