

DIGNITY

HOW TO PRACTICE

A TINY GUIDE

Based on the work of Dr. Donna Hicks

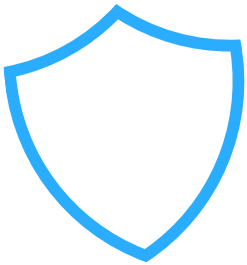


**When someone violates
our dignity our instincts
react as if we're
threatened.**

***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 aware 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**.

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 something in the relationship 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

Intent means a purpose or goal.

Impact means the 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 your actions.**



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**. 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 and 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?*

*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.

