



How to Respond When...



PEOPLE MAKE INTOLERANT COMMENTS

DO:

- Say something!
- Take a moment to breath, pause and ground yourself
- Listen to understand versus reply - come from a place a curiosity
- Find a 'go to' phrase you can use and practice it ahead of time

KNOW YOURSELF

When someone makes a remark that we're unsure of how to respond, we tend to fall into Fight (respond defensively/combatively), Flight (change the subject) or Freeze (lose our train of thought). If we're aware of how we tend to react, we can prepare responses .

IF YOU TEND TO...

- Fight:* "Can you explain why you said that?"
- Flight:* "I'm having a reaction to what you just said and need a few minutes to collect my thoughts before we talk."
- Freeze:* "What did you mean by that comment?"

REDIRECT

Intervene, correct, pull aside

- I'm going to stop you there.
- Let's pause/take a breath...
- Ouch!/Oops!
- What you said could be hurtful to others/concerns me b/c....
- I'm having a reaction to that comment.
- You're repeating a stereotype (and this is why it's harmful...)
- There's some history behind that expression you just used that you might not know about...
- I need to stop you there because something you just said is not accurate.

ASK

Ask questions to clarify

- I think I heard you say...What did you mean?
- I want to make sure I understand what you're saying. Were you saying that...?
- What experiences have led you to this conclusion?
- I'm wondering if you know the impact of your words when you say...

EMPHASIZE THOUGHTS

- When I hear your comment, I think/feel...
- That language makes me uncomfortable...
- Some people may think you mean...
- In my experience...
- I understand why some people might feel this way but I think we also need to address why it's problematic...
- I'm curious why you chose to repeat that opinion...
- I used to think that too. But then I learned...and now I think...

IF YOU WANT TO RESPOND, BUT NOT ENGAGE

Express:

- Your belief/values statement
- Your concern.
- * Your action
- * Your exit

"I value truth and justice and I want all students to have a sense of belonging in our schools. I believe your comment is harmful b/c it doesn't acknowledge the humanity in all people. I don't feel you're here to find solutions, so I won't engage in this conversation further."