**My Friend the Apple**

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**Items needed**

An apple for each student and one for the instructor. A bag that all the apples can fit in

**What to do**

Before class, make up a story to personalize your apple. Get in front of the class and say something like, “This is my friend the apple; his name is ‘Fred’. Before today, I pretty much thought apples were all the same. But now that I know my friend ‘Fred’, I have been thinking more about apples and wondering if they are not just like humans.”

Take the bag around the room and ask each student to take an apple. Then ask each student to take a minute or two to get to know their new apple friend, and make up their apple friend’s story. Once they have had a minute or two, start things of by introducing ‘Fred’. Tell about Fred’s origin, what its family situation is, its level of wealth, religion, and if it has any scars, describe how the apple got them. The more detail you can put in your story, the better.

Next go around the room and have each student introduce their apple friend. After the students are done, return all the apples back to the bag. Bring the bag up front and dump the apples onto a table. Ask each student to come up and find their apple and take it back to their desk. Then ask the students if they still think that all apples are the same, or if their thoughts have changed.

**Lead a conversation**

Students should work in pairs to consider and discuss how we might be lumping people together (like we did with the apples) based on external factors. Ask them to think about why we may be doing that. Some groups they might want to discuss are

* Students of one race or another
* Jocks
* C students
* Individuals with mental illness
* Immigrants or International students
* Farm kids/City kids
* Men/Women
* Democrats or Republicans
* Artists and Scientists

Discuss answers to the following questions:

1. Why do humans have the tendency to lump people into one group or another?
2. Lumping people this way is stereotyping. How much do we really know about the individuals we are putting into these groups?
3. What makes stereotypes dangerous?

Students can keep/eat their apples after class.