

What is the dignity model?

Using the concept of Dignity, the inherent worth and value of every human, as the foundation for relationships and self-reflection.

Guiding Beliefs:

Psychological distance, seeing ourselves as separate from others, is the doorway to dehumanization.

Respect is malleable and socialized.

Dignity is fixed and universal.

**Donna
Hicks PhD.**

**Dignity
and
Respect
are
Different**

Respect:

Earned and lost through an individual's or organization's choices, actions, and behaviors

Going above and beyond the baseline right to be treated well

Cannot be guaranteed or demanded

Biased, socialized, context driven, supports systemic oppression

**PERSONAL +
STRUCTURAL**

Organizing relationships and communities around respect

Creates a system that is inherently biased

Uses an individual, socialized definition to police the perceived value and participation of others

PERSONAL + STRUCTURAL

Basing your organization in Dignity is transformative

Dignity doesn't weaponize shame or hierarchy

It supports prosocial development of self, other, and community because we lead with the belief that we are all equal in value, even in hard moments.

Elements of Dignity

[Link to Elements of Dignity](#)

**Specific, observable ways
to describe the experience
of Dignity in ourselves and
others**

**Language to Operationalize
Dignity**

Help you know which elements you are vulnerable to so you can understand yourself and your triggers.

Give you a framework to process a negative interaction and find understanding.

Give you a framework for cognitive empathy because they help you see everyone has their own elements that matter deeply to them.

Help you depersonalize and manage conflict because they give you a language to express needs without weaponizing shame.

Elements of Dignity

At the core of understanding the human experience is recognizing the role that dignity plays in our personal well-being and the well-being of our relationships.

If our brain's default setting motivates us to seek safety through connections with our fellow human beings, why not take advantage of that knowledge and use it to leverage its potential power?

Knowing that people feel most secure when their relationships are intact, and that the strength of those relationships is dependent on the extent to which people feel their worth is valued and recognized, then why not do whatever we can do to create the kind of culture where honouring dignity is a priority?

-Donna Hicks Ph.D

**Choosing
Dignity**