Inclusion

YAYA strives to create an environment in which our members, supporters, and partners have both the feeling and reality of belonging and are thus able to work to their full potential.

YAYA values the perspectives and contributions of all people. We strive to create a safe and welcoming environment during all of our meetings, activities, events, and actions.

In order to become inclusive, YAYA encourages members to recognize their own inclusive/exclusive behaviors, as well as the inclusive/exclusive dynamics of their chapters.

YAYA also encourages members to educate themselves on how to become better allies with different groups of oppressed peoples as well as, recognizing their own experiences with/in oppression.

In this session we will:

1. Discuss what it means to be inclusive. (10 mns)

2. Identify the signs of an inclusive/exclusive organization. (10 mns)

3. Identify our own inclusive/exclusive behaviors. (10mns)

4. Identify our chapter's inclusive/exclusive dynamics. (15 mns)

5. Make a plan on how to make our meetings, activities, actions, and events more inclusive. (15 mns)

*Note: In order to facilitate this training you will need butcher paper, tape, and markers. Make sure to leave all your notes from each section on the wall in chronological order until the training is over.

Inclusion

1. What does it mean to be inclusive? (10 mns)

Give the group 3 minutes to individually answer the following questions. When they are done, ask the participants to share their thoughts with the group. Make sure to write the main concepts that come up on the butcher paper under the heading "What does it mean to be inclusive?," and tape it to the wall.

- What words, phrases, or images come to mind when you hear the word inclusiveness?

- What would an inclusive organization look and feel like?

- What behaviors are needed in order to sustain an inclusive environment within an organization?

After the discussion, read the following definition to the group – it would be better to have a poster with the definition ready and to share it with the group at this point. Ask them if there is anything that they would like to add/change to the definition. The idea is that the group will have their own definition when the time allotted is over. Write the final definition of "inclusiveness" on the butcher paper, and tape it to the wall.

Example: Inclusion Is …

1. *A sense of belonging created when you…*

2. *Feel respected, valued and seen for who you are as an individual within an organization that has…*

3. *A level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that everyone —individually and collectively—can do their best work in a safe environment…*

4. *This is achieved when there is an internal awareness of differences, good communication, internal systems that bridge cultural gaps and work that is focused on a common denominator.*

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2. Identifying the signs of an inclusive/exclusive organization (10 mns)

Once you have consensus on a definition of "inclusiveness" with the group, ask them to list the signs/behaviors of an inclusive organization vs. those of an exclusive organization. Write these lists on 2 different pieces of butcher paper, and tape them to the wall.

Make sure to include the ideas below:

Hallmarks of Welcoming & Inclusive Groups:

- People are able to bring their true selves to the group.

- The organization encourages and welcomes people to contribute different opinions and points of view.

- People form dynamic and diverse teams; trust is a given.

- People are aware of their differences. Differences are seen as additive and productive.

- The organization has an interactive culture, where an array of points comes in contact with each other.

- People have the competencies and capabilities to adapt to different culture contexts (awareness of power, privilege, and cultural differences)

- People support and trust each other's efforts to do the best work possible.

- There is good communication, honesty and openness with/in members.

- New members and supporters feel welcomed and included on the group's conversations.

- Everyone in the group is committed to the organization's mission.

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<u>Hallmarks of Exclusive Groups</u>

- People feel pressure to fit in.

- People fear speaking up.

    Cliques are common; you trust the people closest to you or who share similar beliefs, ideologies as you do
- Denial of differences is considered a virtue (e.g., "we don't see differences here").

- Hard for outsiders to learn the rules.

- There is no diversity within the group.

- There is distrust within the group and lack of commitment to the organization. Misunderstandings are common.

- New people feel uncomfortable, excluded, and lost during the group's conversations.

- People attend meetings or events to "hang out," and may not know the organization's mission.

3. Identify our own inclusive/exclusive behaviors (10 mns)

Looking at the lists, ask the participants to reflect on their own behavior in YAYA. Give them 3 minutes to write down a list of their own inclusive/exclusive behaviors.

Some examples of exclusive behavior include: using acronyms during meetings attended by new members, using offensive language, cliquish behaviors with other members of the group, the use of inside jokes during meetings or events, etc.

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Some examples of inclusive behavior include: making an effort to hang out with new members and to get to know them, one-on-ones, having informative written materials for new members during meetings, making an effort to learn about other people's cultures, educating yourself about power and privilege group dynamics, etc.

Ask the group to share their answers and write them down on a piece of butcher paper, and tape it to the wall.

After each answer, ask the rest of the group if this is a behavior in which they also engage, or if they have ever felt excluded by this behavior in the past.

4. Identify our chapter's inclusive/exclusive dynamics (15 mns)

Based on the discussions so far (use the notes you have taken so far!) have a group discussion by collectively answering the following questions:

- Could your chapter be more inclusive?

- What are some of the most common inclusive/exclusive behaviors in the group? (Encourage people to use specific examples)

- What are some of the most common inclusive/exclusive dynamics in the group? (Encourage people to use specific examples)

- What efforts are currently being done in order to maintain the inclusiveness of your chapter?

Take notes on a piece of butcher paper, and tape it to the wall.

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5. Make a plan on how to make our meetings, activities, actions and events more inclusive (15 mns)

Ask the members to start thinking about specific steps of action to become more inclusive. Our goal is to avoid feeling excluded or making others feel excluded, as if they don't belong in YAYA, during our meetings, activities, actions and/or events.

Based on the exclusive behaviors and dynamics that you identified, discuss the following questions (As people speak up ask the group for consensus and then write it down on a piece of butcher paper. This ensures commitment and accountability for the future):

a. How can we avoid our exclusive dynamics/behaviors? How can we encourage inclusiveness? Below you will find some examples:

- We will provide background materials for new members during our meetings

- We will avoid inside jokes and acronyms during our meetings and events

- We create a space for bonding time with new members

- We will make decisions based on the consensus model

- We will have a weekend training on power and privilege

b. How will we deal with exclusive behaviors?

- We will create hand signs that will be used when somebody engages in a harmful behavior to alert the individual(s) of their action/s

- We will develop communication systems that make members aware of their behavior at the moment in which they engage in it (example: red and yellow cards)

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- We will focus our conversations at our meetings, activities, actions or events on farm workers and farm worker issues and campaigns

Ask the group once again if they can commit to these steps of action.

If there is consensus set up a date to evaluate whether these steps of action are working.