

Navigating Challenging Conversations



A) **Pause & Pay attention to:** **remember when we are triggered it affects how we engage with others**

- what you are feeling in your body?
- what stories are coming up for you?

B) **Practice** the skill of **Other Knowing** {engaging from a place of curiosity}

- What is the person trying to convey?
 - i. “How did it feel to say that statement?, from here it felt uncomfortable.”
 - ii. “I feel like we are having an oops/ouch moment let’s do a check-in?”
- Ask for a specific example to illustrate their view? {goal is to find the story behind their thought/belief/fear}
 - i. “Can you be more specific about how you came to believe _____?”
 - ii. “Help me better understand why you feel that way?”
- Who else thinks this way?
 - i. “Hum, I wonder where that belief/assumption comes from?”
- Why is the person defensive?
 - i. “I may be totally off, but I’m sensing that you are _____ {name feeling}.
What’s going on for you right now?”
- How do you engage them?

C) **Shift the discussion** to perspective from individual experience to systems & how when the most marginalized of us are supported then we all are uplifted, including white people. {this can be from a perspective of race, class, gender, ability/ableism, nationality, sexuality, age, etc}

- “Help me better understand why you feel that way?”
- “What lead you to make that comparison? What beliefs/stories do you think are behind that comparison?”
- “Can you tell me more about that thought? What has contributed to you having this perspective?”
- “Can you be more specific about how you came to believe _____?”
- What do you think is behind your fear or safety concern? What stories do you hold about this population?
- I may be totally off, but I’m sensing that you are _____ {name feeling}. Can you help me understand what you are experiencing in this moment?