CROSSING THE LINE

This exercise is difficult, yet increases a great deal of awareness into self and others; about your identity and others. I will make a statement to indicate or call out specific categories/labels/descriptions that may represent you. I will ask that all those that the description applies to step across the line, turn and face the rest of the group. I will pause for a few seconds and then you will return to the rest of the group.

You will need to follow 2 critical rules in this exercise.
1. LISTENING: Let's have silence throughout the exercise— no giggling or talking.
   Silence will enable us to experience our personal thoughts and feelings more clearly.
2. RESPECT: It is imperative that we respect the dignity of everyone in the class. Everything shared should remain confidential. If you feel the need to talk about something that comes up in the workshop, talk to the person(s) it involves, not others. Some guidelines are:
   1. No pressure to respond
   2. Each of the categories will have some "gray areas". Define the terms used as YOU understand them. If you have serious reservations about the clarity or meaningfulness of a word then the best thing to do is not cross to the other side of the room.
   3. Once we begin, there can be NO talking, No interruptions and please do not ask questions. There will be plenty of time at the end to ask questions or make comments.
   4. It is important that you be as honest as you can, yet do not risk more than you feel comfortable sharing. You decide what to share and expose. Risk as much as you can. Exercise the option to pass if you wish.
   5. If you cross the line notice who is with you, notice who is across from you, note your feelings and please cross back.

Statements:
Cross the line if...

- You are female
- You are male
- You are left-handed
- You are from a large city or town
- You have attended a Nationals game
- You took a vacation this summer
- You are right handed
• You are the first one in your family to go to college
• You received a scholarship or grant to attend college
• You were encouraged to attend college by your parents
• You were ever discouraged from academic or career paths because of your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status
• You believe you were paid less because of your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or class
• You are the oldest child in your family
• You are the youngest child in your family
• You are an only child
• Your parents are divorced or separated
• You are from a single parent household
• You were born outside of the United States
• You are Native American or a member of an indigenous tribe of North America
• You are Chicano/a, Latino/a or Hispanic
• You are African American
• You are Haitian
• You are Jamaican
• You are African
• You are Indian
• You are Asian, Asian American, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
• You are White European or European American
• You are of mixed heritage
• You are a person of color
• You feel you know very little about your cultural heritage
• If you studied the cultures of your ancestors in elementary school
• You frequently saw characters who shared your race, religion or sexual orientation portrayed in likable ways in books, TV or movies
• If your ancestors were forced against their will to come to the United States
• You speak more than one language
• English is your second language
• At least one of your parents did not grow up in the United States

• You Practice a religion
  • You are another religion other than the 3 major US religions, Catholic, protestant or Jewish
  • You have at least one parent who did not complete high school
  • You have at least one parent who graduated from college
  • If you are a first generation college graduate
  • If most of your family members work in careers requiring a college education
  • You consider your family as blue-collar or working class
  • You consider your family as middle class
  • You consider your family as upper class
  • You have felt embarrassed by the economic class of your family
  • You were raised with less than enough resources
  • Your parents told you you could be anything you wanted to be
  • You struggle with your self-esteem
  • You have ever tried to change your appearance, behavior or speech to avoid being judged on the basis or your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or class
  • You were ever called hurtful names because of your race, religion, sexual orientation, gender or class
  • You have ever felt uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or class, but not able to confront the situation
  • You have ever been afraid to walk alone at night
  • You would like to lose 10 or more pounds
  • You, a friend or a family member has had an eating disorder
  • At times, you are uncomfortable with the way you look.
  • You feel lonely
  • You have a visible or non-visible physical or learning disability
  • You have cried at least once this year
  • You, a family member or a friend has a terminal disease
  • You know someone who died in a car accident
  • You or a friend or family member has attempted suicide
  • You know someone who committed suicide
  • You are comfortable with homosexuality
  • You or someone you know is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
- Your parents or grandparents might still have prejudicial thoughts
- You have been in love and were hurt
- You feel that you haven't formed a close friendship
- You are comfortable with interracial relationships
- You have been involved in an interracial relationship
- You were ever the victim of violence related to your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation
- You feel unfairly treated
- You feel threatened
- You have had a person close to you pass away in the last year
- You have had to work twice as hard to prove yourself in school or at work
- You want a hug right now

Discussion:
- How are you feeling right now?
- Is there anything you want to say about why you crossed for a particular question?
- How did you feel when you got to choose an answer (pro-choice, etc) vs. when you had no say in the answer (parents divorced, etc.)?
- Were there any questions difficult to choose an answer for?
- How did you feel when there were lots of people on your side of the line? How did you feel when there were few people on your side of the line?
- What did you learn about yourself from this activity?
- What did you learn about our community?
- How did this experience affect your view of yourself and members of our community?
- What do you think the purpose of this activity was?