



## Engaging Employers as Allies: Normalizing honest, open and transparent conversations

### **Sentence Starters for Meaningful Conversations**

*Adapted from "Respect Differences? Challenging the Common Guidelines in Social Justice Education," Robin DiAngelo and Özlem Sensoy*

I'm really nervous/scared/uncomfortable to say [X], but . . .

From my experience/perspective as [identity], . . .

I'm afraid I may offend someone, and please let me know if I do, but . . .

It feels risky to say [X], but . . .

I'm not sure if this will make any sense, but . . .

I just felt something shift in the room. I'm wondering if anyone else did . . .

It seems like some people may have had a reaction to that. Can you help me understand why?

Can you help me understand whether what I'm thinking right now might be problematic?

This is what I understand you to be saying. . . . Is that accurate?

I've been wondering about how we are using [term] in this discussion . . .

I have always heard that [X]. What are your thoughts on that?

The author is arguing that only [e.g., men can be sexist]. Can you help me understand that?

Is [X] a good example of what the author was saying?

How would you respond to [X] from a social justice framework?

I am having a "yeah, but" moment. Can you help me work through it?

Given the reality of inequitable power, would it be better if . . . ?

How does [X] effect relationships between [Y] and [Z]?

What is another example of [X]?

Additional sentence starters can be found here:

<https://eleducation.org/resources/sentence-starters-for-courageous-conversations>