Let’s Circle Up

The Ten Essential Elements of Dignity

Acceptance of Identity: Accept people as neither inferior nor superior to you.

Inclusion: Make others feel that they belong, whatever the relationship.

Safety: Put people at ease on two levels: physically and psychologically.

Acknowledgement: Give people your full attention and validate their concerns and experiences (realities).

Recognition: Validate, praise, and show appreciation for others’ efforts, thoughtfulness, hard work, etc.

Fairness: Treat people justly and without discrimination or injustice.

Benefit of the Doubt: Treat people as trustworthy on the premise that they are acting with integrity.

Understanding: Actively listen and give people a chance to explain and express their points of view.

Independence: Encourage people to act on their own behalf to feel in control of their lives.

Accountability: Take responsibility for your actions and be willing to apologize and commit to changing hurtful behaviors.

From Donna Hicks, Dignity: The Essential Role It Plays in Resolving Conflict (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).