

Dealing with Discrimination Action Planning

Recommended Age: 14+

Goal

- To brainstorm ways to feel good about our bodies and combat negative body image.

Have Ready

- Write: “How can I feel better about my body?” “How can I help others feel better about their bodies?” on two flipcharts.
- Markers.
- Tape (for posting flipcharts).

Instructions

- Split youth into two groups. Give each group a list. Allow groups about 5-10 minutes to complete the lists.
- Have each group read their list, debriefing as a large group after each list.

Sample Flipcharts

How can I deal if I’m experiencing discrimination?

- **Realize it is NOT your fault!**
- **Own your difference. Own your uniqueness. Discover the strength, gifts, and power in it.**
- **Talk to someone you trust about the discrimination you are experiencing.** (Friends, family, caregiver, school counsellor, teacher, crisis lines)
- **Practice self-care** and be kind to yourself. Say encouraging things to yourself like how you would support a friend.
- **Laughing together** with people who have similar experiences can help get you through and can be healing.
- **Know that you are not alone.** There are many supportive groups/organizations out there that help people talk, share, come together, and raise awareness.

- **Learn about people you admire who have experienced the same type of discrimination.**
- **Know who to report abuse/harassment to.** Teachers, guidance counsellors, caregivers, parents, police, supervisors, coaches, etc. Become familiar with your school's anti-bullying/harassment policy.
- **Visit www.needhelpnow.ca for support on how to remove hurtful or bullying images from the internet** (take screenshots if you are planning on reporting them).
- **Use social media to get your voice heard. Start or sign petitions, support or create activist hashtags (e.g., #blacklivesmatter), rally folks together and organize info sessions, protests, gatherings, and celebrations.**
- **Explore your history and culture. Honour your ancestors for what they have overcome.**
- **Organize in your school, group, or community.** The student council, human rights group, youth night, or start a group where folks can get support, share stories/experiences, access resources, and do fun activities.
- **Ask school administrators to make education about respecting differences among people a priority.**
- **Be politically aware.** Vote, write letters, lobby government, speak directly to politicians, organize and/or participate in demonstrations.

Debrief

- **Remember, if you are experiencing discrimination or oppression, it's not your fault.** It comes from people who are ignorant to or fearful of how powerful you truly are. Own your power and connect to others like you.

How can I be an ally?

- **Think about the language you use and stop saying sexist, racist, and homophobic terms, phrases, and behaviours. If you make an insensitive remark, genuinely apologize for it.**
- **Use the privilege you have to help others.** Examples are white people speaking out against racism and not doing racist things; cis-men treating all other genders with respect; cis-gendered people using language that is inclusive of trans, Two-Spirit, and non-binary people; people holding space for people living with disabilities on the bus, in a washroom, in class, in a theatre, etc.; wealthy people choosing to help create opportunities for those with less money.
- **Educate yourself more on these topics (racism, ableism, sexism, decolonization, etc.).**
- **Respect people's pronouns and identities. Ask people what word/name they want to be called by.**
- **Don't laugh at offensive jokes. Challenge them, if you feel safe doing so.**
- **Learn about the history of the Land you live on or are visiting.**
- **Organize or attend awareness-building events.**
- **Don't judge people for their (assumed) sexual activity.**
- **Be politically aware** (e.g., vote, get involved in a party, lobby government, speak directly to politicians, organize and/or participate in demonstrations).
- **Start or join a gender-sexuality alliance.**
- **Don't like or share memes, jokes, and images that are discriminatory. Instead, you can report them.**
- **Get involved in already existing groups and work together to raise awareness about discrimination** (student council, human rights groups).
- **Join or start an anti-oppressive social media account, book club, rock group, or an anti-violence association at school.**
- **Learn about new ideas and trying something new.**
- **Learn a language other than English.**
- **Listen to people living with (dis)abilities to find out how you can support them.**
- **Challenge people's fatphobic comments: don't apologize for your body/don't use 'fat' as a four-letter word.**

Debrief

- **You don't have to organize big things. Making a difference can be as small as not laughing at a discriminatory joke or making an effort to understand/befriend someone different from you.** Each 'action' you come up with is important.
- These actions exist on a continuum and can vary between not laughing at an inappropriate joke (personal action on one end) to going to a demonstration (political action on the other end).