

Gender: Where Do You Stand?

Objectives:

1. To promote awareness of gender stereotypes.
2. To increase awareness of gender in our own lives.

Materials Needed: Post-it-notes, markers, masking tape.

Activity:

Gender Scale: 10 rows are made on the floor with masking tape. The rows are labeled -5 thru 5. Participants stand in a line, on row 0. 21 statements are made. If the participants agree with the statement, they will be asked to move forward or backward.

Group Discussion 1:

- What gender was associated with each side of the Gender Scale?
- How do you feel about where you ended up on the scale?
- What did you notice about where everyone stood on the scale?
- Is gender a fixed thing?
- Have you ever been discriminated against because of your gender? How did this affect your gender?

5-10 Minute Break

Group Discussion 2:

- How many genders are there?
- Are you comfortable with your gender?
- How do you feel about your gender's stereotypes?

Gender Scale Statements

Mention to participants before starting that these statements are all based on society's stereotypes of what more 'feminine' and more 'masculine' people are supposed to do and like. Ask them to be thinking about how they relate to these stereotypes; if they find them limiting, etc.

1. If you have ever shaved your legs, step forward.
2. If you have ever shaved your face, step backward.
3. If you have ever played with GI Joes, step backward.
4. If you have ever played with Barbie, step forward.
5. If you have ever been harassed for being feminine, step forward.
6. If you have ever been harassed for being butch, step backward.
7. If you have ever been accused of being a man in the women's bathroom, step backward.
8. If you have ever been accused of being a woman in the men's bathroom, step forward.
9. If you have ever grabbed your crotch in public, step backward.
10. If you have ever had long flowing hair, step forward.
11. If you have ever been reprimanded for playing too rough, step forward.
12. If you have ever been told you should "toughen up," step backward.
13. If you feel like you're expected to be the breadwinner of your household when you're older, step backward.
14. If your favorite subjects are math and science, step backward.
15. If your favorite subjects are dance and art, step forward.
16. If you have been called a bitch, step forward.
17. If you have ever been called a dick, step backward.
18. If you have ever worn a tie, step backward.
19. If you have ever worn a dress, step forward.
20. If you have ever been called a dyke, step backward.
21. If you have ever been called a sissy, step forward.