



Move Into The Circle: Recognizing Power and Privilege

Objective:	To become aware of our relationship to power and privilege, and the ways in which people experience advantages and disadvantages in our society.
Time:	30 - 45 minutes
Materials:	A list of statements read by the facilitator
Group size:	10-30 people. This could also be done individually as a self-reflection activity

Instructions:

It is recommended to have a “Respect Agreement” developed with the group before starting the activity, to help set the tone for safety, inclusion and respect. Participants are asked to stand in a circle. The facilitator will read a number of statements. Participants are asked to step into the middle of the circle if they agree with the statement or if it applies to them. At the end, participants are asked a few discussion questions. The facilitator helps maintain physical and emotional safety and comfort within the group.

Facilitator Statements:

I am going to say a number of statements. If you agree with the statement, step into the circle. If you do not, you are unsure, or you are not comfortable answering, stay in your spot. Please feel free to remain standing for all of the statements if you do not wish to participate.

Move into the circle if...

1. If you were able to access this space without any difficulty.
2. Your family owned their own home.
3. Your parents graduated from college or university.
4. You studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school.
5. You can access washrooms easily without worrying about finding a gender-neutral or accessible washrooms.
6. You were raised by your parents.
7. You have never had to tell anyone your sexual orientation (you never had to 'come out').
8. Your family told you that you could do, or be, anything you wanted.
9. You have never felt like an event is closed to you because you cannot access the space it is in.
10. You attended art galleries, museums, or theatre plays growing up.
11. You are a Canadian Citizen.
12. You have never felt judged because of the size or shape of your body.
13. Most of your friends are the same racial or ethnic background as you.
14. The people in power in your city look like you.
15. The holidays you get at work or school are holidays you celebrate.
16. You are able to communicate verbally.
17. You can walk down the street with your partner anywhere in Canada without being afraid to hold hands.

18. When people hear you speak, they don't ask you where you are from.
19. You feel pretty safe walking home at night regardless of what you are wearing.



For Discussion:

1. How did you feel when you heard the statements? What came up for you?
2. How did it feel to step into the circle, and how did it feel to be left standing?
3. Did anything surprise you? Did you notice anything new or different about yourself or the group?
4. What have you learned from this activity? Share any insights or reflections if you're comfortable.



Facilitator tip:

Encourage participants to *feel* their feelings without judgement; remind that all feelings and experiences are OK. Avoid labeling an experience as “good/right” or “bad/wrong,” and allow people to just *be* with whatever arises for them.

Variation:

- Participants can choose other ways to indicate a “yes” that feel comfortable; for example stand or sit, raising a hand, making a sound, etc.
- You can change, add or remove questions while maintaining the core intention/purpose of the exercise which is to evoke insight/awareness about our relation to power and privilege.