

Find your peeps activity

Goal: the purpose of this activity is to demonstrate the power and resiliency of group identities

Materials:

3x4 pieces of 4 different colors of paper, one sheet per person (see breakdown below). The paper may be repurposed, i.e., does not need to be clean.

50% single color A

30% different color B

20% different color C

2 pieces of a different color that are a shade(s) of one the A, B, or C colors

Distribute colors. If this is a known group, be certain that the solo colors go to someone who is considered a natural leader.

Activity:

Have the group cluster themselves into groups based on likes and preferences three times, e.g., This activity is called Find Your Peeps. I am going to give you a prompt then ask you to group yourselves by people who have the same answer.

1. Sort yourselves by favorite sport to observe or participate in (people who don't like sports can constitute a group);
2. Sort yourselves by favorite food;
3. Sort yourselves by preferred Friday night activity;
4. Sort yourselves by paper color.

Debrief:

The power of this activity is in the skills of the facilitator to bring key observations into the debrief. Pay attention to conversations the participants have while they are sorting themselves. Are there participants who chose to stand alone, who "shop" the different groups deciding which one they will join, or are persuaded to join another group (e.g., a person who likes pizza could be persuaded to join the Italian food group)?

Ask the participants:

How did it feel when you 'found your peeps'?

Did any of you shop around when trying to find an identity group? (facilitator add observations if indicated)

Was there any peer pressure/encouragement to join a group? (facilitator add observations if indicated)

For those you who had multiple interests, how did you decide which group to join?

Some of you decided to stand alone in your interest rather than join a group. What entered into your decision?

How did it feel to be assigned to a group by your colored paper v. being able to select your own group?

Address the two solo colors – Please share your experience of not having a group to join. (Comment on whether they were invited to or rejected from joining a larger group with a similar color.) When working with youth, does color sometime matter?

Closure:

This was an anti-bullying activity.

We often ask students to go ‘find someone to play with.’ This may be easier for some than others. You all talked about how much you liked being part of a group with a shared identity, be it pizza, Friday night movies, or baseball.... Being part of a group with a shared identity is not only validating for the individual, but the a protective factor for the person. Students with 5 friends are significantly less likely to be bullied. You can help students form peer groups by helping them find people with shared interests, be it card games, robots, sports, etc.

Warn them that if they do this with children, be sure that the one with no social capital does NOT get a solo color!

