

## Overview:

This lesson plan will challenge participants to reflect on their values and how they contribute to their identity. In this activity, participants will be provided with a handout and asked to identify their cultural identities. Then, they will reflect on those identities.

## Background and Information:

This activity was adapted by Chuck Calahan from a workshop facilitated by Stella Ting-Toomey and Leeva Chung. While the origin of this activity is debated, an early version appears to be available in *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Program Professional's Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use* (see citation below). Different versions of the handout are available in the [Downloads](#) and [Links](#) sections of this tool.

## Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Articulate how they perceive their own identities.
2. Analyze why they place value on certain aspects of their identity.

## Time:

1 hour

## Group Size:

Small group

## Materials:

One handout (in [Downloads](#)) and pen per person.

## Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

## AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

## Other Skills:

Mentorship & Leadership

## Links to Activity Instructions & Supplemental Materials/Information:

- [Activity instructions from the Center for Instructional Excellence](#)
- Mick Vande Berg has a similar activity called "Identity: My Culturally Diverse Heritage." The Instructions and Handout for this activity are also included in [Downloads](#). They are titled as "Identity Circle Activity Diagram" and "Identity Circles."
- Students sometimes struggle to come up with 12 identities for this activity. To help them better conceptualize their own identity markers, facilitators may choose to show them the YouTube video titled "[Before You Call the Cops - The Tyler Merrill Project](#)." Facilitators can also use this video as a way to discuss how minority identities are often perceived in a way that is dangerous and discriminatory.

## Related Tools:

### Similar tools:

- [Cultural Autobiography](#)

Adapted by Chuck Calahan from Ting-Toomey, S. & Chung, L. (2013, July). Who am I? Identity dialogue [Workshop]. Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication, Portland, OR, United States.

The origin of this activity is debated, but what appears to be an early version is available in the following:  
Paige, R.M., Cohen, A.D., Kappler Mikk, B., Chi, J.C., Lassegard, J.P. (2002). Discovering your cultural diversity. In R.M. Paige, A.D. Cohen, B. Kappler Mikk, J.C. Chi, & J.P. Lassegard (Eds.), *Maximizing study abroad: A program professional's guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use* (p. 187). Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition.