



**DIGNITY WORKSHOP:
SEEING THE DIGNITY IN OTHERS**

OVERVIEW + FACILITATOR PREP

As humans, we naturally gravitate towards people and groups similar to ourselves. We tend to identify and feel more comfortable with people who share the same race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, abilities or social status. **It's easy to see people outside of our identity groups as "other,"** which can lead to bullying in schools and classrooms, hate speech online, and conflict and strife in our communities.

But every person on the planet shares a much larger identity: as a member of the human family. Recognizing the dignity of every single person and our shared humanity is essential to creating a more just and peaceful world.

Use this guide to explore these ideas in a **60-90 minute workshop** with participants ages 8+. It can be used alone, or following a [Dignity Starts with You](#) workshop. This workshop can also be held virtually by using [this guide](#).

This **Seeing the Dignity in Others** guide can be used by educators, volunteers, youth group leaders, parents, or anyone who wishes to highlight how transformational it is when we recognize and honor the dignity in every person.

As the facilitator for this workshop, **it is important that you have a solid understanding of what we mean by *dignity* is 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
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 what it means to recognize the dignity of every person, why it matters, how we can do so, and how that recognition can profoundly impact your life and the lives of others.

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. DIGNITY STORIES / 10 MINS.

STEP 1: Ask participants to **think about a time when a person or group of people was treated like an outsider, stigmatized or dehumanized**. This can be an example from their own life, a current event or a historical event. What happened? Why do you think this happened? How did it make you/the person feel? How did this event impact you/the person afterwards? Allow 3-5 minutes for participants to write down their thoughts.

STEP 2: Ask if one or more participants would like to **share their story with the group**. Let participants know that sharing personal stories is optional. Anything shared during the workshop should remain confidential.

STEP 3: Give participants a few moments to reflect on this question: **if there was a belief in the equal value of every single person**, how could that have impacted the experience you wrote down or the story that was shared?

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. **Feel free to skip this section if you do not wish to focus on painful experiences during this workshop.**

3. LABELS AND IDENTITIES / 10-15 MINS.

Here we offer **two activity options** to explore the concept of labels and identities. Choose one or, if time allows, you can do both.

ACTIVITY OPTION 1: 100% HUMAN

STEP 1: Distribute a copy of the **100% Human page** (found at the end of this guide) to each participant, or copy all of the elements onto chart paper, a white board or chalk board (as large and visible as possible).

STEP 2: If participants do not have their own copies of the exercise, have them **copy the elements** onto a piece of paper.

STEP 3: Give everyone 2-3 minutes to fill in five **identities, labels or adjectives that help make up who they are**. You might give a few examples of how you describe yourself.

STEP 4: Invite everyone to **share their paper** with a person sitting close by.

ACTIVITY OPTION 2: LABELS: PROS AND CONS

STEP 1: Ask the group to **think of some of the labels and identities we give ourselves and others**. To get the conversation started, offer a few examples: race, religion or gender. As participants call out their ideas, write them on chart paper, a white board or chalk board.

STEP 2: Explain that labels and identities can be empowering and sources of pride. They can also lead to exclusion and bigotry.

STEP 3: Invite participants to share their thoughts on **how labels and identity groups can have a positive impact**. What are some of the **negative effects labels can have?** Can anyone think of some examples of each?

4. GROUP BRAINSTORM: OUR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN NEEDS / 10-15 MINS.

STEP 1: Let the group know that now that we have reflected on what makes us different, **let's think about what we all share.**

STEP 2: Ask participants to **brainstorm the fundamental needs that all humans have, no matter who they are.** Examples include food, shelter and love. As participants call out their ideas, write them on chart paper, a white board or chalk board.

STEP 3: Distribute a copy of the **Fundamental Human Needs page** (found at the end of this guide) to each participant, or copy all of the elements onto chart paper, a white board or chalk board (as large and visible as possible).

STEP 4: Explain that research shows that **these are the essential elements that every child, young person and adult need in order to thrive and flourish.**

STEP 5: **Write the four fundamental human needs** (Safety, Autonomy, Connection to Others, Sense of Purpose) across the top of chart paper, a white board or chalk board.

STEP 6: Ask everyone to **look back at the brainstorm ideas from a few moments ago.** Ask participants to identify which of the four fundamental needs their ideas fall under. For example: food, water and shelter fall under "safety." Friends and family fall under "connection to others." As participants call out their ideas, write them underneath the corresponding fundamental need.

5. SHORT VIDEO SCREENING / 3-15 MINS.

STEP 1: Explain that now we will **continue exploring these ideas by watching a short video**.

STEP 2: Show one or more of the videos linked below, or feel free to choose your own. The videos are divided by theme.

We recommend the following two films for understanding **how painful it is to feel like an outsider, or to be stigmatized and bullied**:

We Became Fragments

This film from our friends at Global Oneness Project follows Syrian teenager Ibraheem Sarhan through his first week of high school in Winnipeg, Canada. After losing his mother and four siblings in a bombing that left him injured, Ibraheem and his father make a new life despite the heartbreak of leaving their home behind. (12 minutes)

Confronting Racism: Adam Goodes

When Indigenous Australian footballer Adam Goodes points out a 13-year-old girl for shouting racist comments at him during a match, a country-wide debate about racism in Australia begins. (2 minutes)

These two films offer uplifting examples of **building bridges and seeing people's inherent dignity and humanity**:

We Dine Together

A high school student and Haitian immigrant counter loneliness and isolation by ensuring that no one eats lunch alone. (3 minutes)

#DoSomethingForNothing

In 2015 Joshua Coombes, a London-based hairdresser, began offering free haircuts to people who are homeless. He has since inspired thousands to be positive change makers in their communities. (6 minutes)

To explore **how COVID-19 has impacted the fundamental needs of so many young people**, we recommend the following film:

Cocoon

This Global Oneness Project film documents the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic as experienced by students living in Portland, Oregon, USA. As these young people face anxiety over financial security, health concerns and school changes, they also reflect on what they miss the most: human connection. (12 minutes)

6. FILM REFLECTION / 15 MINS.

STEP 1: Invite participants to **share their reactions to the film(s)**.

STEP 2: Ask participants to look again at their ideas from the **Fundamental Human Needs brainstorm**.

STEP 3: Thinking about the subject(s)/protagonist(s) of the film: **Which of their human needs are being met?** How do you think this affects their life? **Which of their human needs are not being met?** How do you think this affects their life? Is their dignity recognized and honored?

7. FINAL THOUGHTS + CLOSING / 5 MINS.

STEP 1: Thank everyone for participating, offering their ideas and sharing their stories.

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



100% HUMAN

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_____ 100 % Human _____



FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN NEEDS

1. SAFETY

Physical and psychological security.

2. AUTONOMY

Power over our environment and circumstances.

3. CONNECTION TO OTHERS

Close personal relationships that allow us to depend on and share emotions with one another.

4. SENSE OF PURPOSE

Goals that give life meaning.