

Arnie Kahn, adapted from Peggy McIntosh

Have students stand in a straight line or a circle and request that they refrain from speaking during the exercise. Then ask:

- If you were ever called names because of your race, class, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If you were ever called names because of your political, religious, or spiritual beliefs, take one step back.
- If your parents were professional, doctors, lawyers, etc., take one step forward.
- If you were raised in an area where there was prostitution, drug activity, etc., take one step back.
- If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step back.
- If there were more than 50 books in your house when you grew up, take one step forward.
- If you ever had to skip a meal or were hungry because there was not enough money to buy food when you were growing up, take one step back.
- If your parents brought you to art galleries or plays, take one step forward.
- If one of your parents was unemployed or laid off, not by choice, take one step back.
- If you attended a private school or private summer camp, take one step forward.
- If your family ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, take one step back.
- If you were ever discouraged from academic pursuits or jobs because of race, class, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If you were ever encouraged to attend a college by your parents, take one step forward.
- If prior to age 18, you took a vacation out of the country, take one step forward.
- If one of your parents did not complete high school, take one step back.
- If your family owned your own house, take one step forward.

- If you were ever offered a good job because of your association or connection with a friend or family member, take one step forward.
- If you ever inherited money or property, take a step forward.
- If you ever had to rely primarily on public transportation, take one step back.
- If you were generally able to avoid places that were dangerous, take one step forward.
- If your parents told you that you could be anything you wanted to be, take one step forward.