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