

Chain of Diversity

Goal:

Participants will discover and recognize the many ways in which they are similar and are different from others in the group, as well as the ways in which each person is unique.

Time:

15–30 minutes, depending on the number of participants.

Materials:

Glue sticks and enough strips of colored construction paper so that each participant will have six strips. Strips should be about 1.25 to 1.5 inches wide.

Procedure:

This activity is a strong follow-up to an initial discussion about differences and similarities among people from different groups.

Introduce this activity by inviting participants to look at some of their own similarities and differences. Pass bundles of colored strips around the room. Ask each participant to take six strips. Ask participants to think of ways in which they are similar to and different from the other people in the room. On each strip, participants should write down one similarity *and* one difference. When completed, each person should have written six ways in which they are similar and six ways in which they are different from the other people in the room.

Tell participants to be prepared to share what they have written on two of their strips with the whole group. If group members are having difficulty, give some examples of ways that people may be different or similar, such as appearance, birth order, the type of community in which they live, hobbies and interests, age, parental status, or marital status. Ask each person to share two ways he or she is the same and two ways he or she is different from the other people in the room.

Start a chain by overlapping and gluing together the ends of one strip. Pass a glue stick to each person and ask the participants to add all six of their strips to the chain. Continue around the room until all participants have added their strips to the chain.

Discussion:

Ask participants to reflect on the many things they have in common, as well as the ways that each person in the group is unique. Conclude by pointing out that even though members of the group come from different backgrounds, in many ways they are the same. Display the Chain of Diversity on a bulletin board or around the doorway of your meeting room. The Chain of Diversity will symbolize the common aspects and the uniqueness that each person contributes to the group.