

Major Identity Markers (MIM)

Instructions:

- Instruct the group to stand in a line in the middle of a large space.
- Practice “small” steps so everyone moves an equal distance.
- Define “Major Identity Markers” - Perceptions of your race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion and able-bodiedness.
- Listen to the statements and take a small step in the appropriate direction as instructed if the statement applies to you.
- You may pass on a given statement at any time by standing still.

Statements:

1. If your primary ethnic identity is American, step forward.
2. If you were ever called a hurtful name because of any MIM, step back.
3. If your family has ever employed people in your household as domestic workers, step forward.
4. If they were people of color, step forward.
5. If you were often ashamed or embarrassed of your material possessions, step back.
6. If most of your family members worked in careers requiring a college education, step forward.
7. If you were raised in an area where there was visible drug activity, step back.
8. If you ever tried to change your appearance, behavior or speech to avoid being judged, step back.
9. If you studied the cultures of your ancestors in elementary school, step forward.
10. If you started school speaking a language other than English, step back.
11. If there were more than 100 books in your home when you grew up, step forward.
12. If your parents took you to art galleries, plays or museums when you were growing up, step forward.
13. If one of your parents was ever unemployed, not by choice, step back.
14. If your family ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, step back.
15. If you have ever attended summer camp, step forward.
16. If you attended private school, step forward.
17. If you were ever discouraged from academic or career paths because of your MIM, step back.
18. If you were encouraged to attend college by your parents, step forward.
19. If you believe that you were paid less for a job because of your MIM's, step back.
20. If you were raised in a household with two parents, step forward.
21. If you saw characters on TV who shared your MIM's, step forward.
22. If you have ever felt like clerks watch you more than other customers, step back.
23. If you were ever offered a job because of your association with a friend, mentor or family member, step forward.
24. If you have ever had your name mispronounced, step back.
25. If you have inherited money or property, step forward.
26. If you had an allowance in high school, step forward.

27. If you have had to rely on public transportation, step back.
28. If you believe an employer turned you down because of your MIM, step back.
29. If you have ever felt uncomfortable about a joke related to your MIM, step back.
30. If atleast one of your parents did not grow up in the US, step back.
31. If your parents told you that you could be anything you want to be, step forward.
32. If you have ever been whistled at, step back.
33. If you have traveled overseas, step forward.

Processing Questions:

How did you feel doing this exercise?

Were some steps easier than others?

What did it feel like to be behind people?

What did it feel like to be in front of people?

What surprised you about this activity?

Would you give up some of your privileges so that others could catch up?

What did you learn?