SPRINGBOARDS FOR DISCUSSING PREJUDICE

This page contains springboards for you to dive into a discussion of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. Feel free to discuss the questions in any order or create springboards of your own. The key thing is not to answer all the questions, but to have a good discussion in which everyone participates fully.

1. Is it possible to be completely free of prejudice? Have you ever met anyone who was?

2. Are *you* prejudiced? If so, what are some recent instances in which you were prejudiced? If not, how do you know that you're not prejudiced?

3. If you've acted in a prejudiced way, what caused the prejudice, and what might reduce it? How did other people respond to your behavior?

4. If a friend or family member were to make a prejudiced comment, would you object? Why or why not? What about a stranger or acquaintance—would you respond in that case?

5. If you were to make a prejudiced comment at a party or among a group of friends, would your friends say something?

6. Does the categorization of people always result in prejudice? What about categorizing people based on positive attributes—does that result in prejudice?

7. Does the categorization and labeling of people—for example, as a woman, African American, Texan, or college student—always rob them of individuality?

8. Are stereotypes ever a good thing? Have you ever tried to get people to stereotype you, either positively or negatively?

9. At a psychological level, what are the common denominators that link all forms of prejudice?

10. In general, which forms of prejudice seem to be declining over time, and which forms seem to be persisting or increasing?

11. Which forms of prejudice are most socially acceptable, and which are least acceptable? Why are some forms more acceptable than others?

12. Are people prejudiced if they don't want to date outside their race, ethnicity, or religion? What if dating that way preserves an advantage in wealth for their own group?

13. Are there ways that you or your discussion group can reduce prejudice in your community?

14. What other prejudice-related issues are worth discussing?

[From UnderstandingPrejudice.org]