Exploring Leadership

ADAPTABILITY: OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Research indicates that being open to new evidence, values, and perspectives different from one's own can increase empathy and lead to greater tolerance, deeper understanding, and a respect for diversity and complexity in learning, relationships, and everyday life. Open mindedness is a crucial trait for all good citizens and especially leaders. This activity will help you practice open-minded thinking.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- **Apply open-minded thinking strategies to common arguments.**
- **Argue an issue from the side opposite one's opinion.**

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- Show the video: "IB Trait: Open Minded" on YouTube
- Ask, "When was the last time you changed your mind?"

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- **Paper & Pencils**
- **Computer/Projector to show video.**

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

It's no secret that as a teen/young person you probably argue with your parents, maybe even everyday. Actually, they are probably the people you argue or disagree with the most! In every parent/child relationship there are bound to be issues you may never agree on. Learning to be open-minded can help resolve disagreements and make you a more understanding and empathetic person.

- Identify an issue in which you and your parents disagree or argue.
    - Examples: Curfew, dating, household chores and responsibilities, homework, etc.
- On your paper create two columns. At the top of one side write, "I think..." on the other side write "My parents think"
- Write out the different points of view for the issue you chose. What are your main arguments? How about theirs?
- Pair up with someone you trust and share your lists.
- Now, role play the arguments while playing the part of your parent and your partner will play you.
- Switch roles and play out your partner's argument acting as them.

FACILITATOR TIP:

- Keep the topics non-political, focused on common parent-child issues.
- For students with non-traditional family circumstances, ask them to choose someone close with whom they might have a common family disagreement.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

- Have the participants think of their least favorite candy or fruit.
- Then pair them up and have them debate/convince their partner why the candy/fruit they chose is actually the best.

The participants will be forced to think of reasons why someone might enjoy this candy/fruit even though it is actually their least favorite. It teaches them to be open-minded to the other side of the argument.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Ask the below open ended questions to your group to engage in a discussion about what happened during the activity.

- How did arguing from your parents' point of view change your perspective on the situation?
- How was your partner's argument similar to or different from yours?
- How difficult was it to be open-minded?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- In real life, when are some times that you can consciously remind yourself to try and see the other side of the issue?
- How might it benefit you to be Open Minded?
- What would it take to get you to change a strongly held opinion?
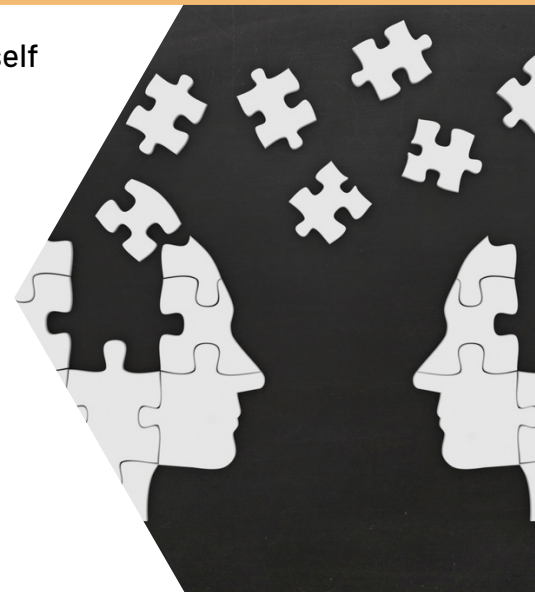
CONCLUSION:

As science communicator and television personality Bill Nye once said, "Everyone you will ever meet knows something that you don't." Without an open mind, you will never have the opportunity to consider other perspectives and experiences. You'll never get to know what others know.

REFERENCES

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