



Tool Twelve:

The Hidden Me, The Hidden You

DIFFICULTY: ● ○ ○ ○ ○

FOR: INDIVIDUALS

The Hidden Me, The Hidden You exercise encourages participants to share deeply personal experiences, including struggles and failures, in a safe and supportive environment. By doing so, it helps individuals transcend labels, discover shared threads that connect them, and build stronger relationships. It's a powerful tool for fostering empathy and understanding among adolescents and adults.

BASICS:

When: This exercise is ideal for adolescents and adults who either wish to have or already have a strong relationship with another person participating in the exercise (for example, through mentor or fellowship programs or peer coaching).

Time Needed: 60 to 90 minutes.

Materials: Pen and paper.

Objective: This exercise prompts participants to delve into and share their personal experiences and pivotal decision points in life. The goal is to broaden their understanding and connection with others.

STEPS:

1. Setup: Divide the larger group into pairs or trios.

2. Write about experiences: Provide each individual with two sheets of paper, each

folded in half. The top of each sheet should have "best" and "worst" written on opposite sides of the fold. On the first sheet, have participants create two lists: one for the best things and one for the worst things that have happened in their lifetime. On the second sheet, ask them to list the best and worst decisions they've made in their lifetime. Ask each person to find a quiet place without electronic devices and spend 20 to 30 minutes completing their lists.

3. Listen to partners: Once ready, each pair or trio should find a quiet space to sit together. Each person takes turns reading their lists aloud to the others, who listen for similarities, differences, and recurring themes.

4. Reflect: The larger group discusses the similarities that emerge. Encourage participants to share their admiration for what they've learned about their partners, as well as any unexpected insights. Explore how this newfound understanding might influence their interactions within the group in the future.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- * This exercise is ideal for a group where trust is established.
- * Encourage active listening.
- * Maintain confidentiality.

Source: [Thread: The New Social Fabric](#)