

Dyads/Paired Sharing: *Earliest Memories...Causes of Heterosexuality*

[] form dyads (pairs of 2), preferably with people you don't know as well; mixed gender... sit in counseling mode, face-to-face...be good listeners.

[] allow each person 2 minutes of uninterrupted time to talk about:

question #1 * **your earliest memory about homosexuality**
* **when you first learned about it**
* **when you were first aware of it**

[] try to recall the actual situation and relate specific details about time period; what was happening; how you were feeling; what you did; what was going on for you; how you see the situation now.

[] partners should try to be good, supportive listeners, no questions, please; give the person sharing their full two minutes; **silence is okay**...people may need time to think or decide how they want to share.

[] after pairs have shared stories to each other; remain in dyads and move on to question #2.

question #2 * **what causes heterosexuality?**
* **how does someone become heterosexual?**

[] instruct participants not to talk about or use the terms "homosexuality", "homosexual", "lesbian", "gay", "bisexual" in their discussion.

[] answers should focus on heterosexuality, heterosexuals and straight people's reality.

[] ask people to avoid discussion that includes comments like: "***You're born that way.***" "***It's natural.***"

Large Group Share Back

- ask the larger community to share a few of their **earliest memories**, their own or their partner's... be sure that their stories include their age at the time of their earliest memory, specific details of the situation, and how they felt about what happened.

- have people recall if their earliest memory was a positive or negative experience.

- number of stories shared will depend on time you have, but encourage community to share stories that are different from ones shared earlier in order to reflect the broad range of how people first became aware of or learned about homosexuality.

- then ask community to share their perspectives and theories about **what causes heterosexuality** as well as what issues and concerns came up for the dyads in their discussion.

- ask people if the question was difficult to answer and why? Was any group able to answer it without using the words "homosexuality", "homosexual", "lesbian", "gay", "bisexual"?

- talk about why this question is more significant than questions about "what causes homosexuality"; and that, the answer for what causes heterosexuality is probably the same as what causes homosexuality (the homophobic tendency is to want to "blame" someone for it).

Discuss why there is a need to know (the causes of....). What's behind the need to know?....how have theories been used in the past not to broaden understanding but to label, target, and make one group feel inferior to another (e.g. brain size of African Americans and Whites re: intelligence).