

# Dignity

WHAT IT IS AND WHY  
YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT IT



Based on the work of  
Dr. Donna Hicks

**Dignity is the  
inherent worth and  
value of every  
human.**



Everyone has it.  
Everyone has the same  
amount.

# Dignity and Respect are Different



Respect is admiration for someone's actions, traits, or accomplishments.

Respect is earned or lost through actions, choices, and behaviors.

Respect has to be earned. Earning respect means doing something that goes above and beyond the baseline right to be treated well.

# Denial of Dignity= Root of Conflict



Our instincts don't know the difference between a physical threat and a psychological threat. Violations to our dignity feel like a threat to our survival.

When we feel hurt our brains leap into self-preservation mode. For a moment, we don't care about others and we don't care about our relationships. We only care about feeling better.

# Dignity= Vulnerability

We often fail to recognize how vulnerable all people are to being treated as if they don't matter.

We are psychologically programmed to believe that our survival depends on acceptance. We cannot help but react to being mistreated.



# Dignity= Metacognition

We all matter the same amount. Even in conflict or hard moments, other folks matter as much as we do.

Which means we have to stop and think about our feelings and actions and how they impact others.



We need to be aware that everyone is equally vulnerable and is carrying that with them.

# Dignity= Self-Compassion

Everyone matters the same amount, which also means you are the keeper of your own dignity.

There is internal power that comes along with claiming your inherent worth and value.

Knowing your dignity is in your hands, no matter what, makes you resilient and more connected to your worthiness.



# Dignity= Awareness

We are all born with dignity, but we are not born knowing how to act in ways that honor everyone's dignity.

Humans are hard to manage. It is easier to fall into default modes.

We all have a hardwired impulse not to be seen as the one in the wrong. We have an equally strong desire to want to save face when we have done wrong.



# Dignity= Practice

Shame is a really powerful emotion and can hijack our thinking when we feel hurt or have hurt others

Seeing someone else's worth when they have hurt you is super hard.

Conflict is uncomfortable. You have to practice.



Standing up for yourself is hard.

# Dignity= Perspective Shift

Empathy is not a passive act. It is actively choosing to engage in critical thinking and metacognition.

You have to practice slowing your thinking down, it doesn't just happen.

Everyone is less likely to engage if we do not feel like we matter.

***You Matter. Make people feel like they matter.***

