



Class activity

Power walk

TIME

30 minutes

AIM

To examine the impact of discrimination through role-play.

MATERIALS

Power walk identity cards.

METHOD

This activity is best performed outside, or inside a large room.

Explain to the whole group that these participants will each be given a role that describes a particular sexual identity. They are not to disclose what this role is until the end of the exercise.

Hand out the role cards and allow time for each player to assume their role. They are to imagine what their life might be like: their family, their friendships and their situation at school.

Players line up against one wall so that everyone has the same starting point.

Players take a number of steps in response to a series of questions: one step forward if they can say “yes” to a question; if their answer is “no”, or they are unsure, then they stay in place. Remind them that they are to respond to the questions as their role, not as themselves.

Read out the questions allowing time for players to consider their move. It may be necessary to remind them not to ask clarifying questions as this may reveal their role. If they are not sure they should remain in place.

By the end of the questions there will probably be two separate groups. Ask players to describe how they felt during the activity and how they feel about where they are standing, without disclosing their roles.

Discuss with the whole group who might be in each group and why. Ask each participant to reveal their role.

Ask the group if they have noticed anything they would like to share with the group.

Players de-role by pretending to take off an imaginary coat. They return to their seats as themselves. It is important that the de-role is obvious to both players and observers.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- Do you feel safe at uni or in the workplace?
- Can you be yourself without fear of rejection?
- Do you find it easy to talk about yourself in new situations?
- Would you feel safe talking about your sexual identity with people in position of authority / responsibility?
- Do you feel safe disclosing your sexual orientation publicly?
- Can you talk about your relationship with friends and family?
- Can you take your partner to family gatherings, eg weddings, parties, anything?
- Does your uni or workplace give you positive messages about your sexual identity?
- Are role models of your sexual orientation discussed at your uni or workplace?
- Would you feel confident making a complaint to the Sexual Harassment Officer at your uni or workplace?
- If attacked by your partner, would you feel comfortable going to the police?
- Can you hold hands with your partner walking down the street?
- Would you take your partner home to meet the parents?

SOURCE

Adapted from an activity from Family Planning, Queensland. Used with permission.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the AIDS Action Council Community Education and Health Promotion Unit on 02 6257 2855 or www.aidsaction.org.au.