

10 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DIGNITY

ACCEPTANCE OF IDENTITY - Approach people as neither inferior nor superior to you: give others the freedom to express their authentic selves without fear of being negatively judged: interact without prejudice or bias, accepting how race, religion, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc. are at the core of their identities. Assume they have integrity.

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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT - Give people your full attention by listening, hearing, validating, and responding to their concerns and what they have been through.

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

SAFETY - Put people at ease at two levels: physically, where they feel free of bodily harm: and psychological, where they feel free of concern about being shamed or humiliated, where they feel free to speak without fear of retribution.

FAIRNESS - Treat people justly, with equality, and in an even-handed way, according to agreed-upon laws and rules.

INDEPENDENCE- Empower people to act on their behalf to feel in control of their lives and experience a sense of hope and possibility.

UNDERSTANDING - Believe that what others think matters: give them the chance to explain their perspectives, and express their points of view; actively listen in order to understand them.

BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT- Treat people as trustworthy; start with the premise that others have good motives and are acting with integrity.

ACCOUNTABILITY - Take responsibility for your actions: if you have violated the dignity of another, apologize; make a commitment to change hurtful behaviors.

From: Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict, Yale University Press, Donna Hicks