



12+



45 min



2+

Source:
Mira Skadegård Thorsen

8

Stereotyping



To identify the stereotypes associated with the participants' own identities, as well as the challenges or pride they have experienced in relation to those different identities

Description

1. Participants pair up in groups of two. In the central circle of their sheets, participants write their name, and in each surrounding satellite sphere, they write an aspect of their identity that they consider one of the most important in defining themselves (e.g., older brother, soccer player, student, daughter, boy/girl, Danish-Pakistani, young, etc.).
2. Next, each pair shares a story with each other. It should be a stereotype associated with one of the categories you wrote down that they don't believe is true and give an example. For example "I am a boy, but I do not like to play soccer".
3. Now, participants must write down a stereotypical sentence they have heard about one of their chosen identity dimensions. Preferably, it should be a stereotype that doesn't fit them very well. Ask the participants about their observation and if anyone would like to share them with the rest of the group. Afterwards, each participant should read their stereotypical sentence aloud to the rest of the group, so each participant can say: "I am ..., but I am not ..."



The good stereotypes

Stereotyping is a way our brains sort information quickly so we can make decisions. These stereotypes develop over time through things like culture, media, personal experiences, and by interacting with people. We are bombed by information everyday, and our brains automatically group and organize it into patterns, helping us understand the world and make fast decisions. This means we can make quick decisions without thinking about every little detail. It was very important for our ancestors to survive in the wild environment of prehistory, and it is an instinct that we carry with us still today.

Always fact-check

We will always categorize in stereotypes. And some stereotyping are most often correct, eg. men are in general taller than women. Be careful not to generalize though! Also, we do have to remember that not all stereotypes are correct. For example, there is no real reason to say that women are bad drivers. These shortcuts are not always based on facts so it's important to always fact-check stereotypes.

Stereotype and Prejudice

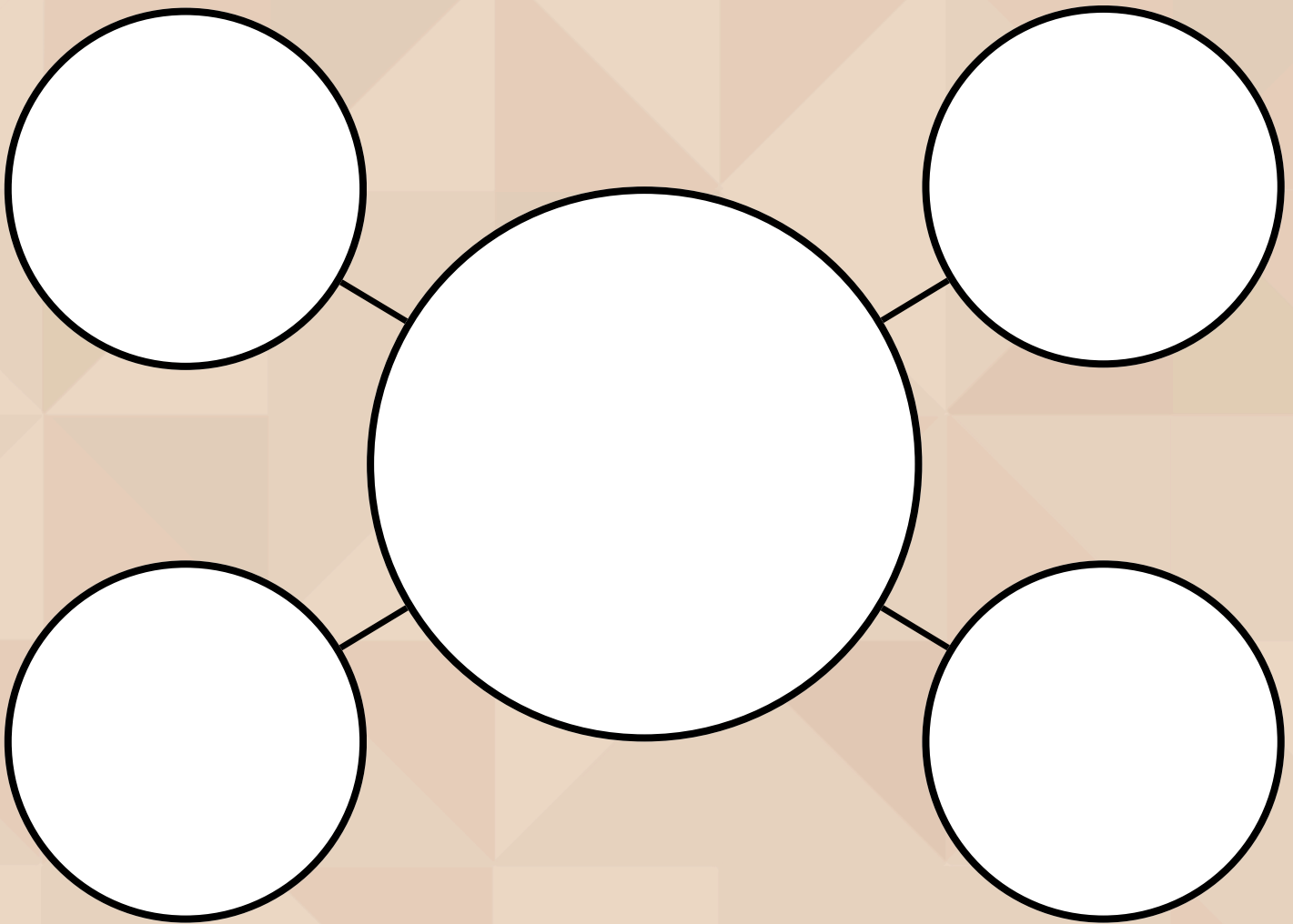
Stereotypes and prejudice are connected but are not the same. Stereotyping is when we assign certain traits to a whole group of people, often oversimplifying and generalizing based on shared characteristics. It becomes prejudice when the stereotype becomes a fixed opinion about a group of people, without enough knowledge about the topic. Prejudice literally means "judging before", that is, before getting to know the matter that is going under judgement.



Civil Connections
Building robust communities



1



I am _____ But I am not _____



Group discussion:

- Did anyone break down a stereotype you had believed in? If so, which one?
- How did it feel to talk about your own stereotype in front of others?
- How are the identities you choose for yourself different from the identities others use when relating to you? For example you might highlight something about yourself and your parents or friends would highlight other identities about you.



Evaluation questions:

- What do you think about the exercise?
- Did you learn anything new?
- What will you remember the most?
- Can you use the knowledge you have gained from the exercise? And how?
- How are stereotypes related to prejudice?
- What is the function of stereotypes?
- Is there a good stereotype? How do they become negative?

