

3.3 What Causes Are You an Ally For?



Suggested Grade Level: 6-12

Time: 30-60 Minutes

Subject Area: Allyship and Activism

Overview:

The group will discuss causes that are important to them and the importance of being an ally to other marginalized communities. Further the discussion hopes to help the group begin to see how different issues intersect i.e. Black Lives Matters and police violence against trans women and trans women of color in particular.

Goals:

- Understand what causes matter to individual members
- Understand what causes matter to the group as a whole
- Begin to learn how to be an ally to marginalized groups other than LGBTQ

Materials:

- Provided “Issue Cards”

Procedure:

Step One:

The discussion leader begins the discussion with the question “What do you think is the most important issue facing the LGBTQ community?” The group will then contemplate this question either as a whole or in small groups or in quiet self reflection.

Step Two:

The discussion leader will then hand out issue sheets which list intersections between LGBTQ advocacy and other advocacy groups. Similar to Step One, allow the group to process and discuss these issues.

Step Three:

The discussion leader will then bring the group back with a new question “What are important issues facing you or groups you care about?” Note the goal is not to say Group A is more important than Group B but to see what causes the GSA is passionate about. If discussion goes this way a good recovery question is “Can we care about multiple issues?” to show that we can in fact be vocal about bathroom issues and anti-muslim bias for example. Lead the discussion towards intersections between LGBTQ issues and the issues the group cares about with questions like “How does BLM intersect with LGBTQ employment discrimination?”

Example Issues Facing Marginalized Communities

LGBTQ Employment Discrimination: As of writing this no federal law exists and only 19 states have laws which prevent employers from discriminating against employees for sexual orientation or gender expression.

Police Violence Against Communities of Color: As of writing this The Counted by The Guardian has the rate of death by police action per million population as 10.13 Native American, 6.66 Black, 3.23 Hispanic/Latino, and 2.9 White showing that as a percentage Native American, Black and Hispanic people’s face a greater percentage deadly encounters with police. Movements like BLM have spent countless hours protesting and working to fix this.

Prison Reform: According to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, 16% of transgender adults have been in a prison or jail for any reason. This compares with 2.7% of all adults who have ever been in prison.

Homelessness: According to the [Williams Institute](#), 40% of the homeless youth served by agencies identify as LGBT and 43% of clients served by drop-in centers identified as LGBT.

Anti-Muslim Violence: The muslim American community faces many forms of violence and discrimination with a chilling example being the bombing of a Imam’s office at a Mosque in Bloomington, Minnesota.

School Safety: According to the 2015 National School Climate Survey by GLESN 57.6% of LGBTQ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and 43.3% because of their gender expression.

Bathroom Access: Cities and states have passed numerous conflicting ordinances and laws requiring or outlawing bathroom access for transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary individuals. The issue is often a focal point for trans activists.

Hormone Access: For many transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary individuals access to gender related hormones is necessary for their mental wellbeing and livelihood however access is often difficult or impossible due to factors from insurance to lack of providers to laws limiting access.