

Mask-Making Activity

Objective

This activity will encourage participants to:

- recognize the masks they might wear
- recognize the masks that others put upon them
- view other participants with more compassion in regards to the masks they wear

Materials

- paper plates and markers
- optional: magazines, scissors, glue

Instructions

Participants will use the materials to decorate a mask (paper plate) that describes them individually.

The **outside of the paper plate** represents what people see / what we *believe* they see:

- How do you want people to view you (your “reputation”)?
- How do people label you?

The **inside of the paper plate** includes who we really are:

- What are some things that you value, that others may not know?
- What are some of your passions?

The mask does not necessarily have to include facial features – participants should feel free to draw and/or write, covering both sides of their mask. Allow participants about 20-25 minutes to complete their mask. As a conclusion, encourage them to share their masks with the group.

Examples / Idea Starters

Give participants some time to work independently. If they are struggling with what to include, moving through these reflection questions can be helpful!

Outside of the mask:

1. **How do you present yourself to others? What image do you try to portray?**
2. **How do the various people in your life view you? How have you been labeled by others?**
3. **What roles do you play (e.g. mother, friend)? What communities do you belong to (e.g. work, faith)?**
4. **What do people know about what you do?** What activities are you involved in, what are some of your strengths/weaknesses, etc.?

5. **What do people think they know about your life?** Do they think you: have the perfect family, are happy all the time, etc.?

Inside of the mask:

6. **What is your personality *really* like?** How do you act when you feel the most comfortable? Are you: fun, talkative, opinionated, quiet, goofy, serious, etc.?
7. **What are some things you *really* love to do that not everyone knows about?** Do you: listen to oldies music, ride horses, swim, sing Disney songs, love Lord of the Rings, play/dislike a certain sport, read, write, love certain movies, enjoy musicals etc.?
8. **What is your life *really* like behind closed doors?** Do you: have family struggles, feel unhappy sometimes, worry about the future, get nervous about things, etc.?
9. This is an opportunity to **be honest** about the things that most people may not know about us – past experiences that have formed us, family history, hobbies, interests, hopes, feelings and dreams.

Additional Follow-Up Activities

1. Discussion Questions
 - What similarities and differences do you notice between the inside and outside of your mask?
 - What is holding you back from showing the people in your life what's on the inside of your mask?
 - Are there changes you would like to make or changes you've already made that you would like to celebrate?
2. Writing Personal "Mission Statements"
 - How can I start to remove the masks in my life?
 - What words do I strive to live by?
3. Media Evaluation
 - Have participants work independently or in groups to evaluate the presence of masks in popular movies or TV shows.