

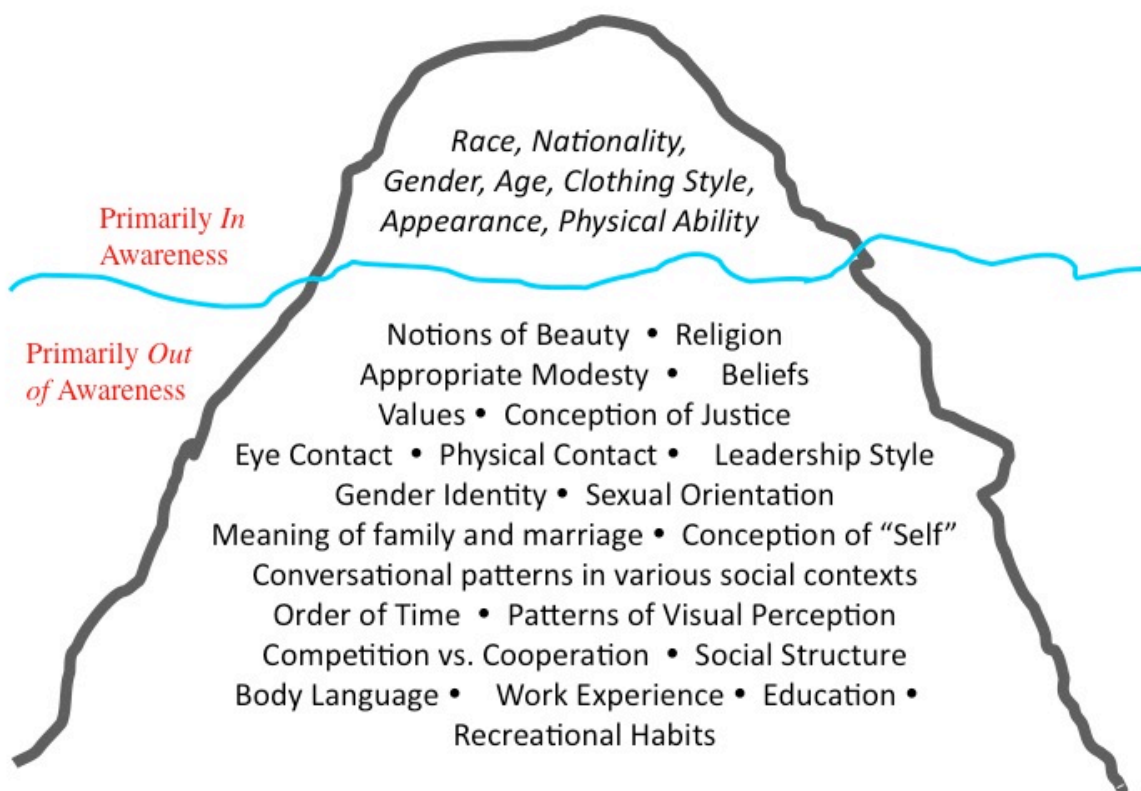
ICEBERG OF DIVERSITY ACTIVITY

Ask: “How are we all different from each other?”

As participants contribute, write it down on a board. Put the visible stuff (race, age, appearance, etc.) toward the top of the board, and the invisible stuff (religion, values, sexual orientation) toward the bottom. Then draw an iceberg around all the words and a waterline between the visible and invisible (like below).

Point out some important things:

- “Just 90 percent of an iceberg is below the surface, 90 percent of who you are is below the surface.”
- “Even in a visually homogeneous group (e.g., all Caucasian American boys), there is diversity. You just have to look below the surface.”
- “Some dimensions of diversity are sometimes found above and sometimes below the water line—like gender”(explore why this might be the case).



Now have each person introduce himself or herself to another person using five descriptors under the water line. Tell participants they don’t need to limit their introductions to what is on the board—just five important and defining things that they want their partner to know about them that they wouldn’t know just by looking at them (invisible characteristics).

Debrief: “Any surprises? What would happen if you didn’t know the below-the-waterline traits about someone you live with, cook with, and sleep next to? How can you find out more about these characteristics?”

Conclude: “Imagine each of us is an iceberg floating around. Other icebergs in our group only see what is above the surface, and it is very easy for them to make assumptions about the stuff below the surface (for example, someone might see our clothing and make assumptions about our wealth). The problems occur when these assumptions are wrong—and icebergs end up colliding under the water. We cannot avoid icebergs colliding, but we can try to become more aware of other icebergs so we can minimize the number of collisions that happen. This takes having conversations like the one we just had with each other.”

