Talking Through the Hooks

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right place but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment”.

~ Dorothy Neville

Explore where each story comes from
“My reaction here probably have a lot to do with my experiences in a previous…”

Share the impact on you
“I don’t know whether you intended this, but I felt extremely uncomfortable when…”

Take responsibility for your contribution
“There are a number of things I’ve done that have made this situation harder…”

“I’m not sure why but I feel like I may have disrespected you in some way. I feel the tension between us, can we talk about it? I’m trying to become more consciously competent when working with diverse groups of people”

Describe feelings
“I’m anxious about bringing this up, but at the same time, it’s important to me that we talk about it…”

“I’m not sure why, but I’m feeling discomfort right now with what was just said, can we stop for a minute and check in on what others are feeling and why we are having the reactions that we are?”

Cross Cultural Connections, LLC
“Training the Trainer: Helpful Tips for Leading & Facilitating Conversation on Race, p. 31
Refocusing Tools

Refocusing is an important way to stop your thoughts and focus on what is happening in the moment.

Restructure Self-Talk

Positive Self-Talk
- I can handle this
- I’ve done this before
- I am a competent, talented person
- I have a lot to offer
- I care

Calming Self-Talk
- Breathe…stead…
- I don’t have to know everything
- I don’t have to have the “perfect” answer
- I’m doing the best I can. I don’t have to be the expert
- This isn’t about me…don’t take this personally
- Everything happens for a reason
- This too shall pass
- How important is it

Empathetic Self-Talk
- I wonder what this person really needs, what they are really feeling
- I wonder what they feel threatened or scared about?
- How can I better understand where this person is coming from?
- When have I felt similarly?
- I wonder what has been this person’s experience that they respond this way

Explore Your Part in the Situation
- I wonder why I am so triggered…
- What else is going on for me?
- Which of my issues and needs are being triggered in this interaction?
- What needs of mine are not getting met?
- Who does this person remind me of?
- What personal issues are interfering with my willingness or ability to be helpful?
- Could I have triggered them?
- Am I contributing to their behavior?
- Have I acted inappropriately?
- What rules or expectation have I set-up that are not working