

TIPS FOR FACILITATING CRITICAL DIALOGUE



Need to engage in discussions that are brave and meaningful? Use these strategies to set up substantive conversation for all participants.

Note: Conversations should be grounded in the need to center the safety and well-being of people who are in the minority group.

OWN THAT YOU ARE NOT THE EXPERT.

You do not speak on behalf of all people or all experiences.

Note: Make sure that you begin with conversation norms and guidelines so that the tone of the discussion remains respectful.

CONSUME CONTENT ABOUT SYSTEMIC RACISM.

This will help you to enter the conversation through the lens of equity.

Note: Feelings of guilt are not enough to lead a conversation that is substantive or sustainable. Overflowing guilt can also be traumatizing for people who are in the minority.

Be conscious of the words you use. For example:

- *Uprising* instead of riot
- *Freedom Fighters* instead of thug
- *White Supremacy* instead of prejudice

Sourced from @Shiftingtheculture- Instagram

SAY SOMETHING EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

These conversations only get better with practice.

Consider these conversation starters:

- Tell me what you notice about what's happening in our world right now.
 - How does race play a role?
 - How are you feeling about what you're seeing?
 - Why are people protesting? What changes do they want to see for our world? What changes have already happened?
 - What have you seen or heard recently (on the news, social media, or in your neighborhood) that you have questions about?
- Why are people saying 'Black Lives Matter'? What is happening that is causing them to say this?

RACIALIZE YOUR EXPERIENCE.

It is important to racialize yourself and share your gender identity to contextualize your perspective in the conversation. If one's religious identity is salient the conversation, share that as well.

- "As a [*insert race*] [*insert gender identity*], I feel..."

Note: In order to push toward operating through a lens of equity, we must practice naming these salient aspects of our identities- both children and adults. No one is too young for the conversation. Children use race to determine friendships as early as 2.5 years old.

Adapted from *Courageous Conversations on Race* by Glenn E. Singleton and Katz & Kofkin, 1997

LET THE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN THE MINORITY LEAD.

Don't be afraid to be vulnerable.

Step back from the desire to have power or be in control.

Apologize when you make mistakes; but don't center your guilt. Own it and continue to engage.

Name insensitive or racist comments for what they are. If it sounds like it may have racial undertones, it does. Say something.

IN CASES OF STUDENTS/ ADULTS SHARING MISINFORMATION OR MICROAGGRESSIONS...

Interrupt - Take a moment to show whomever you are talking with or texting that what they said needs to be addressed:

- "Let's go back to what you said....."
- "I need to stop you there because something you just said is not accurate."
- "I'm having a reaction to that comment. Let's go back for a minute."
- "Do you think you would say that if someone from that group was with us in the room?"
- "There's some history behind that expression you just used that you might not know about."
- "In this class, we hold each other accountable. So we need to talk about why that joke isn't funny."

Question - Seek to better understand what they said and why:

- "Where did you get that information?"

Educate - Focus the conversation not only on facts but also why the comment needs rethinking.

- "It's not a funny joke if it stereotypes people and can be harmful."

Echo - When someone else speaks up, echo them, thank them and emphasize or amplify their message

Sourced from *Teaching Tolerance*, Loretta J. Ross