Steps for navigating difficult conversations on race and identity

STEP 01
CONTEMPLATE
Examine your motivations and identify your biases.
Be willing to be open, honest, and authentic.
Acknowledge that everyone brings different experiences and understanding.

STEP 02
PREPARE
Research terms and concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Create a space of trust and support where everyone feels safe sharing their feelings and experiences.
Commit to being open-minded and making a sincere effort to better understand others.
Expect to be uncomfortable, realize that it’s okay, and recognize the opportunity for change and growth.

STEP 03
ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LISTENING
Let others speak without interruption.
Make eye contact and give speakers your full attention.
Provide feedback or responses that make it clear you listened and thought about what was said.
Repeat or summarize what you heard and ask clarifying questions.

STEP 04
MAKE PROGRESS WITH PURPOSEFUL DIALOGUE
Don’t rush to fill silence. Process and reflect before responding.
Show grace, compassion, and understanding. Acknowledge the speaker’s courage in sharing difficult or painful experiences.
Look for common ground that promotes empathy while also recognizing different perspectives and identity-based realities.
Seek to understand, not question or tear down.
Pledge to continue the positive dialogue in ongoing discussions.

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