

# Respect During Social Change

Times of social change can be difficult to navigate. Events witnessed on the news or happening in your community may lead to feelings of uncertainty or tension in both work and personal relationships.

During periods of change, you may question previously held assumptions or behaviors. These feelings of discomfort, while challenging, are a necessary part of becoming more sensitive to the views and needs of those with different backgrounds and experiences.

During times of social change, these tips may be helpful:

- ▶ Don't rush to judgment. Try to see the situation from multiple points of view.
- ▶ Avoid "us" vs. "them" thinking that makes it harder for people to find common ground.
- ▶ Be sensitive to the religious, cultural, and social backgrounds of your neighbors and co-workers. Recognize that your own biases and stereotypes may influence how you interact with others.
- ▶ Respond to others based on their behavior. Treat them as you would wish to be treated.
- ▶ Think about what you say. Avoid using offensive slang or slurs or language that is derogatory toward others.

- ▶ If a person tells you that their experience differs from yours, don't dismiss it. Instead, listen to what they have to say and ask what they would do to improve the situation.
- ▶ Be a role model. Set an example for your children, family, and friends.

It's also important to remember that times of change are often stressful. You may find that you are:

- ▶ Paying more attention to the news
- ▶ Having arguments or tense conversations with friends or family members
- ▶ Feeling anxious or having physical symptoms, such as headaches, stomach aches, or difficulty sleeping

If you are feeling stressed or uncertain, remember to:

- ▶ Practice self-care. Eat right, exercise, and engage in activities that help you relax, such as meditation or spending time in nature. Limit your media exposure to what is necessary to stay informed.
- ▶ Understand that change rarely happens overnight. If you are volunteering or engaging in other activities to support social change, set limits to maintain your health and wellbeing.

For more suggestions on how to navigate a time of social change, contact LifeMatters. Practical resources and emotional support are available 24/7/365.

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