

# DIGNITY

## THE 10 ELEMENTS

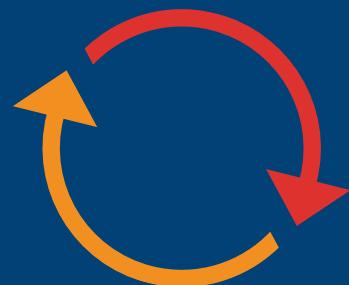
### A TINY GUIDE

*Based on the work of Dr. Donna Hicks*



**Everyone knows the feeling of having infuriating, looping conversations that don't go anywhere.**

Knowing what the Elements of Dignity are enables you to have conversations that break unhealthy, unproductive patterns.



THE ELEMENTS OF DIGNITY  
HELP YOU GET YOUR NEEDS  
MET, NAME YOUR FEELINGS,  
AND HAVE BETTER  
RELATIONSHIPS.



# THE 10 ELEMENTS HELP US...

Define what dignity means to us.

Have vocabulary to explain our point of view, especially when we feel hurt.

Find compassion for ourselves and others.

Make conflict less scary.

Tell the difference between intention and impact.

Get out of conversations that don't go anywhere.



# THE 10 ELEMENTS OF DIGNITY



# 1. RECOGNITION

Validate others for their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help.

Be generous with praise.

Give credit to others for their contributions, ideas and experience.



# 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Give people our full attention by...

*Listening*

*Validating*

*Responding*



# 3. BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

Treat people as trustworthy.

Assume that others have good motives and are acting with integrity.



# 4. INCLUSION

Make others feel that they belong at all levels of relationship (family, community, organization, nation).



# 5. SAFETY

Put people at ease at two levels...

**Physically:** feel free of bodily harm.

**Psychologically:** feel free from shame or humiliation. Feel free to speak without fear of retribution.



# 6. UNDERSTANDING

Believe that what others think  
matters.

Give them the chance to explain  
their perspective.

Listening so we're prepared to be  
changed by what we hear.



# 7. ACCEPTANCE OF IDENTITY

Approach people as neither inferior nor superior.

Give others the freedom to express themselves without fear of being judged.

Acknowledge that people's race, religion, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, disability are the core of their identities.



# 8. FAIRNESS

Treat people justly, with equality and equity, according to agreed upon laws and rules.



# 9. INDEPENDENCE

Empower people to act on their own behalf so that they feel in control of their lives and experience a sense of hope and possibility.



# 10. ACCOUNTABILITY

Take responsibility for your actions.

If you have violated someone's dignity, apologize.

Make a commitment to change hurtful behaviors.



# THE 10 ELEMENTS AND SELF REFLECTION



# Review the list and ask yourself....

*Which ones  
matter to me the  
most?  
Why is that?*

*Which ones am  
I not getting?  
How is that  
impacting me?*

*Which ones do  
I want to focus  
on showing  
people?*



# SELF-REFLECTION IN ACTION

*"I'm a recognition fiend. I grew up with learning disabilities and felt stupid.*

*As an adult, I have to fight my need for recognition. If I don't feel recognized, I often feel vulnerable and sometimes lash out.*

*I have to work hard to remind myself that I'm the keeper of my dignity and I don't need other people to tell me I'm smart.*

*Knowing I'm sensitive to needing recognition helps me calm down faster, not take things so personally, and better explain my feelings to others."*

**- MEGAN SAXELBY**



Using dignity reminds us that, **everyone is equally vulnerable to feeling like they don't matter.**



**DIGNITY IS  
A GIVEN!**



**YOU MATTER.**

**YOUR FEELINGS MATTER.**

**OTHER PEOPLE MATTER.**

