

Icebreaker Activity 1

A Unique Perspective

Description: In this icebreaker activity, youth will be asked to use their senses to identify common/everyday objects, as well as understanding the world from a different perspective

Purpose: This activity may serve multiple purposes. The first purpose is for youth to recognize that things may not be as obvious, facilitating discussion on stereotypes. Additionally, through confusing different senses, youth can begin to understand sensory impairments.

Recommended Group Size- 5-20 youth (however, the activity can be modified to accommodate different group sizes and needs)

Estimated time: 1 hour (if all parts of this activity are used)

Part 1-

The Bigger Picture

Activity Summary:

In this activity there will be two pictures that are magnified so that intricate details of ordinary items can be seen, but these magnifications may make the larger object hard to recognize. These pictures are meant to demonstrate that often individuals are too close to issues happening in their own lives and are therefore unable to see the bigger picture.

The final picture is a collage of pictures that put together will create a larger picture. At first glance, one would only see the large picture but with further examination he or she will recognize the smaller pictures. From a distance, people see a group of individuals as a single unit, creating a stereotype. It is important to recognize the unique qualities and needs that each person has as an individual.

Shopping List:

- Use the PowerPoint attached or print 5"x7" pictures from the slides
- Print the discussion questions for all leaders and participants
- Have writing utensils available

Leader Instructions with a Draft Script of Directions:

This is an optional script that could be used to introduce and conclude the activity. On each slide of the PowerPoint there are questions and topics that may be used to guide the discussion. Below there are key words that should be included in the introduction and conclusion of the *Big Picture* icebreaker with a possible script.

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~Key Points~

- Arrange participants in a semi-circle using only chairs to encourage discussion.
- Introduce the icebreaker
 - A worldview is how we see the world and how we understand our position in it. Our worldview includes our unique perspective and how we see others. Sometimes our perspectives may be skewed, not having the ability to see things for how they really are.
 - We will be looking at a couple of pictures, tell me what you think each of them is.
- After showing each magnified picture; discuss what the participants believe the object is
- Then show the actual picture. Use the PowerPoint notes to assist the participants in understanding the significance of each picture in order to guide discussion.
- Show second image and use discussion topics from PowerPoint
- Repeat for the remaining magnified images
- Proceed to photo collage and final slides



~Concluding Points and Discussion Questions~

- Much like the pictures, a person's perspective can be distorted if he or she is too close or far away from an object, person, or issue.
- Different perspectives can affect how a person understands others and the world.
- How can these distorted images relate to events in your life?
- How has your perspective been distorted and how do you feel it has affected your ability to understand the world?
- Why does perspective matter?
- How can you change the way you see these distortions and how will it affect your general outlook on the world?
- Why is it important that everyone be viewed for who they truly are and not what is seen to be different on the outside?

Possible accommodations

Having print outs of the pictures may make this activity more accessible for people with low vision.

If you know that you have someone who is blind in the group using the "Do You Hear What I Hear" activity may be more accessible.

Part 2- Do You Hear What I Hear

Activity Summary:

This activity is similar to playing "telephone" but with a twist.

Shopping List:

- Ear plugs (cotton balls can also be used but may not be as effective)

Leader Instructions with a Draft Script of Directions:

This is an optional script that could be used to introduce and conclude the activity. Below there are key words that should be included in the introduction and conclusion of the *Do You Hear What I Hear* icebreaker with a possible script.

~Key Points~

- Arrange participants in a circle
- Introduce the icebreaker
 - Youth with disabilities may often feel like they are not being heard and that no one understands what they are truly saying.
 - This feeling of not being heard can be a form of disempowerment, preventing people with disabilities from having self-determined lives.
 - For people with disabilities, not being heard may not be about others hearing them as much as it is that others are not listening. Unfortunately, people may not believe that people with disabilities have anything important to say or do not understand the importance of empowerment.



- In this activity you will be told a phrase by the person on your left. You must then retell the exact same message, word for word, to the person on your right. The message will go the whole way around the circle and the last person must tell the group what the message was (much like the game of telephone, gossip, or whisper down the lane). The difficult part however is that you will all have ear plugs in and you can only say the message once
- Create a phrase that is about a sentence long, such as
 - People with disabilities do not always have their voices heard
- Whisper your phrase to someone standing to your right.
- Once the message has made it the whole way around the circle signal to have everyone take their ear plugs out
- Ask the last person to repeat the message that he/she heard

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~Concluding Points and Discussion Questions~

- Why did the message change? *(answer: couldn't hear it)*
- Why couldn't people hear you? *(answer: ear plugs)*
- What do the ear plugs symbolize? *(answer: discrimination)*
- Why would people feel discrimination against people with disabilities?
- How can we help to end this discrimination and help people with disabilities to be heard?

Possible accommodations

If you know that you have someone who is deaf in the group have the translator join the circle as well.