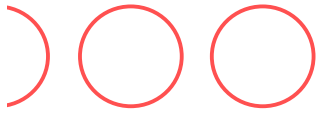




Choose People



Denver, Colorado
970.219.0245 phone
720.400.8215 phone

Mattering vs. Marginalizing Exercise

Adopted from On Course Workshop

Based on the work of Nancy K. Schlossberg

More detailed description of this exercise in a college/student context is available online at: <http://oncourseworkshop.com/interdependence/mattering-marginalizing/>

First schedule an hour for the exercise and then create the following two-sided handout:

Side 1: MATTERING

Please think of a time when you felt that you really mattered; when who you were or what you did was valued by others. You do not need to disclose the circumstances of the particular event. Please write down the following:

- Cues:** What in the interaction let you know you were being valued?
- Feelings:** How did you feel as a result of this interaction?
- Actions:** What were your behaviors or actions that occurred as a result of this interaction?

CUES	FEELINGS	ACTIONS
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Side 2: MARGINALIZING

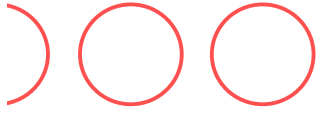
Please think of a time when you felt as if you did not really matter; when who you were or what you did was not valued. Sometimes marginalization in an interaction stems from identity characteristics, such as race, gender, perceived sexual orientation, ability status, age, etc. Sometimes marginalization is influenced by our position within a group. Sometimes it is the result of an interpersonal dynamic in the absence of any other factor. You do not need to disclose the circumstances of the particular event. Please write down the following:

- Cues:** What in the interaction let you know you were not being valued?
- Feelings:** How did you feel as a result of this interaction?
- Actions:** What were your behaviors or actions that occurred as a result of this interaction?

CUES	FEELINGS	ACTIONS
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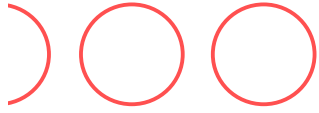
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Mattering vs. Marginalizing

Directions:

1. Distribute the “Mattering and Marginalizing” handout and inform team members that they should only look at the side that says MATTERING. Say “Today we are going to do an exercise called Mattering and Marginalizing. I am not going to say much by way of introduction. Please know we’ll pause to do a round robin after each section to share thoughts and answers.”
2. Have a volunteer read aloud the text following the title MATTERING, including the Cues, Feelings and Actions statements. You may need to provide an illustration for each. For example, Cues – the person looked me in the eye; Feelings – that made me feel happy; Actions – I wanted to work harder for that person. (Additional examples can be found below.)
3. Then state, “Please think of a time you felt valued by someone. Once you have thought of the experience please write down the cue(s), feeling(s) and action(s), related to the experience you are thinking of. You have five minutes. Please begin.” Alert team members when they have about 30 seconds remaining. (5 minutes)
4. Using a flip chart or white board, write the word Mattering and then Cues, Feelings and Actions. Ask the team members to call out the cues they wrote down and record them. Then repeat the process with Feelings and Actions. (15 minutes)
5. Next, have your team flip to the side that says MARGINALIZING. Have a volunteer read the text, including the Cues, Feelings and Actions statements. Ask your team, “Please think of a time you felt marginalized or not valued by someone. Once you have thought of the experience please write down the cue(s), feeling(s), and action(s) related to the experience you are thinking of.”
6. Write the word Marginalizing and then the words, Cues, Feelings and Actions. Ask the team to call out what they wrote down. (15 minutes)
7. Have the team form small groups. In your group please share your thoughts on these two questions with each other. Choose a recorder to write down your answers.” (5 minutes)
 - “What are some ways we (can) show our co-workers they matter or are valued?”
 - “What are ways we show our co-workers they are being marginalized or are not valued?”
8. Reconvene the large group and record the team members’ answers. (5 minutes)
9. Pass out an index card to each team member. Say, “I have two more questions. Once you are done writing, I will ask you to share one of your responses.” (5 minutes)



Mattering vs. Marginalizing

Write/post the following questions:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- What one action will you commit to show your peers that they matter?

10. Have team members share their responses as well as one of your own to wrap up the exercise. (5 minutes)

Examples for Mattering:

Cues	Feelings	Actions
Recognition	Validated	Take on more, cont. the work
Verbal/written validation	Valued	Respond well
Get "thank you's"	Humbled	Give feedback
Given Independence	Proud	Stay emotionally involved
Given voice	Warm and fuzzy	Try harder
Specific/positive feedback	Good	Take more risks
	Competent	Engage more in relationships
		Stay committed to organization

Examples for Marginalizing:

Cues	Feelings	Actions
Excluded	Out of place	Avoid social settings
Disconnected	Hurt	Disconnect from work
Little/No financial reward	Angry	"To hell with 'em"
Silenced	Humiliated	Do job and "that's it"
Rubber stamp	Resentful	Bend rules (negatively)
	Isolated	
Shut-down	Ignored	Circumvent channels of communication
		Quit
Invisibility	Annoyed	
Assumptions		

Source: Schlossberg, N.K. (1989). Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community. In Roberts, D.C. (Ed.), Designing campus activities to foster a sense of community. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

