



*THE PLAYING FIELD -- A Tools for Change Exercise**

SET UP: Everyone starts out on a line in the middle of the room facing one wall. Do in silence, if the question is mostly true for you step; we prefer not to break the silence with questions of clarification. Let people know that it is fine to remain still rather than take a step if they would prefer that others not know about that aspect of their experience. If they choose to refrain from stepping they should ask themselves what they would need for others to understand in order to feel safe to reveal their experience— what cultural change it would take to be open about it. (For more info: www.toolsforchange.org)

1. If your ancestors were forced to come to this country, or forced to relocate from where they were living, step back.
2. If when you were a child you were primarily cared for by paid help, step forward.
3. If you were frequently called names or ridiculed because of your race, ethnicity, class or appearance, step back.
4. If one or both of your grandparents were college educated, step forward.
5. If you were ever embarrassed or ashamed of your clothes or your house when growing up step back.
6. If you have a professional degree step forward.
7. If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, language or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, step back.
8. If you have ever been battered, step back.
9. If your religious holidays were honored in public life, step forward.
10. If you quit a job or class because of unwanted sexual advances, step back.
11. If you ever skipped a meal or went away from a meal hungry because there wasn't enough money to buy food, step back.
12. If your parents' marriage was announced in the "Society Pages" of the newspaper step forward.
13. If one of your parents was ever laid off, unemployed or underemployed, step backward.
14. If you ever had to move because of not paying rent or mortgage, step back.
15. If you are a rape survivor, step back.
16. If you ever attended a private school, step forward.
17. If you were ever discouraged or prevented from pursuing academic work by an authority figure, step back.
18. If your parent(s) encouraged you to go to college, step forward.
19. If it was assumed that your parents would pay your way through college, step forward.
20. If you grew up in a single parent household for most of your childhood, step back.
21. If, prior to your 18th birthday, you took a vacation outside of your home state, step forward.
22. If you had worked somewhere longer than they had worked others yet the others were promoted first, step back.
23. If you or anyone in your immediate family ever had cosmetic surgery, step forward.
24. If you or your family ever had to pawn anything that you wanted to keep, step back.
25. If you own your own home, step forward.
26. If you do not have a credit card, step back.
27. If you are often followed around in a department store by security, step back.
28. If you have ever had to prove your heritage to qualify for federal programs, step back.
29. If you have medical insurance, step forward.
30. If people dismiss what you say because of your age, step back.
31. If you are HIV+, step back.
32. If you were ever denied a job because of who you are, step back.
33. If at work you were ever paid less, treated less fairly, or made to work harder than another person in a similar position, step back.
34. If people often assume you will steal, cheat or lie, step back.
35. If you shared a bed with a sibling when you were growing up, step back.
36. If you had your own bedroom when you were growing up, step forward.
37. If you have invisible or visible disabilities, step back.
38. If one of your parents is a doctor, lawyer, or other professional, step forward.
39. If you assumed you would spend time in jail, step back.

40. If you thought you would not live past the age of 40, step back.
41. If people often assume you know more than you do, step forward.
42. If you've had to obscure the identity of the one you love, step back.
43. If in high school you were tracked in an accelerated class, step forward.
44. If activities you want to participate in are often held in places inaccessible to you, step back.
45. If you have been a victim of incest, step back.
46. If your first language is English, step forward.
47. If you have ever been told you are too sensitive, too emotional or too angry step back.
48. If people stare at you because of how you appear, step back.
49. If you are or appear white, step forward.
50. If your physical limitations are regarded as neurotic step back.
51. If you are openly gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, step back.
52. If you ever lived on public assistance, step back.
53. If you are a first born son, step forward.
54. If you have ever been denied or lost a job because of your politics, step back.
55. If you were raised to believe some kinds of work were beyond your ability, step back.
56. If your parents ever gave you an automobile, step forward.
57. If you ever considered joining the Army because it opened career options, step back.
58. If you were raised to view police as protectors, step forward.
59. If you were raised to view police as potential threats, step back.
60. If you have or expect to inherit anything worth \$100,000 dollars or more, step forward.
61. If you were frequently called a "sissy" or a "tom boy," step back.
62. If people assume you are not sexually active because of how you appear, step back.
63. If, in general, you can avoid those communities or places that you consider dangerous, step forward.
64. If you have been a victim of a hate crime, step back.
65. If you were raised to believe that you could become anything that you wanted, step forward.

COMPLETION: After the last question ask everyone to freeze in place, and look around. Then tell them that the fulfillment of the American Dream is waiting for the first 3 people to get to the front wall. Then count to 3 and tell them to race. Do this quickly without explanation or advance warning. Afterwards have participants pair up and debrief with one another.

***This has been adapted with permission from the Horatio Alger Exercise originally developed by Martin Kano and Paul Kivel.**

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Transform Organizational Culture So that everyone can participate

Tools for Change creates a safe and respectful atmosphere in which power, history and culture are openly addressed. Our society is riddled with inequities; to protect the status quo, contemporary norms exclude the expression of differences. It is only when we share our stories and full perspectives that we discover what is needed to heal the schisms across the lines of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. This enables everyone to transform guilt, blame, and distrust into supportive and creative relations, so power dynamics and tokenism are replaced by an open, multicultural and democratic context.

Tools for Change is a multi-cultural organization working with individuals to promote healing and leadership development; and organizations to create sustainable democratic structures in which everyone can contribute their best. In our work, we call on spirit, heart, history, collectivity and vision. We offer long-term consultation, large group meeting design and facilitation, as well as training on power, diversity and vision-building. For those engaged in making social and ecological justice, we host gatherings to inspire dialogue, open the imagination, deepen relationships and empower people's work.

WE HELP CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE THAT:

Evokes a spirit of generosity
Reclaims wholeness
Builds trust
Draws out mutual support
Where differences widen horizons
Inspires integrity and respect
Fosters principled relations
Establishes democratic processes
People enjoy one another
Is innovative

ORGANIZATIONS . WE HAVE WORKED WITH:

State Coalitions against DV: in:
RI, CA, PA, OR & NY
Rural Women's Resources
Jesuit Volunteer Corps
PFLAG
Interfaith Center for Racial Justice
SEIU, Local 535
Olympia Food Coop
Planned Parenthood
Plymouth Housing
Real Change

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT WORKSHOPS OR CONSULTANCY SERVICES CONTACT:

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