Ground rules for difficult conversations and talking about race

Do: Be explicit about race

Don’t: Use coded language

Do: Point out coded language when it occurs

Do: Acknowledge that even though race is a social construct (i.e., not biologically real), it still has real-world implications

Don’t: Promote the idea of being “colorblind”

- Listen deeply
- Accept one another’s reality
- Step up, step back
- Ask compassionate questions
- Challenge yourself
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Expect to experience discomfort
- Allow others to learn what you already know
- Respect confidentiality—take the stories, leave the names
- Take care of yourself

Minnesota Department of Health
Center for Public Health Practice
625 Robert Street N PO Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-3880 health.ophp@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

2018. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3880.