

Take a stand - women and sport

Duration : 1 hour

Group size : between 10 and 40



What do we think about equality between the sexes, and gender-based discrimination? To what extent are we able to go to defend our positions, and understand the others ?

TOPICS

- Equality, parity, gender-based discrimination, intolerance ;
- Responsibility for our own actions ;
- Reference frame.

OBJECTIVES

- Call into question the participants' points of views and about equality ;
- Raise the participants' awareness about their role as members of the society ;
- Encourage participants to share ideas and opinions ;
- Expose and identify the various ways of thinking within the group ;
- Overcome the obstacles to communication and encourage everybody to express their opinions ;
- Make participants aware of their behaviours: We defend doggedly hasty decisions, refusing to accept other people's point of view.

PREPARATION

- Paperboard, marker and overhead projector ;
- List of statements ;
- Before beginning the activities, write the statements on the board or on an overhead transparency.

INSTRUCTIONS

Explain to the participants that they will have to imagine that on one side of the room, there is a negative sign (-) and on the other side a positive one (+).

Explain to them that you will read a list of statements. Participants who disagree go to the (-), those who agree to the (+). Those who cannot make their mind up will stay in the middle but will not be allowed to express themselves.

READ THE FIRST STATEMENTS

Once all the participants have chosen their side, ask each of them why they chose the minus or the plus. They have to try to convince the others to agree with them on this subject. They can discuss for 5 to 8 minutes.

- When they are done, read a second statement, and start the whole process again.
- When all the statements have been discussed, proceed to evaluation.

EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING

Start by asking the following questions:

- What did you feel during this exercise?
- Did you find it hard to make a choice? Why?
- Was it difficult to remain in the middle not being allowed to express yourselves?
- What types of arguments have been used? Based on facts or on emotions? Which ones have been the most efficient?
- Are those statements true?
- Was the exercise useful?

ADVICE TO THE LEADER

To encourage participation, you can invite the quietest participants to express themselves, and ask the frequent speakers to let them speak their mind.

The statements do not have to be controversial. It's important to explain this to the participants at the end of the evaluation.

Depending on the group, you can develop the discussion around several points :

Despite their ambiguity, these statements are partly true. (stereotypes)

Explain that, as in any communication process, different people understand a same sentence differently. Consequently there is not a good or bad way of thinking. What matters most is to identify and understand the reasons why they take one stand or another.

Try to stress the connections to everyday life. We often consider only one side of problems. We may be asked to support an idea without thinking deeply about it. You can ask the group to what extent it affects collective thinking.

Do we really listen to the other arguments? Do we make ourselves clear enough? The vaguest we remain, the more we breed ambiguity and may e misunderstood.

Are we logical in our ideas and opinions?

It's not always easy to have the courage of our convictions, sometimes it's even dangerous. But you don't have to feel alone, because others are fighting for a better world too. There is always something that can be done. Think carefully about what you can do to give women better access to sports.

EXAMPLES OF STATEMENTS

“Sport is good for health”

“women do less sport than men, because they are not fundamentally the sporty type”

“ a too brawny women is not feminine”

“ a bodybuilder woman looks like a man”

“a woman has no sense of direction”

“ sport can harm pregnant women”

A POSSIBLE DEBATE ?

What are the obstacles to women practicing sports ?

What are the obstacles for women to access technical or elective responsibilities in sports ?