national healthy marriage resource center

Facilitator Tool Kit Activity

"Remember When" Penny

Instructions:

1. Put a penny on each person's seat before class starts or allow them to choose one at the beginning of class.
2. Have each participant find a partner, preferably someone they did not know before the group started.
3. Direct participants to **find the year their pennies were made. Ask them to ponder for a few minutes what their life was like during this year**. If participants were not born, ask them to think about what their parents or grandparents were doing during that year. If participants were very young, ask them to think about what they think their lives were like.
4. **Give them the opportunity to switch the penny for a different year if they prefer to think about another time**.
5. After allowing participants a minute or two to think, give them 5 minutes to share with their partners.

Title: "Remember When" Penny

Group Size: 1 to 50

Time Needed: 5 to 10 minutes

Goal: To get to know each other

Audience: Couples, Singles, Parents (works best for middle-aged to older adults)

Special Considerations:
Occasionally a participant may pick a year that is emotionally difficult to talk about. Always allow them to switch for another penny. This is a great exercise for introductions or if there has been animosity among the group.

Materials:

- One penny per participant plus several extra
- Try to make sure none of your pennies are too old

Tip for Discussion and Processing:

This activity encourages your group members to connect to one another. It helps participants build understanding and empathy for each other. You can use this activity to lead a discussion about the different sets of life experiences and circumstances each participant brings to the group. It is helpful to talk about how the variety of experiences and circumstances can sometimes cause people in the group to see things very differently. Explain that variety is a huge benefit for the group if people choose to keep an open mind.