

Toolbox idea

Values continuum

Session : Values (5)

Possible applications: value applications, being respectful even if you disagree, the value of seeing both sides of an issue

Materials needed: Value statements list, Agree/Disagree signs

Instructions: Hang an 'Agree' sign on one side of the room and a 'Disagree' sign on the opposite side. Ask participants to stand, and as you read each value statement, to place themselves along the agree/disagree continuum. (If they completely agree or disagree- stand against the wall, somewhat would be towards the middle in various degrees).

Read each statement aloud slowly, repeat once, and allow time for the participant to consider briefly and place themselves where they think fit. Then you can ask for some explanations and ideas as you see fit. People will often surprise each other by where they stand—the instructor should insure that this is a safe environment to respectfully express their opinions. The instructor should also try to minimize pushing their own opinions and should be able to point out the pros and cons of each side's point of view dispassionately and respectfully.

Key points to process:

We should be able to respect other peoples' opinions even if we disagree with them. We have all arrived at our personal beliefs through life experience, and that counts for something, even if we don't agree!

It is valuable to have a variety of opinions—it keeps society balanced.

We have the right to choose any values we want, but some are more successful than others.

We can have any values we choose—though might not have the right to express every value at any given time. For example, some personal values can't be fully expressed until we're self-sufficient adults.

Or some can't be expressed (at least without consequences) if they're against the law.