

Name Story Activity

Facilitator: Find a partner (preferably someone you don't know very well) and share with them your full name (first, middle and last).

Facilitator: Choose one of your names and discuss with your partner a story about your name. Include information about its **meaning** or **history**. Is it significant to your family? Is there a translation of different pronunciation? Are you named for someone or did someone have the particular responsibility of naming you? If you don't know any of that; share what it feels like to have your name? **(If students push back and say that they do not have a "name story", you can replace it with a value/belief that they share with their family members).**

TIP: SHARE A BRIEF EXAMPLE USING YOUR OWN NAME: TOUCHING ON THEMES RELATED TO THE WORKSHOP; IDENTITY, PERSONAL CULTURAL HISTORY, ETC...

Facilitator: Now I am going to ask question and ask you to share information about your partner's story **(Large Group Process Questions: Choose 1 or 2 of these prompts to get the conversation going)**

- a. What was it like to hear/tell name stories?
- b. What did you find interesting, surprising?
- c. Did you notice any themes?
- d. Does your name reflect anything about your social identities (i.e. your gender, race/ethnicity, religion, social class)?
- e. Do you think others make assumptions about you based on your name?
- f. How does this activity relate to diversity?

Facilitator: In order to understand issues of diversity, it is important that we understand ourselves and recognize the unique stories, experiences, and identities that each of us brings; this will be useful for your own personal growth and self-awareness, but it will also aid you as you build relationships with others – all of which will be important for your success here at NIU.