

HANDOUT 7

HOW TO EXPRESS CHARACTERISTICS OF IDENTITY



You will need a sheet of paper with the main circle drawn on it and as many satellite circles as possible.

Time: 30 minutes or more, depending on the number of participants.

-Instruct the participants to write their names into the central circle. After that, ask them to fill the small circles with their own identity: age, sex, race, ethnic consideration, religion etc.

-Divide the participants into couples. Ask them to share a moment, when they have felt proud and happy, and a moment when they have felt discomfort, and to connect those with some specific characteristics.

-Then, let everyone write down on the paper some stereotype that he/she is connected to the specific characteristic. (Etc. I am a Christian, but I am not a feminist).

-Ask them to form new groups and to share what they have written. Be aware that no one feels oppressed or forced to participate and everyone is taking part willingly.

-Discuss the negative effects of prejudices and stereotypes. Some possible questions for discussion:

- In what way do the elements that you chose to share, differ or are similar to the other participants' opinions?**
- Are those elements surprising?**
- Which stereotypes refer to you?**
- Where they have come from?**

This activity is very useful for two main reasons. In one way, this is the possibility for the participants to represent their own characteristics and to be able to see the positive and negative aspects. In addition, this is a great way to start a reasonable and interesting discussion about the source and the meaning of the stereotypes. It can help in creating a place of "acceptance" and can assist in preventing possible conflicts.