

# COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

## Conversation Norms

### ➤ **Stay Engaged**

- Stay present in the room. Pay attention to when you are shutting down.
- Use strategies to stay present (ie stand up, etc)
- Stay with the topic
- Checking out of a conversation when it becomes uncomfortable is a form of 'privilege' protection

### ➤ **Speak Your Truth**

- If not here, where? In not now, when?
- An environment where everyone can speak openly so that learning can occur
- People are in different places in this work
- Be prepared to experience discomfort
- Everyone does not communicate the same way you do
- A characteristic of dominance is to speak as if you represent all people's perspectives... use "I" not "We"

### ➤ **Experience Discomfort**

- Learn to become comfortable with the discomfort
- If you are not experiencing some discomfort... are you fully engaged and taking risks?
- Don't confuse safety and comfort
- Avoiding conversations for the sake of comfort serves to reinforce 'white' privilege

### ➤ **Expect and Accept Non-Closure**

- There are times when things will feel like they were left unfinished... that is okay
- Be willing to take risks and accept that much of this about changing ourselves, not others
- Colonial cultural norms often focus on the product, rather than the process

### ➤ **Listen for Understanding**

- Understand where another person is coming from
- Don't compare our experiences with another person's
- Listen without thinking how you are going to respond
- Don't rationalize what you said or why you said it... just say "I didn't meant to hurt you, I am sorry."
- Think about your comments before you say it. Sometimes positive intent is not enough (intent vs impact)

### ➤ **No Fixing**

- Let people experience their own discomfort and not try and fix it for them. Discomfort is part of learning
- If you find yourself wanting to fix someone, explore what might be coming up about your own identity or bias

### ➤ **Take Risks**

- The more you are willing to take risks, the more potential you have to learn.