

# Session 9.1

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## THE MERRY-GO-AROUND

### Introduction

An activity to encourage people to talk openly about their feelings and ideas concerning the topics of the campaign “All different - All equal” to other people. The exercise also allows for one to one communication with a large number of different people in a short space of time.

### Materials

- Trigger questions, 13 - 15 questions are probably enough.
- Chairs, arranged in one outer and one inner circle facing each other.

### Time

2 hours

### Group size

15 - 30 people

### Process

People are asked to sit opposite (and facing) another person arranged around the room. Chairs should not be too close that pairs can overhear conversations taking place near to them. Spacing the pairs out will help them to concentrate on their partner. If there is an odd number of people one chair is put slightly outside the circle for a person to sit on (to make a ‘three’).

The people are told that they will move around, so they will not only speak to the person opposite them now. They will have three minutes each time to speak to each other. Every time you will call out the question. The question can vary according to the topic you are working on and the age and level of the group.

*The following questions are some suggestions:*

- What is your reaction if your best friend told you (s)he had mobbed someone?
- A good friend of yours tells a racist joke to a group of friends. What do you say?
- On the wall of your youth club somebody writes racist graffiti. What is your response?
- What is racism?
- Why does it say “Blacks go home” on the wall?
- Already for a long time it is very popular between your friends to use racist name-calling such as Four Eyes, Paki, Blackie, Gypsies. How do you react?

all different  
all equal

alla olika  
alla lika



## all different all equal



- What does it mean when you stereotype people?
- What could be done to challenge some of the negative views and stereotypes of minority groups?

After each question and three minutes conversation the people on the outside of the circle are asked to stand and shift one (or more) place to the right. Then they discuss the second question, which you have called out. After five or six questions like this, ask the inner circle to shift one (or more) place to the left. Another five or six questions, with changes of place should take place.'

For the last two or three questions ask both circles to make up their own questions to get an answer. By this stage they have an idea of the exercise and the type of questions.

At the end ask people generally whether it was easy to answer the questions? Did they find something out about their personal limits concerning the issues? Would this exercise influence the way in which they train or inform other young people?

### Conclusion

This exercise can be good as starting point to consider the complexity of some issues. It can also be useful near the end, if people are planning to spread their ideas further, by using peer education or other kinds of action. It is a very useful way to enable them to continue their discussions with each other if they wish, so it could be structured to take place prior to time off or a break.

