

“North Country” Ally-Ship Activity

Developed by Molly Keehn

Goals: The goal of this activity is to review the characteristics of an ally, and then give participants an example of what being an ally can look like (examples were developed for Sexism but can be adapted to any or all Isms).

Time needed: 20–30 minutes

MATERIALS

- A copy of the DVD, “*North Country*” (this Warner Brothers film should be available in the “drama” section of most establishments which rent videos as well as through Netflix).
- “*Becoming an Ally*” (from TDSJ2 CD Appendix 3N, reprinted in box below) either as a handout or on newsprint.

[Please upload TDSJ2 CD Appendix 3N and frame it in a box]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ACTIVITY

- Before showing the film clip, review the characteristics of an Ally in “*Becoming An Ally*” which is reprinted above.
- Tell participants you will be showing them a scene from the movie, “*North Country*” (2005) which is a fictionalized account of the first major successful sexual harassment suit in the United States. Give a brief synopsis of the plot of the movie, and let participants know that the scene they will be seeing was a turning point in the movie in which the main character, Josie Aimes (played by Charlize Theron) tries to talk in front of the Union about a class action suit she had filed against the mine.
- Show the scene from “*North Country*” titled “Union Meeting” (marked as one of the chapters on the DVD).
- After watching the film segment, have participants discuss what Josie’s father did in the scene that made him a good ally (examples—stood beside Josie, spoke to the miners in a way they could hear him, used his identity to connect with them, showed vulnerability, etc).
- Have participants call out examples, and write them on newsprint.
- Ask participants to identify what they can learn from this person’s actions that can be applied to being an ally in their own life.
- Ask participants to identify examples of Ally-ship in everyday life, dealing with different forms of oppression. Participants might form 8 groups, each group to identify or imagine examples of ally-ships for different forms of oppression treated in RDSJ2: racism, classism, religious oppression, sexism, heterosexism, transgender oppression, ableism, and ageism/adultism.