

# BEAD EXERCISE TO EXPLORE PRIVILEGE

This activity can be done individually or in a group. Set out seven bowls of beads. Print out the seven handouts with “privilege statements” (sexuality, ability, gender/sex, race, religious, class, and nationality) and put above a bowl of beads.

For each handout, read each statement. For any statement for which you can say, “Basically, yes,” take a bead. (Don’t overthink it.) Do this for each handout and collect your beads.

When you are all done, you can use a piece of string to make your collection of beads into a bracelet or necklace.

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Ask yourself/your group:

What was it like to focus on your various privileges rather than your oppression as we often do in diversity activities? Was it a new experience? Comfortable? Enlightening? How did it actually feel to do it?

Why do you think it is we don’t often attend to this aspect of our identities very often?

What would it mean for you to wear this noticeably for the rest of the day? What messages could others get from your “jewelry”? How noticeable, to us and others, are our privileges on a daily basis? Can we and how do we hide (deny, justify, ignore) our privilege on a daily basis?

