



## 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 may be the reactions that we are?”



# 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...steady...
- 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 she/he is 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 she/he responds in 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 expectations have I set-up that are not working?