



More Alike than Different

Life Skills:

Accepting Differences, Self Responsibility

What to Do:

Youths will begin to explore how everyone is alike and yet everyone has differences.

Measuring Success:

Youths will identify similarities and differences among the group and get to know one another better.

Audience:

4th – 12th grades

Time Involved:

30 minutes

Group Size:

5 - 30

Preparation and Materials

Prepare a handout or a poster that has the following sections:

- Identify at least five significant differences represented in your group.
- Identify at least five similarities shared by three or more people in your group.
- Supply pencil and paper to each group.

Introduction

Look around the room. Who do you see? What do you see? You see friends, perhaps family, perhaps someone you don't know. You may not know it, but you have something in common with everyone in this room. You also have some differences.

The Activity

Let's begin to identify some of those similarities and differences. Link up with one person you do not know well. Share your family's favorite holiday and how it is celebrated. (*Ask for volunteers to share this information with the entire group.*)

Link up with another group of two. Share your favorite food. Is this a special treat? If so, what makes it that way? Does anyone in your group have the same favorite food? (*Ask for volunteers to share this information with the entire group.*)

Once again, link up with another group to form a group of approximately eight. (*The size of the group is important. This activity works best with five to 12 youths in each group.*) In your group, identify at least five significant differences that are represented. Now identify at least five similarities three or more of you share. Some examples may be race, gender, religious beliefs, etc. (*You may want the group to list as many differences and similarities as possible.*)

Reflect/Discuss

Share What You Did

(*After 10-15 minutes, ask each group to report its findings.*) What did you find surprising? What did you expect to find?

Tell What's Important

What do you think this means? Would the results have been different if you performed this activity in a different group (school, 4-H club, family function)?

Generalize To Your Life

Are there differences that you would like to learn more about? What questions would you like to ask someone in your group? (For example, if someone is not Christian, what are some important religious holidays for that person and how are they celebrated?)

Apply What You Learned

What did you learn from this activity? What will you do next time you find out that someone is different from you? Will you be able to find some similarities as well?

More Challenges

- Do the groups that you belong to welcome youths who are different? What could the groups do to be more inviting? What can you do when someone new (and different) comes to school?
- Are you a member of other community groups? How did you become a member?