Diversity Rounds

Adapted from the National School Reform Faculty | www.nsrfharmony.org

Purpose
To acknowledge the strength of our diversity and the rich tapestry of stories we all carry and to explore the implications for our work. This activity is most powerful in a group of at least 20 people, but can be facilitated with up to 200. If affinity groups within the activity exceed 5 or 6, ask participants to sub-divide into smaller groups to enhance their ability to share and talk.

Steps

1. **Introduction.** Welcome participants to the activity. Explain the purposes above in your own words. Tell participants the number of rounds you will have them engage in (generally we recommend 4-5 at most). Explain that when a round is announced, it is up to them to decide how to self-organization into sub-groups. There is no right or wrong answer.

2. **Identity Rounds.** As the facilitator, you should pre-determine the identity categories for each round, generally starting with less sensitive areas of identity like birth order and moving toward more sensitive ones (race, gender, etc.). Categories can be adapted to fit the group's purpose, helping to surface non-discussables and/or to reflect particular demographic variables. Once you announce the category for a round, encourage participants to self-organize into sub-groups and have a brief discussion about the impact of this particular identity on their work. Categories might include:
   - Where you are from
   - The kind of high school you went to
   - Birth order
   - The kind of student of mathematics you are
   - Your gender
   - Your ethnicity
   - Your language background

3. **Share Out.** At the end of each round, invite each sub-group to report out on the big ideas, themes, or questions featured in their discussion.

4. **Re-group.** The facilitator announces a new category. Groups re-form and have the same discussion about impact of this new identifier. Repeat for 3-5 rounds.

5. **Whole Group Debrief.** Invite participants to discuss any feelings that emerged during the activity, along with any insights about the meaning and impact of diversity on their professional experience. If the group is still warming out, you can ask them to turn and talk to a partner before opening the whole group reflection.