Managing and Facilitating Discussions about Race

Prepping for Courageous Conversations

* 1. [Set ground rules](https://wit.abcd.harvard.edu/blog/harvardwit-community-agreements)—make sure no one is surprise
  + Verbally and in writing
* 2. Create a safe and respectful environment
  + Allow for staff to feel safe to express opinions and questions
  + Explain why dialogue is important and valued part of the learning experience

Successful Strategies for Facilitating Dialogue

1. Understand your racial/cultural identity
2. Acknowledge and be open to admitting your racial biases
3. Control and validate the process, not the content, of race talk
4. Validate, encourage and express admiration and appreciation to participants who speak when it feels unsafe to do so

[Specific steps and with detailed instructions](https://ct.counseling.org/2015/12/race-talk-and-facilitating-difficult-racial-dialogues/).

Tips for Managing During a Racial Discussions

1. Acknowledge what’s happening
   1. Provide a forum for people to share their thoughts in a brave space.
   2. Silence is not neutral and upholds the status quo. It also communicates that the office is not a place to have honest conversations about racism or other -isms.
   3. Don’t ask Black staff members to share unless they volunteer
   4. Don’t ask Black staff members them to educate you or the team
2. Reduce work-related pressure
   1. Recognize the physical, mental, and emotional toll, especially for Black staff members
   2. Encourage self-care (work schedule flexibility, allow extensions on deadlines, etc.)
   3. Develop strategies to support your staff members’ work if they need additional support.
3. Be vulnerable
   1. Being open and transparent helps build trust in times of crisis and during happy times.
   2. As a manager, lead and participate in the discussion by sharing your own reflections
4. Support communities beyond the workplace
   1. Take action outside of the office and encourage others to do the same

[Specific steps with detailed instructions](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/03/what-managers-should-and-should-not-do-to-address-moment-of-racial-reckoning.html)

[Specific steps for managing a remote team during times of crisis](https://medium.com/remotely-managing/tips-for-managing-a-remote-team-during-a-time-of-crisis-e8cfa2c40eb4)