

Who are you?

Jennifer Rosen: Usually when someone asks us about ourselves, they ask our profession, our ethnicity, where we're from, our relationship status. While these are all parts of us and reflect things about us, they're ultimately labels that do not get to our core identity. This exercise, called who are you, is a fun, compelling, and at times challenging way to learn more about another person and encourage them to connect with multiple layers of their identity.

So for who are you, you'll need to divide into pairs. And the first person starts by asking, who are you? And the second person responds. You'll keep repeating this for two minutes and then swap.

The person asking can't interrupt the responder. This is an opportunity for whoever is asking the question to practice active mindful listening and sustained eye contact. Have fun playing with how you ask who are you, as it may prompt your partner to further reveal or explore their response.

You'll now hear my demonstration with Ali, a woman I've been coaching, to get a further idea of the exercise.

Jennifer: Hi, Ali.

Ali: Hi.

Jennifer: All right, let's begin.

Who are you?

Ali: I am a freelance consultant who's been doing marketing and PR work.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I am from Switzerland, and I grew up in London.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a creative person who enjoys the outdoors.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a curious person who really likes to read and learn.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm an active individual who enjoys meeting new people and expanding their knowledge and surroundings, environments.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I don't know. I'm Ali.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I am a curious person.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a dog person.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a mountain person. I like being outside and hiking and skiing and keeping busy.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm Ali.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a confused person, clearly.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm a person who is still trying to figure out who I am.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: That's the good, that's the question.

Jennifer: Who are you?

Ali: I'm still learning the answer to that question.

Jennifer: Bravo. Bravo, fantastic.

So this continues in totality for about two minutes. We swap. And for the sake of this exercise, we're not going to do all of that. We're just showing this as an example. But what did you learn about yourself?