

Have You Ever? Game

Props/materials: Place markers (optional)

Group size: 8-30

Activity:

- Have the participants stand in a circle.
- Tell them that you will read them a question and they will think about if they have ever done what the question asked.
- If they have they will change places with someone else who has also done what the question asked.
- Do the activity in silence.
- Facilitate a discussion after the activity as a group, or for a large group, in pairs or several smaller groups.

Process Activity

- Did you notice that we all have had experiences with _____ ?
- What was the most important part of this activity for you?
- How can you apply what we learned in this activity to real life?

Have You Ever? Role Modeling Questions for Adults

RELATIONAL AGGRESSION

In my adult life:

- I have unfairly “vented” about co-workers or acquaintances.
- I have gossiped about other people’s children, campers or girls in the troop.
- I have participated in spreading rumors.
- I have refused to continue speaking to someone I disagree with.
- I have rolled my eyes at others when I didn’t like what they were saying.
- I have enlisted friends to side with me in an argument with another friend.
- I have asked for the help of others to blindly corroborate my story when filing a complaint about a co-worker, neighbor, teacher, etc.
- I have teased someone else.
- I have stopped that teasing as soon as the person being teased looked uncomfortable.

BYSTANDER

In my adult life:

- I have listened to gossip about other people’s children, campers or girls in the troop.
- I have broken the speed limit because everybody else was doing it.
- I have not said anything when hearing a joke that made me uncomfortable (i.e. sexist, racist, etc.) (in order to not be a killjoy).
- I have witnessed my children, family or friends purposefully exclude others from a group or party and let it “slide.”
- I have seen a person being teased, picked on, demeaned or bullied, and did not do anything because I feared losing my status and no one else did anything either.
- I have listened to “venting” that was very unfair and didn’t say anything because I didn’t want to “make waves.”
- I have stated to others who are gossiping that I don’t feel comfortable talking about others when they are not present.
- I have heard rumors about someone but did not do anything to stop the rumor.
- I have asked someone to stop “venting” when they were speaking unfairly about another person.
- I have asked my boss, co-worker, doctor, etc. to stop when they disclosed something confidential about someone else.

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Original Article

Interpersonal chemistry through negativity: Bonding by sharing negative attitudes about others

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Abstract

- We propose that sharing a negative—as compared to a positive—attitude about a third party is particularly effective in promoting closeness between people. Findings from two survey studies and an experiment support this idea. In Studies 1 and 2, participants' open-ended responses revealed a tendency to recall sharing with their closest friends more negative than positive attitudes about other people. Study 3 established that discovering a shared negative attitude about a target person predicted liking for a stranger more strongly than discovering a shared positive attitude (but only when attitudes were weak). Presumably, sharing negative attitudes is alluring because it establishes in-group/out-group boundaries, boosts self-esteem, and conveys highly diagnostic information about attitude holders. Despite the apparent ubiquity of this effect, participants seemed unaware of it. Instead, they asserted that sharing *positive* attitudes about others would be particularly effective in promoting closeness.