



The barometer 25-30 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any group willing to engage in participatory learning. Suitable for all levels of knowledge.

PURPOSE

- To enable the facilitator to assess participants' knowledge of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and tailor subsequent input sessions accordingly.
- Allows participants to explore their views and ideas about FORB in relation to their own values.
- To gradually ease participants into deeper discussions of FORB in their local context.



DESCRIPTION

An interactive game in which participants place themselves along an imaginary line between 'totally agree' and 'totally disagree' in relation to statements on FORB and discuss their thoughts. A good opener for a session on FORB for all, before any knowledge input on the right.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- Contextualized statements – choose from the statements below and/or create your own.
- An indoor or outdoor open space large enough for participants to walk around freely and position themselves along an imaginary or actual line on the floor between two corners of the room. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Ask everyone to stand in the middle of the room. Explain that the group is going to do an exercise to explore what we know and think about FORB.

Assign opposite corners of the room as 'agree' and 'disagree' corners. Explain that you will make a statement and ask participants to stand in one of the corners, according to whether they agree or disagree with the statement.

Use two of the following test examples to help participants grasp the idea of the game:

- Pizza is tastier than pasta.
- I love football.
- Watching TV is more enjoyable than reading.
- Money is essential to happiness.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15-20 MIN

- Begin the game by introducing two simpler statements on FORB for participants to 'agree' or 'disagree' with. Choose two of the following, or create your own:
 - Freedom of religion or belief is a human right all people should have.
 - In our community there is full freedom of religion or belief.
 - Freedom of religion or belief can be limited in some situations.
 - Freedom of religion or belief only protects followers of the major world religions.
- Tell participants that for the next set of statements, they can position themselves anywhere along an imaginary line between the two corners. This is a 'barometer' scale ranging from totally agree in one corner, through partly agree to undecided or indifferent in the middle, followed by partly disagree to totally disagree in the opposite corner.
- Choose a few of the following statements to read out or create your own. After each statement has been read, ask one or two participants to explain why they positioned themselves where they did on the scale.
 - Freedom of religion or belief allows believers from different religions to share their faith and promote their beliefs.
 - Freedom of religion or belief is a Western idea that doesn't work in our context.
 - People should be allowed to leave their religion without seeking permission or facing consequences.
 - Freedom of religion or belief is only for adults, not for children.
 - Freedom of religion or belief means that you should show religion respect – you are not allowed to criticize religions.
 - Freedom of religion gives religious leaders the right to control the beliefs of their followers/members.
 - All religious groups should be allowed to build places of worship – the same rules regarding buildings should apply to all.
 - Religion should be removed from ID cards.
 - I think interreligious marriages should be allowed.
 - I think that religious education in school should give all religions the same attention.
 - Governments have the right to restrict the religious freedom of groups that they don't like.
 - I think it is natural that xxx (the majority religious group) in our country have privileges that religious minorities don't have.
 - Atheists should not be allowed to spread information freely.
- Remember, your role as facilitator is to enable participants to freely share their own thoughts and reflections without fear or guilt about making a mistake. Refrain from making judgements on the opinions and ideas participants express and limit discussions of what is right or wrong between different participants during this exercise. Note any serious misconceptions about FORB to address when you conclude the exercise (or in knowledge inputs or sessions that follow).

TIP! Include statements that will challenge people's ideas but are not so controversial as to create an atmosphere of conflict.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking participants for exploring their own views and ideas about FORB. Address any serious misconceptions about FORB. Explain that the rest of the session will explore the contents of FORB as set out in international human rights law.

Source

Adapted from www.educationforpeace.com