



**DIGNITY WORKSHOP:
DIGNITY STARTS WITH YOU**

OVERVIEW + FACILITATOR PREP

The goal of this workshop is to help participants **understand the meaning and importance of dignity, how it impacts the way we think about ourselves, and how it affects the way we treat one another**. Dignity is a simple yet incredibly transformational concept. When a person truly believes in their worth and unique strengths—their *dignity*—they have the confidence to transcend challenges and find their voice, sense of purpose and potential.

Use these easy-to-follow instructions to explore these ideas in a **70-90 minute workshop** for participants ages 8+.

This **Dignity Starts with You** guide can be used by educators, volunteers, youth group leaders, parents, or anyone who wishes to support others in recognizing their inherent value and, from there, to encourage them to join others in creating positive change in their communities.

During the workshop, participants will be introduced to the powerful concept of dignity and share personal dignity stories—the most engaging and impactful way we have found to get to the heart of what dignity is all about. It can be used as a stand-alone workshop, or in conjunction with our **Seeing the Dignity in Others** workshop. This workshop can also be held virtually by using [this guide](#).

As the facilitator for this workshop, **it is important that you have a solid understanding of what we mean by *dignity* and why we believe it is fundamental to a more just, peaceful world**. Prior to the workshop, please download **[Dignity: The Essentials](#)** for a quick overview of what dignity is and how it impacts the way we see ourselves and our relationships, cultures and societies.

MATERIALS:

Chart paper, white board or chalk board
Marker or chalk
Paper and pen/pencil (for each participant)
Internet access (optional; required for videos)
Projection screen or large monitor (optional)

A NOTE ON TIMING: Although suggested time allotments are included for each module of this guide, feel free to build out one or more modules to explore any ideas more deeply, or to allow for more time for interaction and dialogue.

1. FACILITATOR INTRODUCTION + SESSION GOALS / 10-15 MINS.

STEP 1: **Introduce yourself** and the **goals of the session**: to understand the meaning and importance of dignity, how it impacts the way you think about yourself, and how it affects the way we all treat one another.

STEP 2 (Optional): Ask participants to introduce themselves.

STEP 3 (Optional): Share a **dignity story from your own life**. A dignity story might focus on a time when you or someone you know *was not* treated with dignity, or when you or someone you know *was* treated with dignity. Take a look at our [Identifying Your Dignity Story](#) learning experience for helpful hints.

2. WORD WALL / 5-10 MINS.

STEP 1: On chart paper, a white board or chalk board (as large and visible as possible), **write the word “dignity” at the top or at the center**.

STEP 2: Ask participants **what words come to mind when they hear “dignity.”** As participants call out their ideas, write them around or beneath the word “dignity,” or invite everyone to add words to the Word Wall themselves.

NOTE: More often than not, participants will use the word “respect” when describing dignity. **There is an important distinction between respect and dignity**, which you can use this opportunity to explore. [Dignity: The Essentials](#) includes a helpful explanation of the difference.

3. INSPIRATIONAL VIDEO OR STORY / 10-20 MINS.

STEP 1 / OPTION 1: Play a **short inspirational video showing dignity in action**. We recommend [this UNICEF video](#) about a friendship between 7-year-olds Nawwar (Syrian) and Alec (German). You'll find many other options at globaldignity.org/inspiration, or use a video of your choice.

STEP 1 / OPTION 2 (technology-free): Invite an **inspirational speaker** to share his/her dignity story. Musicians, artists, poets, athletes, entrepreneurs and activists are great options. Allow extra time for participants to ask questions.

STEP 2: Ask participants to **look at the Word Wall again**. Which of these dignity traits were exemplified in the video or dignity story? Do they have any new words to add to the Word Wall?

4. OUR DIGNITY STORIES / 40-45 MINS.

STEP 1: Explain that now that we have explored what dignity is and what it looks like in action, **we are going to think about how dignity relates to our own lives.** Let participants know that sharing personal stories with others in the group is optional. Anything shared during the workshop should remain confidential.

STEP 2: Ask each participant to think about **a time when his/her dignity was NOT seen and honored.** This may have taken place in school, online, on a sports team, in a workplace, in their community, etc. What happened? How did you feel? Why do you think you felt that way? How did this event impact you afterwards? Allow 3-5 minutes for participants to write down their thoughts.

STEP 3: **Divide participants into small groups** of 3-5 people. Invite participants to share their experience with their small group, if they are comfortable doing so. (Allow approximately 15 minutes).

PLEASE NOTE: All of us have, at one time or another, felt the pain of humiliation—the opposite of being treated with dignity. Tapping into those emotions and memories is an important step towards gaining a deep understanding of the power of dignity for ourselves, and how important it is to treat others with dignity. **If for any reason you wish to focus solely on positive experiences during this workshop, feel free to skip Steps 2 and 3 and move on to Step 4.**

STEP 4: Have everyone return to their original place. Now ask each participant to think about **a time when his/her dignity WAS seen and honored.** What happened? How did you feel? Why do you think you felt that way? How did this event impact you afterwards? Allow 3-5 minutes for participants to write down their thoughts.

STEP 5: **Divide participants into small groups** of 3-5 people (try to group different people this time). Invite participants to share their experience with their small group, if they are comfortable doing so. (Allow approximately 15 minutes).

STEP 6: Have everyone return to their original place.

STEP 7 (Optional): Ask if anyone would like to **share their dignity story with the entire group.**

NOTE: We have found that in some groups, many participants are willing to share their stories. If your time is limited, explain that there is only time for a few stories, or you might consider planning a follow-up workshop so that more participants can share their thoughts.

5. CLOSING + THANKS / 5 MINS.

STEP 1: Thank everyone for participating and for sharing their personal stories.

STEP 2: As they prepare to leave, ask participants to think about **one way they can bring more dignity** into their classroom, social media interactions, workplace, home, sports team or in any place that is important to them this coming week.