

Ten Tools For Bold Conversations

1. **Listen Deeply**

Be prepared to listen. Notice if you are just waiting to plan a response and try to shift into really listening. We can easily shutdown during these conversations. If you notice that happening in yourself or others, see if you can notice sounds, colors, textures, the ground and anything that supports the connection you have with each other. Hear the underlying concern that the person is sharing with you. Give them the respect they deserve.

2. **Don't let your Silence Be Approval**

Conversations aren't about proving ourselves right they are about interrupting racism and the silence that allows for the status quo of white supremacy and colonialism to continue unchecked. We can't be bystanders in a system that places higher value on white lives above people of color's lives.

3. **BE In Action**

There are so many ways you can engage based on what you care about, what you are good at, and what you want to contribute. It doesn't need to look one way. Choose your way.

4. **Speak in "I" Statements**

None of us were born socially conscious. Be vulnerable and admit to not knowing all the answers while being on your own road of discovery. Admitting to points when you've discovered your own bias or wrong-thinking models a way that this other person can start to examine their own while limiting their defenses. Many people will not be reached with a framework of "white privilege" or "systems of oppression," use language and metaphors that more people relate to.

5. **Find a Stopping Point**

It is unlikely that you are going to completely change someone's mind all at once. If you find a point of mutual agreement chalk that up as a win, and you can continue the conversation another time. Think of planting a seed as a win along the way.

6. **Be in Community**

Confronting racism is hard and having support in the work is an important part of sustaining the journey. For example, Showing Up For Racial Justice, is a national organization, with over a hundred local chapters of white people that are also engaged in this journey.

7. **Commit to Education**

The more we read and learn about these issues, the better formed our counterpoints will be, and the more effectively we will be able to have these conversations.

8. **Call In, Don't Call Out**

Drop shaming, blaming, and stereotypes. It seems simple but requires diligence. White people sometimes shame other white people. We are not better, smarter, downer, more conscious. We are all at different stages in this journey with more to learn. Be compassionate.

9. **When in Doubt Ask Questions**

Racist comments and belief are rooted in other perspectives and beliefs. Asking more questions is always a good idea and can allow you to better understand and therefore address the root of the disagreement. We have to know specifically where someone is coming from in order to best change their perspective.

10. **Work on Your Allies**

Have conversations with those that might be closer to your beliefs at other times. This can help shift the dynamic at the dinner table when you are talking to the person whose beliefs are farther from yours. This will allow you to have a stronger “back up.”