**Themes**

**Community** – Myers explains how groups sharing a common identification experience group cohesion. The connection among group members leads to a preference for similar people, and being alike positively reinforces the mutual identity. Each person in that category has a stake in bonding with other members and all members benefit from each other’s successes. Community sustains the commonality that brings people together. Membership stems from preferring a sports team, joining a college club, or being born a race or religion. Myers’ community is not necessarily about geography or neighborhoods so how does his idea of community work with Bellah’s community concept? Bellah defines community in terms of time and shared values. Would Myers’ ingroup bias inspire communitarianism and feelings of responsibility and commitment towards community members?

**Prejudice** – Belonging to a group promotes group pride according to Myers. We have a common identity and we believe our personal experiences to be superior. Relationships between members can contribute to negative feelings about other groups and may lead to ranking other organizations, races, and cultures. Myers implies preferences are integral to membership and questions this phenomena changing. Compare this issue to WEB DuBois’ concept double consciousness. Being an American with rights and, at the same time, being a Black person without rights leads to problems and questions for African Americans. As race relations change and conditions improve for racial minorities, does double consciousness change? Myers alludes to prejudice reduction through social change, so as

**Activities**

1. Compare ingroup and outgroup dynamics with college culture and organizations.
2. How would Myers’ concept of ingroup bias relate to school bullying?
3. Assign identities and backgrounds to scholarship applicants. Include SES, race, gender, religion, and cultural differences to make the applicants diverse. Have the class choose a ‘deserving person’ to receive the help and de-brief the group by examining ingroup and outgroup biases.
4. Design an education program to reduce prejudice. Choose a specific group like children or adults and discuss what materials or processes would work best with that group.
5. People’s attitudes are formed partly as mirrored images of surrounding attitudes so how do college students adapt to new groups encountered for the first time in college classes? Will attitudes change as college culture exposes people to new ways of thinking and being?
6. How does multi-racial identity change ingroup and outgroup bias?
conditions improve, will group membership not bring about prejudice towards other groups?

**Conformity** – People like belonging to groups. The connections and commonalities give us security, but groups can pressure us to comply with internal norms. All human behavior is governed by norms and we follow the rules to receive acceptance and approval. Conformity brings many rewards and society prefers the status quo so defying those demands elicits punishments, exclusion, and deviant labels. Changing restrictive norms helps people, especially oppressed or exploited minority groups. Myers explains that women who work outside the home defy gender expectations but, in that defiance, demonstrate positive social change for the young. When we strike out on our own and go against social norms, we develop and our communities ultimately benefit. Emerson explains that challenging societal limitations brings enlightenment which benefits all people as well. He encourages people to lead and follow their own voices despite resistance.