

Talking about Race and Racism: Skills for Navigating Difficult Conversations *Putting It All Together*

For this practice, we invite you to try to incorporate all three components of our practice: Attuned Listening, Empowered Speaking, and Mindful Inner World.

1. Please introduce yourselves to each other (1 minute).
2. Choose a trigger statement to work with. (1 minute)
 - We shouldn't be renaming things, even if they are named after people who supported racism. We need to keep our history.
 - I'm not racist... I have plenty of Black friends.
 - I treat everyone the same. I don't see color.
 - I don't see why to emphasize that Black lives matter. All lives matter.
 - Slavery happened so long ago, they should be over it by now.
 - Other: _____
3. Designate Person A, B, and C for Round 1 (you'll switch roles each round).

Person A: You will practice Listening, Speaking, and Mindful Inner World.

Person B: You will start the role play by saying your group's selected triggering statement to Person A.

Person C: Read the directions, aloud, step by step, as A and B do the practice, and operate the timer.

Role Play (each round is 6-7 minutes)

Person B: Say the triggering statement to Person A.

Person A: Establish the idea that we are not going to do "ping pong," but will try to hear each other. Say some version of the following: "It seems like you and I are thinking about this differently. I would like to understand your perspective, so I'd like to listen to you. If you're open to it, after that, I'd love to share how I'm thinking about it. Please tell me more about why you say (the triggering statement)."

Person B: Explain why you believe what you said.

Person A [mindful inner world] Pause and check within, putting your hand on your heart. Try to vocalize your inner world. You can be reactive! Then ask yourself, "What do I feel and need?" "What might this person be feeling? What do they want? For this practice, choose to step into "attuned listening."

Person A [attuned listening]: Options for responses-- do **one** of these and go back to listening.

1. Use body language that welcomes them to speak..
2. Reflect or repeat what you heard.
3. Guess a feeling, yearning, or underlying value.
4. Invite the speaker to go deeper.
5. Summarize what you have understood.

Person B. Say more about your view.

Person A. [mindful inner world]

Person A [attuned listening]

At this point, **summarize** what you understand Person A to be saying and ask if you have understood him/her/them.

Person B: For purposes of practice, acknowledge that Person A seems to have understood you.

Person A. Transition to being the speaker. Say something like, *“Thank you for sharing how you are thinking about this. I am thinking about it differently. Would you be open to hearing how I’m looking at this?”*

Person B: Agree.

Person A: [Mindful inner world.] Take a moment to ground yourself in the values that you want to come from when you begin to speak.

Person A. [Empowered speech.] Speak from the heart about why you disagree with the triggering statement and ask for a reflection of what you said.

Person B: Respond. Attempt a reflection, but you don’t have to get it “right.”

Person A: [Empowered speech.] If the reflection was accurate, thank Person B. and add anything you would like. If the reflection was off, say, “I’d like to try again, because I can see that I was not clear. Do you have space for me to try again?”

Person B: Respond to what Person A just said.

Person A: End the conversation with an expression of gratitude. Perhaps suggest that you’d like to take time to absorb what the other person has said and maybe you could revisit the conversation later.

Switch roles. Hopefully everyone will get a chance to play Person A.