

Tearing Off Your Labels

2. Be Yourself

Spatial Requirements: Classroom with moderate space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 10 or more

Time: 10-15 minutes

Introduction: Youth often get labeled because they are trying to be something they are not. Before they can let the “real” self show, they need to understand whom their “real self” is and why being that person is not only important but also best. This activity is designed to focus students’ attention on not trying to live up to unrealistic expectations. Rather, it emphasizes that they will be happiest being their real selves and trying to be the best they can be.

Materials:

- Timer

Activity:

Have your class stand or sit in a circle. Explain that the object of this activity is to go around the circle as quickly as possible with each person saying their first name. You will time them as they do it. Have students repeat this a few times and see if they can improve their time. Then explain that you are going to change the objective of the activity slightly. This time as they go around the circle, each student must say the name of the person on their left. Again you will time them and give them several chances at improving their time. Finally, explain that this time the objective or challenge is to think of a cartoon character or sports figure. This time as they go around the circle, they have to say the name of that person. Once again, time them and let them repeat to see if they can get faster. Write the times on the board to see which one was fastest.

Processing the Experience:

- Why could we say our own names faster than the names of someone else?
- How easy is it for us to look like someone else? Act like someone else?
- What makes each person unique?
- How hard is it not to compare yourselves to others? Does comparing ourselves to others help us be our best self?
- Why is it important to know who the “real” you is?
- Is being the “real you” easier or harder than pretending you are someone else? Why? What things would make it easier?