



# Gathering Points

## Being in a minority

### Circle chair game

Arrange chairs in a circle with seats facing outwards. Everyone takes a seat apart from a volunteer who stands facing someone, on the opposite side of the circle to the empty chair. Explain that those sitting have to work together to stop the volunteer getting to the empty chair, but they're not allowed to talk. The volunteer then moves around the circle to try to sit in the empty seat. The group responds by moving around filling the seats that the volunteer tries to sit on. Swop volunteers once a seat has been gained or the volunteer needs a break. After everyone has had a chance to be the volunteer discuss how it feels to be outside the circle and inside the circle.

### Force the circle activity

<b>Size of group</b>	6 - 8 people per circle
<b>Core Principle</b>	Acceptance and Understanding.
<b>Purpose</b>	To experience being part of a majority group and being in the minority. To look at what we do/use to be accepted by the majority group. To be aware of when we like to be part of the majority and when we like to be apart or in the minority.
<b>Duration</b>	Approximately 30 minutes.
<b>Materials</b>	Paper and pens for the observers. Watch or timer.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Divide the group into subgroups of 6 to 8 people.</li><li>2. Ask each group to choose one person to be the 'observer' and a second to be the 'outsider'.</li><li>3. Tell the other members of the group to stand shoulder to shoulder to form as tight a circle as possible so as not to leave any space between them.</li><li>4. Explain that the 'outsider' must try to get into the circle while those who form the circle must try to keep them out. Remind the participants they should be gentle in achieving the task (techniques may be thought of, but not suggested, such as distraction, humour, bribery / persuasion).</li></ol>

	<p>5. Tell the observer to make notes on the strategies used both by the 'outsider' and those in the circle and he/she should also act as a timekeeper.</p> <p>6. After two or three minutes and regardless of whether they managed to enter the circle or not, the 'outsider' joins the circle and another member has a turn.</p> <p>7. The activity is over once all the members of the group who wish to have tried to 'force the circle'.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions for the debriefing</b></p>	<p>Bring everyone together to discuss what happened, and how they felt.</p> <p>Start by asking the players:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you feel when you were part of the circle?</li> <li>• How did you feel when you were the 'outsider'?</li> <li>• Do those who succeeded in 'forcing the circle' feel differently from those who didn't manage it?</li> </ul> <p>Ask the observers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies did the 'outsider' use?</li> <li>• What strategies did the people in the circle use to prevent the others from getting in?</li> </ul> <p>Then ask everybody:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In real life situations, when do you feel like an 'outsider' or a minority and when do you appreciate feeling part of the group or the majority?</li> <li>• In our society, who are the strongest groups? And who are the weakest?</li> <li>• In society, the circle may represent privileges, money, power, work or housing.</li> <li>• What strategies do minority groups use to gain access to these resources?</li> <li>• How do the majority preserve their status?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tips for the facilitator</b></p>	<p>It is helpful if you give concrete instructions to the observers, such as to take note of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the people in the circle say among themselves or to the outsider</li> <li>• What the members of the circle do in order not to let the outsider in</li> <li>• What the outsider says</li> <li>• What the outsider does</li> </ul>

\*Adapted from '*Exercises for Promoting Acceptance and Understanding of Others*'