

# Dignity and Repair in Times of Conflict and Crisis



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DATE

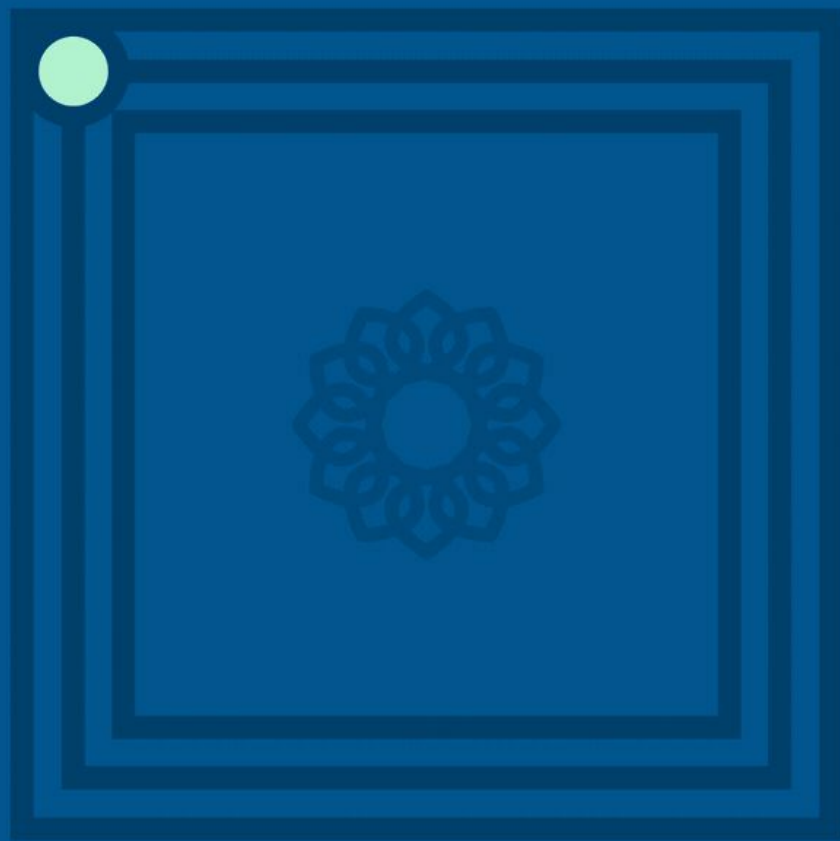
October 19, 2023

PRESENTER

Jason Craig Harris  
Senior Advisor  
Perception Institute

# Mindfulness Moment





INHALE

# Brave Space Guidelines



Be here

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Be curious

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Be reflective

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Be discrete

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Be the change



# Objectives



Explore the **concept of dignity** and its relevance to work life and leadership

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Understand the ten essential elements of dignity and **practices for upholding dignity**

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Share empathy-building stories about our **own dignity experiences**

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Analyze a **scenario** and applying our learnings

Dignity is “**the glue that holds all of our relationships together**” and “the mutual recognition of the desire **to be seen, heard, listened to, and treated fairly**; to be recognized, understood, and to feel safe in the world.”

# Leading *with* Dignity

HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE THAT  
BRINGS OUT THE *BEST IN PEOPLE*

Donna Hicks, Ph.D.

AUTHOR OF *DIGNITY*

# MEMORIZE ME!

**1**

**Relationships  
are the greatest  
source of harm.**

**2**

**Relationships are  
the greatest  
protective factor  
against harm.**

**3**

**Relationships are  
the greatest  
catalyst for  
repairing harm.**





# A Dignity & Belonging Story

“You could be the right person for this job.”

# A Dignity & Belonging Story

An instance when someone said or did something to promote your sense of dignity and belonging at work.

***Get as specific as possible!***

“Leading with dignity demands that we pay close attention to the effects we have on others.”

Leading  
*with*  
Dignity

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- Acceptance of Identity
- Recognition
- Acknowledgment
- Inclusion
- Safety
- Fairness
- Independence
- Understanding
- Benefit of the Doubt
- Accountability

# Leading *with* Dignity

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# Dignity Analysis

Analyzing a situation to identify the pillars of dignity that have been upheld and/or those that have been violated

- Acceptance of Identity
- Recognition
- Acknowledgment
- Inclusion
- Safety
- Fairness
- Independence
- Understanding
- Benefit of the Doubt
- Accountability

Which one of these pillars was most applicable to the story you told?

- Acceptance of Identity
- Recognition
- Acknowledgment
- Inclusion
- Safety
- Fairness
- Independence
- Understanding
- Benefit of the Doubt
- Accountability

# Dignity Consciousness

Proactively taking dignity (and the ten pillars) into account in your interactions and decision-making



- Acceptance of Identity
- Recognition
- Acknowledgment
- Inclusion
- Safety
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- Accountability






- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - Recognition
  - Acknowledgment
  - Inclusion
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - Benefit of the Doubt
  - Accountability

“I am so sorry for my impact. I should have listened to you more carefully. I hear the harm I’ve caused and I regret how I handled that conversation. What can I do to repair the trust between us?”


“I want to pause here and acknowledge the impact of my decision. I can see how it landed for a number of folks, and I want to hold that reality. This is hard. At the time, I was balancing competing priorities and didn’t see another way to resolve the situation. I am committed to finding a way to move through this together.”

### **Accountability**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - Recognition
  - Acknowledgment
  - Inclusion
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - Benefit of the Doubt
  - ~~Accountability~~


“You did a fantastic job facilitating that meeting. You helped us balance the need to move through a robust agenda while leaving time for discussion. I just want to say that this team wouldn’t be the same without you. Thank you so much.”

### **Recognition**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - Acknowledgment
  - Inclusion
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - Benefit of the Doubt
  - ~~Accountability~~

“Thank you for your suggestions on our new project idea. We’d like to pitch a few changes and get your input. Your feedback will help us make a stronger decision.”

### **Inclusion**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - Acknowledgment
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - Benefit of the Doubt
  - ~~Accountability~~

“I know you care deeply about our relationships with community partners, and I admit, I am a little confused by the path you took to address the issues raised by a pretty significant racial justice partner, which, in my view, further complicated things. Can we talk about it further?”


“Yes, you made a mistake, but that’s not who you are. I don’t see you as the decision you made in that moment. And I appreciate the steps you are taking to be responsible for your impact.”

### **Benefit of the Doubt**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - Acknowledgment
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - ~~Benefit of the Doubt~~
  - ~~Accountability~~

“That is a really important concern, and I thank you for sharing it with me. Would you give me some time to think about it more? I want to come back with a more thoughtful response than I can offer on the spot right now. I can reach out on Tuesday. Does that work?”

### **Acknowledgment**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - ~~Acknowledgment~~
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - Safety
  - Fairness
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - ~~Benefit of the Doubt~~
  - ~~Accountability~~

“That feels like an exception to how we typically address these matters. I am concerned about the precedent we may be setting. Can we slow down and make sure that we are aligned with our values?”

“In the past, I’ve seen us move more quickly to make decisions on similar issues. What do we think is the challenge here? I am worried about who will be impacted negatively if we move too slowly.”

## **Fairness**

- 
- Acceptance of Identity
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - ~~Acknowledgment~~
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - Safety
  - ~~Fairness~~
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - ~~Benefit of the Doubt~~
  - ~~Accountability~~

“This should be a space where we can call each other in—rather than call each other out. And if we are called in, we can respond with humility and care. That goes for all of us. I want to model this idea by sharing something I learned from a team member recently who was gracious enough to give me feedback. [Insert relevant learning.] Moving forward, I encourage you all to give me feedback. I may have follow-up questions and may want to engage in a dialogue to reach greater clarity. In all, though, my goal is to model receptivity and to make it easier for you to give feedback to me as a leader.”

## **Safety**



- Acceptance of Identity

- ~~→ Recognition~~

- ~~→ Acknowledgment~~

- ~~→ Inclusion~~

- ~~→ Safety~~

- ~~→ Fairness~~

- Independence

- Understanding

- ~~→ Benefit of the Doubt~~

- ~~→ Accountability~~

“I know you didn’t mean to, but I noticed that you called Lyvonne several times by the name of another Black colleague who, frankly, doesn’t look like her. I am wondering if you can give some thought to how you might prevent this mistake from happening again.”

“I’m sure you didn’t mean to, but I noticed that you called Xan by the wrong pronouns. Xan uses he/him/his pronouns. Thank you for letting me bring this to your attention.”

### **Acceptance of Identity**



- 
- ~~Acceptance of Identity~~
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - ~~Acknowledgment~~
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - ~~Safety~~
  - ~~Fairness~~
  - Independence
  - Understanding
  - ~~Benefit of the Doubt~~
  - ~~Accountability~~

“I hear you saying that you felt sidelined and dismissed in that meeting. Did I get that right?  
(pause) Could you take me into what happened?  
(pause) Thank you for sharing so openly. This is really painful experience; I want to do whatever I can to support. What do you think would be a helpful next step?”

### **Understanding**

- 
- ~~Acceptance of Identity~~
  - ~~Recognition~~
  - ~~Acknowledgment~~
  - ~~Inclusion~~
  - ~~Safety~~
  - ~~Fairness~~
  - Independence
  - ~~Understanding~~
  - ~~Benefit of the Doubt~~
  - ~~Accountability~~

“I trust you to do your best work and to figure out the right approach to solving this particular problem. You know what you’re doing. You’ve got this!”

## **Independence**



# 10 HOURS OF CONFETTI

N&F



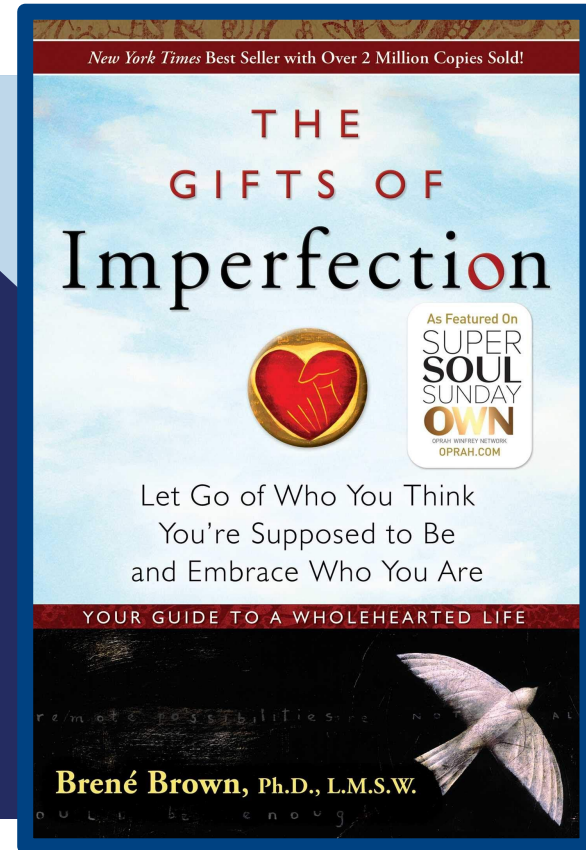
# Dignity Affirmation

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When a person's dignity is affirmed; when steps have been taken by another person, a group, or an institution to honor or protect dignity



**“A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people.** We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually **wired to love, to be loved, and to belong.** When those needs are not met, we don’t function as we were meant to. **We break. We fall apart.** We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick.”



# Dignity Violation

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When a person's dignity is harmed or not honored or protected by another person, a group, or an institution



# Scenario

At work recently the topic of ethnic makeups came up. We were all sharing our backgrounds and I did not feel singled out at the time. However, moving forward, at every work engagement, my boss, a white woman, would call across the room, "Asmara, come over here." When I approached her I found her standing next to someone I had not yet met. I assumed the topic of the conversation was work related. Instead, she would introduce us and then say, "Asmara, tell her where you're from." Then, she would turn to the stranger and say, "Asmara is sooo exotic!" I knew that she was genuinely intrigued with my background. But she did not understand the extent to which exoticising my identity not only singled me out on the basis of my race and ethnicity, but also did so in a way that was for the benefit of her and her friend's entertainment. I also knew that she would not do this same thing to a white colleague who also had a complex ethnic background. I felt like a colorful parrot trained to say my line every time she called me over.

**REVENGE**





# Compounded Dignity Violation

- Initial dignity violation occurs
- Bystanders look on and do nothing
- Redress is sought and denied
- Another dignity violation occurs
- Harm compounds as a result
- Cumulative impact



# Three Ways to Honor Dignity



**1**

**Prevent a dignity violation by proactively honoring dignity**

**2**

**Protect or assert dignity after a dignity violation**

- Bystander Intervention
- Intervening on behalf of oneself

**3**

**Restore and repair dignity after a dignity violation**

# Protection

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*Our lives begin to  
end the day we  
become silent  
about things  
that matter.*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*



Intent

≠

Impact



# Bystander Intervention Strategies



**1**

**Echo**

**4**

**Intervene**

**2**

**Question**

**5**

**Pivot/Redirect**

**3**

**Educate**

**6**

**Circle Back & Check In**

# Repair

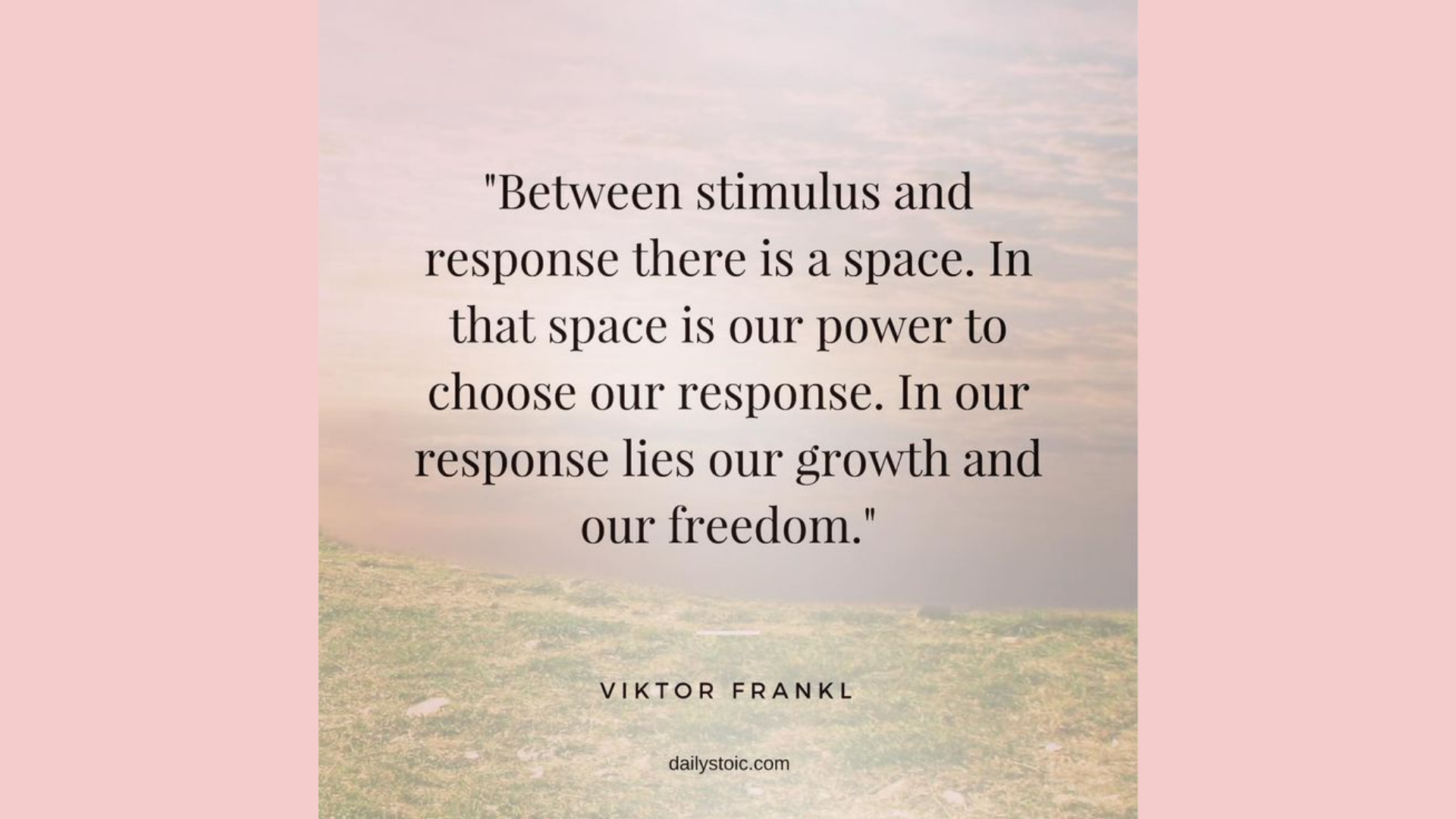
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“Jason, that was  
really hard for  
me to hear.”



“She is just too  
sensitive.”



"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

VIKTOR FRANKL

[dailystoic.com](http://dailystoic.com)

“Thank you for your courage in sharing with me. I am truly sorry. I could have been far more thoughtful and discerning.”

# SHAME

- The fear that you can't escape the judging gaze of others
- The fear that you are unworthy of connection and belonging

# Bad Apology



“I’m sorry if you misunderstood what I said.”



“I’m sorry that you feel that way.”



“I’m sorry, but you...”



“Ugh! Fine! I’m sorry! Are you happy now?”



“I was just trying to...”

# WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

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## Mindfulness

Self-compassion involves recognising when we're stressed or struggling without being judgmental or over-reacting.



## Self-Kindness

Being supportive and understanding towards ourselves when we're having a hard time, rather than being harshly self-critical.



## Connectedness

Remembering that everyone makes mistakes and experiences difficulties at times. We are not alone!

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Comfort



**DIGNITY**

**DIGNITY**

Comfort





R

Refocus from embarrassment

E

Emphasize apology

S

Skip self-justification

E

Explore accountability

T

Thank you

# Script

i'm sorry.

“I made a mistake and I hurt you. I am really sorry. I am going to work hard not to repeat that again. Is there anything I can do to make it up to you? (pause) Thank you for having this conversation with me.”

“I think I made a decision that didn't take into account your perspective. I am really sorry for that and want to do better. Do you have a thought on how I can fix this or facilitate the process differently next time? (pause) I really appreciate your time.”

Together we will create brave space  
Because there is no such thing as a “safe space”  
We exist in the real world  
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.  
In this space  
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,  
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,  
We call each other to more truth and love  
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.  
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.  
We will not be perfect.  
This space will not be perfect.  
It will not always be what we wish it to be.  
But it will be our brave space together,  
And we will work on it side by side.

# Invitation to Brave Space

by

Micky ScottBey Jones

**THANK YOU!**

