**It’s in the Cards**  
(Adapted from Dr. Kathy Obear, Alliance for Change Consulting)

**Purpose of Activity:** To feel what it is like to be a part of dominate and subordinate groups.

**Objectives/Learning Outcomes:**
By actively participating in this activity, participants will:
- Understand and recognize dominant and subordinate groups and their group dynamics.
- Recognize that their actions can have an effect on others.
- Be able to name exclusionary dynamics on campus.

**Materials Needed:**
- Deck of Playing Cards

**Ground Rules:**
- Listen respectfully, share air time, and encourage others to participate.
- Be fully present and participate at their own comfort level – challenge by choice.
  - Follow up - What does it mean to be “fully present”?  
  - Follow up - What does “challenge by choice” mean?
- Push yourself outside of your comfort zone – the most learning happens when we are a little bit uncomfortable.
- It’s ok for us all to be at different places with the things we discuss today.
- Show respect for one another’s beliefs, values, and experiences.
- Respect and maintain privacy.

**Disclaimer:**
- Make sure that students are taking the activity seriously but not too seriously. If people are truly mistreated out of malice, it could have a lasting effect.

**Facilitation Guide:**
- Give each participant a card and tell them not to look at it.
- Tell each student to trade it 3-5 times with people in the room without looking at it.
- After the trading is complete, have them hold the card out in front, continuing to not look at it.
- Now they will engage in conversation with others about anything for 3-5 minutes.
- The catch is that they have to treat the person(s) they talk to like the value on their card.
  - Aces are high.
- At the end, have people gather and try to guess what card they have.
- Discuss the game and its impact on the students.
Discussion Questions:

- What happened? What did you notice during this activity?
- What were you feeling during the activity? Did your feelings change over time?
- What were some of the subtle ways people were treated less than?
- What were some of the ways people were given more attention and better treatment?
- What about this activity felt familiar?
- What feelings or moments do you relate to?
- What has it been like when you were in an “in-group?”
- What has it been like when you were a member of an “out-group?”
- What could be some of the exclusionary dynamics that might occur on campus?
- What can you do if you observe, experience, or hear about some exclusionary comments or actions?