TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

MIRROR, MIRROR

Overview

In an effective youth-adult partnership, roles are fluid and there are elements of mutuality; sometimes partners lead each other; sometimes they mentor each other; sometimes they work hand in hand. This activity provides the participants with a fun and interactive opportunity to explore different concepts of leading and partnering.

When to Use This Activity

This activity can be used at the beginning of a training session or as a quick and fun introduction to training activities focused on specific youth-adult partnership skills, such as communication, teamwork, shared leadership, and so on.

Objectives

• to help the participants identify aspects of a working partnership
• to provide the participants with a visual representation of a partnership in action
• to highlight for the participants fun and creative aspects of working in partnership

Time Required

20-25 minutes

Group Size

Any size

Activity Steps

MIRROR ACTIVITY: 10 MINUTES

1 Invite the participants to form pairs. If possible, ask adults to partner with young people. Ask the pairs to stand, facing each other.

2 Ask the pairs to choose someone to go first. Then designate that person as “leader;” and the other as the “follower.” The job of the follower is to match their partner’s every move, acting as their partner’s “reflection.” The task of the leader is to initiate movements for the follower to mirror.
3 **Allow about three minutes** for the pairs to work through this first round of the activity.

4 **After three minutes**, ask the pairs to switch roles and conduct the activity once again. After three minutes, call time.

**REFLECT AND DISCUSS: 10-15 MINUTES**

5 **Invite a few of the pairs** to briefly share their experiences. Then lead a large group discussion using the following questions:
   - What did it feel like to be the leader?
   - What did it feel like to be the follower?
   - What surprised you about this activity?
   - What patterns did you notice?
   - What was helpful to you as a follower?
   - What was helpful to you as a leader?

6 **Ask if anyone reached across** the invisible mirror and grabbed the hand of their partner? If anyone did, ask the following questions:
   - Why did you do it?
   - What inspired you to do that?

7 **Share the following** key points with the participants:
   - There were no instructions that prevented you from reaching across the barrier; however, many (perhaps everyone) assumed the barrier was there from their past experience with mirrors.
   - The act of reaching through the invisible mirror is a metaphor for breaking through the barriers we can perceive when working with others.
   - Many of these barriers are our own perceptions. The good news is that we have the power to break through these barriers.
   - Common tips for success include creativity, risk-taking, trust, communication, and willingness to adapt to the needs and abilities of your partner.

8 **Conclude by helping** the participants to draw some conclusions about working in youth-adult partnerships based on what they learned from the activity. Use the following questions:
   - Based on this activity, what are some challenges you think we face in working in partnership?
   - What lessons can we draw from this activity to help us in our work in youth-adult partnerships?
• What is important to remember to do as we work together as partners? What should we try to avoid?

• What one or two things that you are going to do differently in your partnership in the future?

9 Before the participants leave, provide them with a brief overview of the next training session (if you are planning one). Be sure to note how the next session connects with the one they just completed.