

Activity 4.4 Identities and Issues Intersections¹

Description

This activity opens up complex thinking; it helps participants to understand issues of prejudice and stereotypes, and it also helps them to find ways of coming to consensus on issues that affect them.

Learning Goal

- Examine how our views are shaped by many factors including the media, family, religion, class, racial and ethnic identities, etc.

Practice (50 minutes)

Step One	<p>Read the following instructions to the group: You have been asked to pull together a task team linked to COVID-19. The task team needs to come up with ideas about how to build community cohesion or to rebuild community, after the end of lockdown/when there is more movement allowed in your neighborhood.</p> <p>People were asked to volunteer their time but there are only 8 places on the team. The following residents came forward, from whom you have to select your team of 8:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An unemployed teenager2. A retired doctor3. A college student4. A drug dealer5. A blind musician6. A pregnant school teacher7. A bank manager in a wheelchair8. A transgender minister9. A homecare nurse10. A migrant farm worker11. A middle-aged architect	5 min
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¹ **Citation for this activity:** Janice McMillan (2023). Identities and Issues Intersections. In Hartman, Britt, & Byrd (Eds). *The Interactivity Foundation Collaborative Discussion Toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.collaborativediscussionproject.com/module-4-culturally-responsive-collaboration>

	<p>12. A homeless person 13. An active duty marine 14. A conservative historian 15. A liberal plumber</p>	
Step Two	Think about your own neighborhood and who you know there that you would like to have on a team like this, and why. Write down a few characteristics of ideal team members.	5 min
Step Three	Working individually and referring back to the list given above, rank the volunteers from 1-15 in order of your preference. Make sure you can say why you would or would not select someone for the task team.	5 min
Step Four	Think about and write down the criteria you used in making in your decisions.	5 min
Step Five	In small groups, compare your individual rankings and discuss the criteria you each used.	10 min
Step Six	Through trade-offs and negotiations, arrive at a decision of the final 8 volunteers, collectively. Tip: It is really important to let each other talk about your choices and for other participants to listen carefully.	10 min
Step Seven	Regroup with the entire class. Each group should share the list of team members. Write these on the board or flip sheets. Compare team membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there consistent overlap? Why? • Are there any outliers? Why were these team members chosen? • How might the complexity of the issue influence the diversity of team membership? • How important are diverse perspectives when dealing with complex issues? When might it be a hindrance? When might it be a benefit? 	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- In your ideal task force formation, what criteria for team members rose to the top of the list? Why these criteria or characteristics? Are these criteria/characteristics that you would want for all important teams or are they specific for this particular task force?
- Was it difficult to come to a shared list of team members? Why or why not?
- During the discussion, how did your discussion of COVID 19 (and the complexity of reopening) inform your decision for team members?

Practice Journal

This week, create your ideal power team. Think of an issue that you would like to solve. Select 8 people to serve on the task force. Why these eight people? What would they bring and how would they work together? For fun, your team can be made up of living, dead, real, or imaginary people.

Dive Deeper: Additional Resources

- [Chimamanda Adichie's TED talk "The danger of a single story."](#)