

CHECK-LIST FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS



WHO AM I?

Identity check-in

- am I aware of my social identities? (ethnicity, language, nationality, religion, class, gender, sexual identity, age etc.?)
- do I understand how my social identities are/are not connected with the characteristics or norms that are appreciated and valued in the society?
- how do my social identities, characteristics and what I consider normal impact how I enter this conversation?

Positional power check-in

- from which role do I enter this conversation?
- how does this role influence how I enter this conversation?
- how does my identity (personal or social) influence how I fulfill my role?
- what is the setting of this conversation? How could I make it as comfortable as possible?
- am I choosing a time for this conversation which provides adequate time for both/all parties to engage?

BODY CHECK: HOW DO I LOOK?

- How am I positioned? Is my body language and my facial features and expressions relaxed and invitational?
- where do I look, do I take eye contact, do I roll my eyes?

MIC CHECK: HOW DO I SOUND?

- is my tone of voice inviting?
- would I like to be talked to this way?
- am I respectful of pronouncing names correctly and do I know how people want to be called or referred to?
- am I using language or words that convey support, maintain calm and build trust?
- am I creating equity of voice (giving everyone the same space in the conversation to express and to listen)?

WHO AM I TALKING TO ?

Identity check-in

- What social identities do we have in common? What is different? How does that impact this conversation?
- How can I engage with authentic empathy to connect meaningfully where commonalities do not exist?

Relational check-in

- Do we have a connection?
- How is the relationship between us? (Interaction, equity of participation, sense of safety, attitudes)?
- are there power dynamics within our relationship that might impact receptivity and engagement in this conversation?
- What have our past interactions been like?
- Can I approach this person with a positive regard if they share perspectives that are difficult for me to receive?

MOOD CHECK: HOW DO I FEEL?

- am i ready and in the mood to listen to understand?
- in this moment, do I feel present or distracted?
- can I be objective in this conversation or will my personal feelings and/or biases get in the way?

CONTEXT CHECK

What is happening in society/in the world that might impact my and others' well-being and balance and therefore, this conversation?

How might stereotypical thinking and structural inequity in society impact the ways the participants engage in this conversation?