

## Five Agreements of Courageous Conversations

1. **Stay engaged:** Be present as fully as possible. Staying engaged means ‘remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue.’ Listen for connection instead of disagreement. Listen instead of preparing a rebuttal. Ask for clarification instead of opposing others.
2. **Experience discomfort:** Be mindful of your reactions: Notice when you feel comfortable or uncomfortable. Discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogues on issues that evoke strong emotions. Commit to bringing these dialogues into the open. Divisiveness and polarization already exists in society at large; and not talking about these issues may encourage greater tension.
3. **Speak your truth:** Notice what has ‘heart and meaning’ for you. Be open to saying not just what you think others want to hear. Speak without making other people wrong, through blame or judgment. Speak in a way that is truthful, kind, useful, and unifying.
4. **Expect and accept non-closure:** ‘Hang out in uncertainty’ and avoid rushing to quick solutions when you feel tension.
5. **Equity of Voice:** Hold ‘equity of voice’ as a personal aspiration and to create a welcoming and supportive learning community.

### Additional guidelines:

- Confidentiality
- Self-care: Do what is resourcing for you.

Adapted from:

Glenn E. Singleton & Curtis Linton, *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. pp. 58-65. Corwin, 2006.

Angeles Arrien, *The Fourfold Way*, Harper, 1983.

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