

10 TEMPTATIONS TO VIOLATE DIGNITY

TAKING THE BAIT- Don't let the bad behaviors of others determine your own. Restraint is the better part of dignity. Don't justify getting even. Do NOT do unto others as they do unto you if it will cause harm.

SAVING FACE - Don't succumb to the temptation to save face. Don't lie, cover-up, or deceive yourself. Tell the truth about what you have done.

SHIRKING RESPONSIBILITY - Don't shirk responsibility when you have violated the dignity of others. Admit it when you make a mistake, and apologize if you hurt someone.

SEEKING FALSE DIGNITY - Beware of the desire for external recognition in the form of approval and praise. If we depend on others alone for validation of our worth, we are seeking false dignity. Authentic dignity resides within us.

SEEKING FALSE SECURITY - Don't let your need for connection compromise your dignity. If we remain in a relationship in which our dignity is routinely violated, our desire for connection has outweighed our need to maintain our own dignity.

AVOIDING CONFLICT- Stand up for yourself. Don't avoid confrontation when your dignity is violated. Take action. A violation is a signal that something in a relationship needs to change.

BEING THE VICTIM - Don't assume that you are the innocent victim in a troubled relationship. Open yourself to the idea that you might be contributing to the problem. We need to look at ourselves as others see us.

RESISTING FEEDBACK - We often don't know what we don't know. We all have blind spots; we all unconsciously behave in undignified ways. We need to overcome our self-protective instincts and accept constructive criticism. Feedback gives us the opportunity to grow.

BLAMING AND SHAMING OTHERS TO DEFLECT YOUR OWN GUILT - Control the urge to defend yourself by making others look bad.

ENGAGING IN FALSE INTIMACY AND DEMEANING GOSSIP - Beware of the tendency to connect by gossiping about others in a demeaning way. Being critical and judgmental about others when they are not present is harmful, and undignified. If you want to create intimacy with another, speak the truth about yourself, about what is happening in your inner world, and invite the other person to do the same.

From: Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict, Yale University Press, Donna Hicks