



WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE



STAY STRONG
Physical Well-Being



ALIGN
Spiritual Well-Being



ENGAGE & GROW
Career & Intellectual Well-Being



CONNECT
Social Well-Being



FEEL WELL
Emotional Well-Being

Activity Title:	Things In Common
Well-Being Dimension:	Organizational Track: Inclusion
Author	Denise A. Robinson, JD, RYT 200, Founding Principal of The Still Center

Activity Objectives:

To foster inclusion across differences by helping colleagues identify what they share in common and see beyond what is apparent on the surface.

Well-Being Connection (How/Why Does this Work?)

Similarity Attracts

Extensive research shows that we’re all affected by a bias called [homophily](#)—we’re most attracted to people whom we perceive to be similar to us. This preference affects things like our attitudes, friendships, alliances, and how we allocate resources. People perceived to be different may experience a “chilly” interpersonal climate that feels unwelcoming and depletes their sense of belonging, which can have [a long-term impact](#) on career trajectory and satisfaction. They also may be cautious about bringing their full selves to work, because we’re [most comfortable](#) being our authentic selves and sharing personal things with similar others. On the other hand, people in the “in group” of shared similarity may miss out on new friendships, collaborators, perspectives, and more.

We All Have Things In Common

We often share more in common with others than what meets the eye. Getting beyond the surface attributes and gaining a better understanding of the experiences, identities, and other aspects of our lives that we share with our colleagues can help us bridge differences and work together more effectively. [Research has found](#) that we like people who are similar to us in a broad range of ways including things like traits, opinions, background, interests, lifestyle, dress, age, religion, politics, and more. The science shows that even small similarities (shared birth dates, similar TV show preferences, favorite sports teams) can produce a positive bond.

Procedure

HUNT FOR SIMILARITIES

Gather into groups of 4-6 people, preferably mixing the groups so that no one group is comprised of people who work together closely on a daily basis.

- A facilitator or timekeeper designee will provide the groups 5-7 minutes (the larger the group, the more time) to come up with a written list of at least three things that they share in common.
- Offer the following categories as examples to help get the groups started: hobbies, geographic origin, pet-ownership, favorite snacks, bucket-list items.
- Apparent physical similarities (e.g., wearing the same color or type of clothing) do not count.

DEBRIEF

Once the time has expired, debrief with all participants by first asking one person in each group to announce their things in common. Select a winning group based on the number of things identified. After that, open the floor for discussion about the activity. Here are some questions to kick off the discussion:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- Was it challenging to find things in common? Why or why not?
- How could we use this activity or lessons from it to foster inclusion going forward?

RESOURCES

- [Identify Common Goals](#), Greater Good in Action: Science-based Practices for a Meaningful Life
- [Bridging Differences Initiative](#), Greater Good Science Center

Authors

Denise A. Robinson. Contact the Activity Guide author, who leads facilitates the Things in Common exercise and other inclusion-focused activities through her work as a diversity, equity & inclusion and wellness advocate: Denise A. Robinson, Founding Principal of [The Still Center](#), denise@thestillcenter.com.