

## **Div Lit Week 2 - Self-Reflexive Process 1: Reflections on your Past**

An important dimension of diversity literacy is to be able to be conscious of 1) our positioning in social groups (as raced, gendered etc.) and 2) how we are socialised into constructions of these groups. This exercise is designed to link the previous two weeks' discussion of constructions of difference with student's own experiences of race and gender, and explore how the processes we've been talking about have played out in their lives.

### **1. Objectives of class:**

- Explore how we are socialised into constructions of gender and race
- Illustrate how difference is constructed through discourse i.e. "messages" about people
- Link theoretical points about the constructions of difference to personal experiences
- Start a process of self-reflexivity

### **2. Material:**

- Handout - Reflections on your Past (see below)

### **3. Method:**

- Follow the instructions on the worksheet, as is.

# REFLECTIONS ON YOUR PAST

## Instructions

1. Read the questions carefully and jot down brief notes to yourself in the spaces provided – take about 15 minutes.
2. Form small groups.
3. Discuss your responses in your small groups for 15 minutes.
4. Summarise your responses on the sheet provided.
5. Be sure to write in large letters. You will share your learning and insights in the class.

## A. Messages about Sameness

Think back on your childhood through primary and secondary school – the time when you were forming your ideas and values. Recall one or two experiences that reveal the messages you received about

- i) **People who were most like you** in terms of **'race'**.
- ii) **People who were most like you** in terms of **gender**

Messages may include:

- Teaching from parents, guardians, elders, church, school teachers, and community.
- Statements and images from the media: newspapers, radio, TV, magazines.
- Things you 'just knew'. Maybe nobody ever said them. You 'just knew' them either as something one would not do; something that was 'right' or 'wrong'; something that was embarrassing or painful and could not be spoken about.
- Statements from your peers and other children in the neighbourhood or at school.

i)'race'


ii) gender


**B. Messages about Difference**

Think again and remember one or two experiences that reveal the messages you received about

- i) People who were **not like you** in terms of **'race'**.
- ii) People who were **not like you** in terms of **gender**

i) 'race'
ii)gender

**C. Insights**

What insights – learning about yourself – have you gained from thinking about these experiences and messages?


**D. Implications**

Do these messages continue to shape your experience as a student at UCT and/or your experience in everyday life? If yes, in which ways do they shape your current experience? Please provide examples.