

## Concentric Circles “Throwback” Activity ( 30 mins)

### Purpose

For this activity, participants are invited to tell stories of their experiences learning about difference, to share those stories with one other person and to reflect on the stories and experience with the whole group. Depending on the amount of time you have, you can have people repeat each story twice. If you have limited time, just have people repeat their first story twice and the other stories once.

Divide participants into two equal groups. Have groups form concentric circles facing each other.

### Facilitator explains:

I'll be posing questions and that each pair of partners will have **2 minutes** to respond to the prompt (*1 minute for each person*). After each question, the outer circle will be asked to rotate one person to their left so that everyone has a new partner.

### Questions:

(*RACE*) Think back to your childhood. What are some of the first things - whether they are positive, negative, or neutral – **you ever learned about people of a race different than your own?** How and by whom were those ideas and beliefs transmitted?

*REPEAT with second partner*

(*CLASS*) Think back to your childhood. What were some of the first things - whether they are positive, negative, or neutral - **you ever learned about people of an economic class different from your own?** How and by whom were those ideas and beliefs transmitted?

*REPEAT with second partner*

(*GENDER*) Think back to your childhood. What are some of the first things - whether they are positive, negative, or neutral – **you ever learned about people of a different gender than you?** How and by whom were those ideas and beliefs transmitted?

*REPEAT with second partner*

(*THE OTHER*) Share a story of a time **when you felt like the “odd” person out, or when you felt like you didn’t fit in.** What was happening, how did others treat you and how did you feel?

*REPEAT with second partner*

### Group Debrief (invite the group to return to the circle and ask the following questions, or make up your own):

How and where do we learn messages about different groups of people?

- What is the impact of receiving negative messages about people and/or groups different than ourselves?

How easily were you able to think about the first time you were exposed to a certain identity different from yourself?

- How did it feel reflecting on these memories?

Have your opinions changed or been molded a certain way since the earliest memories of a certain message?

- Have any of those opinions changed since arriving at [current location]?

How can one unlearn negative messages or learn positive messages to combat the negative messages or stereotypes we receive about groups different than ourselves?