

DIGNITY

HOW TO PRACTICE

A TINY GUIDE

Based on the work of Dr. Donna Hicks



**When someone violates
our dignity, our instincts
react as if we're being
threatened.**

***We're under
attack! Time to
protect ourselves!***



In that moment, we don't want to pause and reflect.



We don't care about empathy, and we don't want to solve the problem.

All we want is to protect us from more harm.



Telling your brain to calm down in those moments can feel impossible. It can also be really upsetting when others tell you to calm down.

And rightly so! Pain is pain and it hurts. Sometimes a lot.

It can be really tempting to lash out, but that only keeps the conflict going.

When you do that you're taking away their dignity as well as your own.



We're all likely to fall into patterns and responses that don't actually help us, even though they might feel good in the moment.

Thinking through the tips below can help you be mindful of unhelpful patterns to avoid.



10 THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND ABOUT DIGNITY



1. TAKING THE BAIT

Don't let the bad behavior of others determine your own.

Acting with restraint is treating someone with dignity.



2. WANTING TO SAVE FACE

It can be tempting to deny what we've done to protect our pride.

Acknowledge anything you may have done that contributed to the conflict.

Admitting that you made a mistake is a sign of strength.



3. AVOIDING RESPONSIBILITY

Admit that you made a mistake and **apologize** for hurting them.

That means you say sorry with a genuine tone of voice, you know what you did, and you don't make excuses.



4. TRICKED BY FALSE DIGNITY

Beware of seeking external recognition through praise, approval, or asking others to agree with your point of view.

If we depend on others alone for validation of our worth—we are seeking false dignity.

Our dignity comes from *within ourselves.*



5.

BEWARE OF FALSE SECURITY



Sometimes our need for connection compromises our dignity.

We can be in relationships that feel good but actually aren't good for us.

If we remain in relationships where we feel small, **our need for connection is outweighing our dignity.**



6. **STANDING IN YOUR WORTH**

When someone is trying to make us feel small, it's a signal that there is something in the relationship that needs to change.

Sometimes we are in relationships where that just can't happen right now.

Even then, we can hold on to remembering that we matter and our experiences and feelings are important.



7. INTENT AND IMPACT AREN'T THE SAME

Intention is a purpose or goal.

Impact is having a strong effect on someone.

What you intend to communicate isn't always how it's received.

You may not be aware of how you're coming across.

If you want people to understand you, **you have to be open to hearing how others interpret what you're saying.**



8.

ACCEPTING FEEDBACK

It's hard to receive criticism.

We all have blind spots.



Our instinct to resist constructive criticism is understandable.

Accepting feedback is **less scary** if we **remember our dignity isn't negotiable**. And then we can appreciate feedback as a growth opportunity.



9. BLAMING AND SHAMING

If we feel the urge to defend ourselves by making others look bad, we have to pause, recognize what we're doing.

Blaming and shaming others doesn't fix anything. While it makes us feel better in the moment, we continue to experience similar problems.



10. GOSSIPING

It's tempting to connect with others by talking about other people.

Being critical and judgmental about others when they aren't present can feel like a bonding experience.

If you want to create intimacy with others, **speaking the truth about yourself**—about what is really happening in your world—and invite others to do the same.



Go back and look over the list...

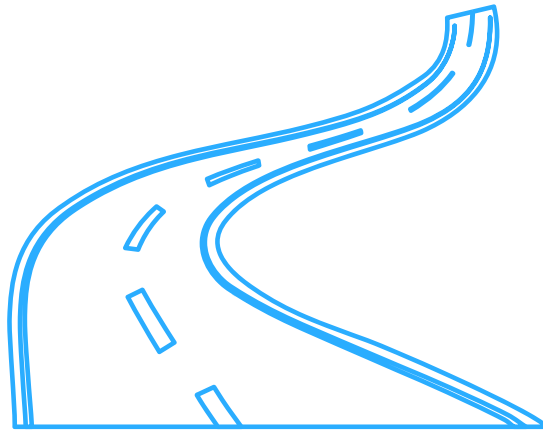
Which one do you want to practice? Why is that?

Which one do you need to focus on?

Who is the person you need to practice with the most right now?



**DIGNITY IS THE
PATH FORWARD.**



YOU MATTER.

YOUR FEELINGS MATTER.

OTHER PEOPLE MATTER.

