

CROSSING THE LINE

This exercise is difficult, yet increases a great deal of awareness into self and others; about your identity and others. I will make a statement to indicate or call out specific categories/labels/descriptions that may represent you. I will ask that all those that the description applies to step across the line, turn and face the rest of the group. I will pause for a few seconds and then you will return to the rest of the group.

You will need to follow 2 critical rules in this exercise.

1. LISTENING: Let's have silence throughout the exercise – no giggling or talking. Silence will enable us to experience our personal thoughts and feelings more clearly.
2. RESPECT: It is imperative that we respect the dignity of everyone in the class. Everything shared should remain confidential. If you feel the need to talk about something that comes up in the workshop, talk to the person(s) it involves, not others.

Some guidelines are:

1. No pressure to respond
2. Each of the categories will have some "gray areas". Define the terms used as YOU understand them. If you have serious reservations about the clarity or meaningfulness of a word then the best thing to do is not cross to the other side of the room.
3. Once we begin, there can be NO talking, No interruptions and please do not ask questions. There will be plenty of time at the end to ask questions or make comments.
4. It is important that you be as honest as you can, yet do not risk more than you feel comfortable sharing. You decide what to share and expose. Risk as much as you can. Exercise the option to pass if you wish.
5. If you cross the line notice who is with you, notice who is across from you, note your feelings and please cross back.

Statements:

Cross the line if...

- You are female
- You are male
- You are left-handed
- You are from a large city or town
- You know what you want to major in
- You have attended a ___ football game
- You took a family vacation this summer
- You saw Harry Potter over the last 2 weeks
- You are left handed
- You are an athlete
- You are the first one in your family to go to college
- You have cheated on a test
- You receive financial aid
- You are affiliated with a Greek Lettered Organization
- You were born outside of the United States
- You are over 21
- You are the oldest child in your family
- You are the youngest child in your family

- You are an only child
- Your parents are divorced or separated
- You are from a single parent household
- You grew up in a family where there was alcohol or drug abuse
- You are Native American or a member of an indigenous tribe of North America
- You are Chicano/a, Latino/a or Hispanic
- You are African American
- You are Haitian
- You are Jamaican
- You are Indian
- You are Asian, Asian American, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- You are White European or European American
- You are of mixed heritage
- You are a person of color
- You feel you know very little about your cultural heritage
- You practice a religion
- You are Catholic
- You are Protestant
- You are Jewish
- You are another religion other than those 3 major US religions
- You are of non-Jewish or non-Christian belief system
- You are atheist or agnostic
- You have at least one parent who did not complete high school
- You have at least one parent who graduated from college
- You or a family member has were/was/is incarcerated
- You consider your family as blue-collar or working class
- You consider your family as middle class
- You consider your family as upper class
- You have felt embarrassed about the economic class your family is in
- You were raised with less than enough resources or poor
- You live independently of your parents
- You have low self-esteem
- You or a family member has had an eating disorder
- You identify yourself as or have been identified as fat
- You would like to lose 10 or more pounds
- You feel lonely
- You consider yourself a Democrat
- You consider yourself a Republican
- You have a visible or non-visible physical or learning disability
- You have cried at least once this year
- You know someone personally who has tested HIV positive
- You or a family member has a terminal disease
- You know someone who is a survivor of sexual assault or abuse
- You are a survivor of sexual abuse or sexual assault
- You support pro-choice
- You support the right to die

- You support the death penalty
- You think the drinking age should be lowered to 18
- You think marijuana should be legalized
- You know someone who died in a car accident
- You or a friend or family member has attempted suicide
- You know someone who committed suicide
- You have driven a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or another drug
- You are comfortable with homosexuality
- You or someone you know is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
- You believe that gay/lesbian couples should be allowed to marry
- You believe that gay/lesbian couples should be allowed to adopt
- You have participated in a racial, sexual, or cultural joke
- You don't like these jokes but you don't do anything to stop them
- You consider yourself a feminist
- You are uncomfortable with the way you look
- Your parents or grandparents might still have prejudicial thoughts
- You are prejudice
- You have been in love and been hurt
- You feel that you haven't formed a close friendship
- You would be involved in an interracial relationship given the right person
- You have been involved in an interracial relationship
- You hate yourself
- You feel unfairly treated
- You feel threatened
- You have had a person close to you pass away in the last year
- You want a hug right now

Discussion:

- How are you feeling right now?
- Is there anything you want to say about why you crossed for a particular question?
- How did you feel when you got to choose an answer (pro-choice, etc) vs. when you had no say in the answer (parents divorced, etc.)?
- Were there any questions difficult to choose an answer for?
- How did you feel when there were lots of people on your side of the line? How did you feel when there were few people on your side of the line?
- What do you think the purpose of this activity was?