



# ROSS INITIATIVE IN SPORTS FOR EQUALITY

Using the unifying power of sports to improve race relations  
and drive social progress

## RISE MODULE: INCLUSION, EXCLUSION & RACISM

*“Racism is not about how you look, it is about how people assign meaning to how you look.” – Robin D.G. Kelley*

### ACTIVITY: IN OR OUT?

#### Objectives:

1. Define racism.
2. Compare the feelings and behaviors from experiences of being included and excluded.
3. Discuss the connection between racism and experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

**Duration: 30 minutes**

#### MATERIALS:

- Two flip-chart pages or whiteboard/dry-erase board with writing utensils

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

This exercise is an adaptation of Donna Stringer’s [Insider/Outsider activity](#).

To prepare for the activity, begin by positioning two flip charts or a large dry-erase board in the front of the room. On one flip chart or side of the board, write “Excluded” at the top and draw a line through the middle splitting the page or board in half. Label the left-hand side “Feelings” and the right-hand side “Behaviors”. Repeat the same set up for the second chart/board labeling it “Included” at the top.

EXCLUDED	
Feelings	Behaviors

INCLUDED	
Feelings	Behaviors

#### Part 1: Excluded feelings

Ask participants to think about a time they were in a team or group and they were different from others and excluded. Encourage them to identify two to three words that best describe how they felt during that experience. Then ask participants to go around the room introducing themselves to their peers using the words that describe how they felt. An example would be, “Hi, I’m awkward and confused.” For this activity they won’t use their actual names. After participants have introduced themselves to three to four people, direct them to stand in a circle around the boards. Participants then should share out loud the words they heard from their peers’ introductions. Write these word in the Excluded – Feelings column.

#### Part 2: Included feelings

Next, prompt participants to think about a time they were in a team or group and felt included. Ask them to call out words that describe how they felt. Write these in the Included – Feelings column.

#### Part 3: Excluded behaviors

Ask participants to think about behaviors they exhibited when they felt excluded by the group. For example, “I didn’t share my opinion or participate in the discussion.” **Note:** Make sure participants talk about behaviors and don’t go back to emotions. If they say they acted sad or angry, ask them how they act when they feel sad or angry. Write some of the behaviors in the Excluded – Behaviors column.

#### Part 4: Included behaviors

Ask participants to think about behaviors they exhibited when they felt included by the group. For example, “I tried to meet more people, so I walked around the room introducing myself.” Write these in the Included – Feelings column. At this stage in the activity, give participants an opportunity to review the information documented on the board/flip-chart paper before beginning the debrief with the questions below as a guide.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did you think it was easier to remember times you felt excluded or included? Why?  
**Note:** It is usually easier to remember excluded experiences because when we are included/insiders, we pay less attention to our feelings or behaviors. Exclusion tends to create negative feelings, which are more memorable.
2. Point to the Excluded – Emotions column and ask if the group agrees that they are mostly negative emotions. Why do they think that is the case? How are these feelings connected to the behaviors?
3. Point to the Included – Emotions column and ask if the group agrees that they are mostly positive emotions. Why do they think that is? How did these feelings translate to behaviors? **Note:** People who feel included tend to participate more and feel safer taking on a leadership role.
4. Who has more power, the insiders or the outsiders? **Note:** Some answers could be the insiders because they set the norms or policies.
5. Communicate the definition of racism to the group: a prejudiced thought or action that is based on one’s beliefs about racial superiority or inferiority. Ask participants to articulate the connection they see between racism and an excluded/included dynamic. What behaviors can this lead to? Ask them to cite examples. **Note:** Based on the definition of racism, one group believes they are the superior group and is only inclusive of people of the same group. This means some people will be excluded. Examples include housing practices where certain neighborhoods didn’t allow black or Latino families to buy homes.
6. Which of these behaviors have we seen among our peers? Are we doing our best to ensure people feel included?

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Racism and its influence on people’s lives is real and affects feelings and behaviors.
2. Racism creates an included/excluded dynamic.

#### NEXT STEPS: Take the following actions after completing the activity with your team.

1. Share photos on social media and tag/mention RISE.



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2. Discuss your experience with students, athletes, coaches, athletic department staff and other organization members. Identify ways you and your school/organization can help lead the way in improving race relations and driving social progress.

#### FEEDBACK:

RISE welcomes feedback as we seek to continually improve our tools and resources. We encourage all participants to share their feedback by completing an online survey at [bit.ly/risetools](https://bit.ly/risetools). Our Leadership & Education Programs team can be reached at [education@RISEtoWIN.org](mailto:education@RISEtoWIN.org).