

# COMMON GROUND

Strong relationships grow from connection, shared experiences, and mutual understanding. While some friendships and partnerships form through common interests, others develop through respecting differences and valuing diverse perspectives. This activity challenges participants to find common ground and reflect on what makes relationships meaningful—whether through shared experiences or the ability to embrace and learn from each other’s unique strengths.



**CONVERSATION STARTER:** Think of a time you connected with someone (friend, teammate, classmate) What about them that made you feel connected?

## WHAT YOU’LL NEED

-Paper and pencils (or digital notes for accessibility)

## FACILITATION TIP

Encourage active listening. Have participants focus on truly hearing what their partner is saying rather than just waiting for their turn to speak.

## FINDING COMMON GROUND

1. Pair up with someone you don’t know well or haven’t worked with before.
2. Take turns sharing your interests—hobbies, favorite activities, or values.
3. Work together to list as many things as possible that you have in common (you have 2–3 minutes!).
4. Discuss: What makes those common interests meaningful to you? Why do they matter?
5. Switch partners and repeat with someone new.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

- Recognize shared interests as a foundation for connection.
- Understand how both similarities and differences shape strong relationships.

## REFLECTION

- Did finding common interests help you feel more connected? Why or why not?
- How might working with someone very different from you create both a challenge and a strength?

## APPLICATIONS

- How can finding common ground help build strong teams and partnerships?
- How can we build strong relationships with people who have different backgrounds or perspectives?

**DIVE DEEPER:** Have you ever changed your opinion about someone after getting to know them better? What made you see them differently, and how did that change your relationship?

**KEY TAKEAWAY:** Building relationships isn’t just about what we have in common—it’s about how we connect, listen, and value both similarities and differences.

## CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Did this activity help participants see how both common interests and differences can lead to strong relationships?