



Concepts of Belonging Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Module 4
Unit 4

- Human beings have a strong need to form social identities which are based on the different groups with which we identify
- We are group animals
- We make sense of our complex social world by including and excluding people



Our first experience of belonging (or not) to a secure group, usually our family may have a powerful influence on our subsequent need, wish and ability to belong to other social groups



Self esteem is related to how positively we view the group to which we belong



The inmost growth of the self is not accomplished as people like to suppose today, in relation to himself, but in the relations between one and the other - between men, that is pre-eminently in the mutuality of making present - in the making present of another and in the knowledge that he is made present in his own self by the other - together with the mutuality of acceptance, affirmation and Confirmation.

Martin Buber
'Between Man and Man'



- Exclusion and isolation is experienced when we are placed outside the social norms of a group to which we belong
- Questions commonly asked by people seeking help are
 - "Am I normal"?
 - "How can I belong"?



Using the Counselling Approach

- Avoid reassurance
- Offer acceptance, genuineness and empathy
 - This can be difficult when the material is very close to our own experience
 - We find it difficult to imagine the experience
 - We may need to ask ourselves – "Do I need to refer this client on"?
- Our aim is to help raise self esteem and regain a sense of connection with self, others and the world



Identifying intrinsic and extrinsic factors which contribute to an individual's experience of social exclusion

- Statistical infrequency
- Violation of Norms
- Disability or Dysfunction
- Personal Distress
- Unexpectedness


