

BULLYING AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

TWELFTH GRADE

LESSON 4

TITLE: Circles of Me

PURPOSE: To explore stereotypes of various groups while affirming differences.

OBJECTIVES: The student will be able to:

- engage students in a process of identifying what they consider to be the most important dimensions of their own identity.

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS: LA.1112.1.5.1, 1112.1.6.1, 1112.1.6.4

STUDENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS AND STANDARDS: PS 1.1, 1.2, 2.1

VOCABULARY: stereotypes, affirm, differences, similarities

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME: 45 Minutes

PREPARATION/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

- dry erase board and markers
- Xerox copies of handout 12-5 (one copy per student)

SPRINGBOARD ACTIVITY:

ACTIVITY: Ask students to pair up with somebody they do not know very well. Invite them to introduce each other, then follow these steps:

1. Have students write their names in the center circle. They should then fill in each satellite circle with a dimension of their identity they consider to be among the most important in defining themselves. Give them several examples of dimensions that might fit into the satellite circles: female, athlete, Jewish, brother, educator, Asian American, middle class, etc.
2. In their pairs, have students share two stories with each other. First, they should share stories about when they felt especially proud to be associated with one of the identifiers they selected. Next, they should share a story about a time it was particularly painful to be associated with one of the identity dimensions they chose.

3. The third step will be for students to share a stereotype they have heard about one dimension of their identity that fails to describe them accurately. Ask them to complete the sentence at the bottom of the handout by filling in the blanks: "I am (a/an) _____ but I am NOT (a/an) _____." Provide your own example, such as "I am a Christian, but I am NOT a radical right Republican." Instructions for steps 1, 2, and 3 should be given at once. Allow 8-10 minutes for students to complete all three steps, but remind them with 2 minutes remaining that they must fill in the stereotype sentence.
4. Probe the group for reactions to each other's stories. Ask whether anyone heard a story she or he would like to share with the group. (Make sure the person who originally told the story has granted permission to share it with the entire group.)
5. Advise students that the next step will involve individuals standing up and reading their stereotype statement. You can either simply go around the room in some order or have people randomly stand up and read their statements. Make sure that students are respectful and listening actively for this step, as individuals are making themselves vulnerable by participating. Start by reading your own statement. This part of the activity can be extremely powerful if you introduce it energetically. It may take a few moments to start the flow of sharing; so allow for silent moments.

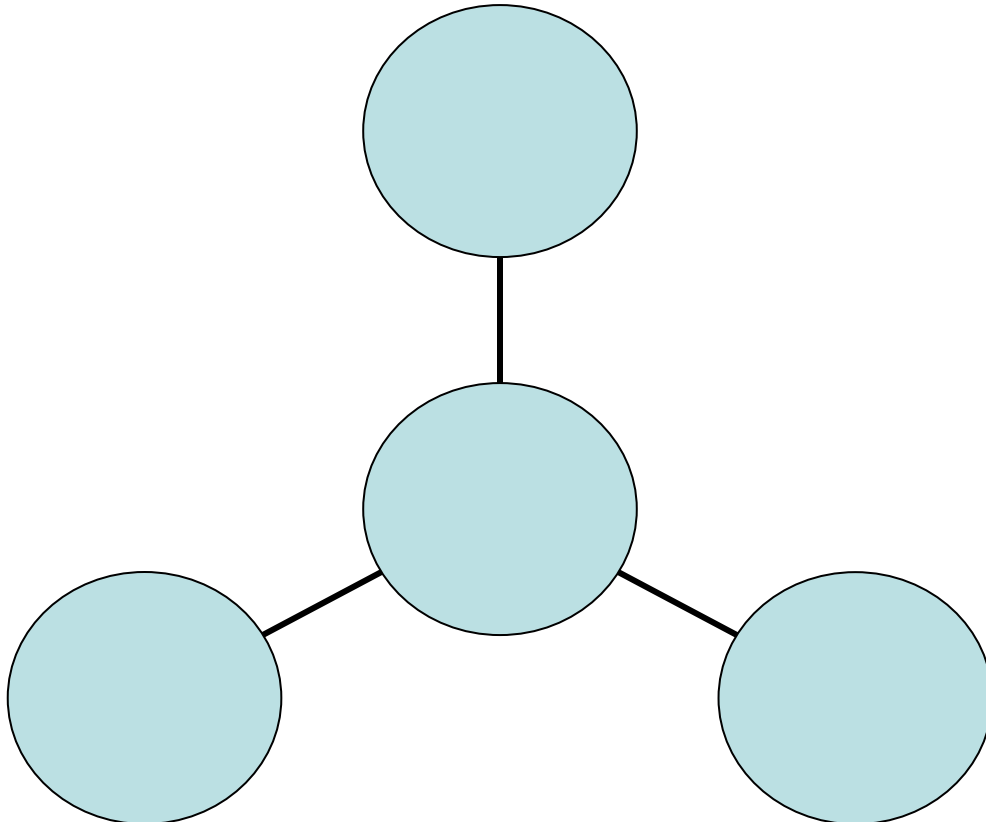
ASSESSMENT: Teacher observation, class participation and completion of activity.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY: Have students write a 1,000 word essay using the following questions as a guide:

1. How do the dimensions of your identity that you chose as important differ from the dimensions other people use to make judgments about you?
2. Did anybody hear somebody challenge a stereotype that you once bought into? If so, what?
3. How did it feel to be able to stand up and challenge your stereotype?
4. (There is usually some laughter when somebody shares common stereotype such as "I may be Arab, but I am not a terrorist" or "I may be a teacher, but I do have a social life.") I heard several moments of laughter. What was that about?
5. Where do stereotypes come from?
6. How can we eliminate them?

Circles of Me

Place your name in the center circle of the structure below. Write an important aspect of your identity in each of the circles. This can include anything: Asian American, mother, athlete, educator, or any descriptor with which you identify.



1. Share a story about a time you were especially proud to identify yourself with one of the descriptors you used above. Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your identifiers or descriptors.

3. Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are. Fill in the following sentence:

I am (a/an) _____ but I am NOT (a/an)_____.

Example: I am a Christian, but I am NOT a radical right Republican.