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The Dignity Index

Utah Pilot Project Technical Summary

Samantha Ball
Senior Research Associate

Kara Byrne
Senior Research Associate

Dianne Meppen
Director of Survey Research

Jesse Graham
George S. Eccles Chair
of Business Ethics
and Professor of
Management,
David Eccles School
of Business

"The Dignity Index relies on one of the most ancient tools for social change in the history of human beings – conscience. When we see how often we use contempt and how harmful it is, we see we're a part of the problem, and that makes us part of the solution."

–Taylor Randall, University of Utah President

Table of Contents

The Dignity Index

UNITE, a national initiative to ease divisions, prevent violence, and solve problems, began work on the Dignity Index in early 2021. The Index is an eight-point scale that measures the level of contempt or dignity in a selected passage of speech. Lower scores (1-4) reflect a lack of dignity and the presence of contempt, with the lowest score (1) showing the most contempt. The higher scores (5-8) reflect language grounded in dignity, with the highest score (8) showing the most dignity.[1]

The Dignity Index grew out of UNITE's founding mission to discover ways to heal America's polarized partisan divide and allow important policy issues to be productively addressed. UNITE found research across a number of fields that suggested scapegoating is a key underlying cause of division, and contempt is a step on the path to scapegoating. The writings of Arthur Brooks (*Love your Enemies*) and Donna Hicks (*Dignity*) put those insights into practical terms – noting that contemptuous speech, creates and magnifies divisions between people, whereas dignified speech brings people together.

UNITE designed the Dignity Index as a strategic lever to ease division based on a set of convictions:

- America's divisions are not caused by disagreement, but by contempt.
- Putting a spotlight on dignity and contempt will promote more dignity and less contempt.
- The best way to put a spotlight on dignity and contempt is to measure them.

UNITE decided to initially focus on scoring political speech because it is a commonly known example of how people with differing opinions treat each other. Moreover, politicians take cues from popular culture and public feedback and vice versa.

UNITE chose to pilot the Dignity Index in Utah during the 2022 campaign season, testing whether the Dignity Index could function consistently and create a conversation about dignity and contempt that would reach the general public, and create a constituency for change. The pilot design supported UNITE's goal for the Dignity Index: to create a public conversation about political campaigns that can reward dignity and make contempt backfire.

The Dignity Index at-a-glance

8 *Level eight believes everyone has inherent worth and therefore treats everyone with dignity no matter what.*

7 *Level seven wants to fully engage the other side – discussing even their deepest disagreements and the values and interests they don't share to build an understanding.*

6 *Level six sees it as a welcome duty to work with the other side to find common ground and act on it.*

5 *Level five listens to the other side's point of view and respectfully explains their own goals, views, and plans.*

4 *Level four mocks or attacks the other side's background, beliefs, or commitment.*

3 *Level three attacks the other side's moral character.*

2 *Level two does not call for violent action, but accuses the other side of promoting evil.*

1 *Level one escalates from violent words to violent actions.*

Source: UNITE

The Utah Dignity Index pilot project is described in the following sections. The pilot was an opportunity to observe how people of differing political backgrounds could be trained to apply the Dignity Index to consistently identify dignity and contempt in a variety of political speech. Moreover, introducing and valuing dignified speech in political campaigns resonated with members of the public. Many of those who worked on the project reported they noticed themselves trying to use more dignified speech in their personal lives and seeking out more dignified news coverage of the topics they care about. The Dignity Index heightened people's sense of agency in addressing division. The Dignity Index challenged the assumption that current divisions between Americans are caused by large historical or economic trends that lie beyond individual action, and offered evidence that contempt causes these divisions and dignity can ease them.

The Utah Pilot Project

In September 2022, a team from the University of Utah that included the David Eccles School of Business, the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, and the Hinckley Institute of Politics joined the project UNITE effort to apply the Dignity Index to political speech used in Utah's midterm elections. The elections included five federal offices – four for the House of Representatives and one for the Senate. The pilot program tested whether the Dignity Index could be defined and explained with sufficient specificity and lack of political bias that individuals of differing political backgrounds would code (assign a Dignity Index level to) passages with consistency. In addition, the pilot project helped refine training and coding materials through an iterative process informed by student coders' insights. Ultimately, the pilot project helped refine the Index and student coder training so that the Dignity Index could be used reliably and meaningfully on the national stage.

Training Process

Student coder recruitment and training. The first step in the pilot was recruiting students and training them to code passages of political speech from candidates in Utah's five federal offices. The Hinckley Institute issued a broad recruitment call to the University of Utah campus, with over 95 student applications. The Hinckley Institute hired a team of 22 student coders from politically and ideologically diverse backgrounds, different majors and minors, and a wide range of personal backgrounds. All had at least a basic understanding of, and interest in, the political system.

The UNITE/University of Utah team designed and conducted student trainings, starting with initial in-person training sessions that included an explanation of the Dignity Index,

explanation of canonical examples of political speech representing perspectives at different points on the Index, and an opportunity for students to code and discuss a selection of passages. The second training session was virtual and provided an opportunity for students to code passages of modern political speech.

Agreement among student coders. During each training session, students noted both their codes and their reasoning for each passage. These codes and reasoning were collected for analysis. The University of Utah team analyzed inter- and intra-coder reliability to better understand consistency in the interpretation and application of the index among student coders (described in more detail in the section "Agreement and Reliability"). Student coders engaged in dialogue with the UNITE/University of Utah team. The student interpretations of codes were central to informing changes to the Dignity Index code explanations in the training materials that would increase clarity and lead to higher intercoder agreement. At the conclusion of training, reliability among coders, with regards to identifying contempt and dignity in speech, was strong.

Public Launch

In early October 2022, political debates between candidates for Utah's five Congressional seats served as the first public test of The Dignity Index. Following the debates, student coders scored fundraising appeals, social media posts, third-party ads, and political speeches and released scores to the public each Friday. For the duration of the launch of the pilot, the process of selecting passages, scoring them, and releasing them to the public was informed by a Plan, Do, Study, Act iterative methodological approach to development.[2] This approach

Lessons Learned

In a time of intense political partisanship, the Dignity Index distinguishes contemptuous speech from speech grounded in dignity. Recent polls suggest it is needed. Percentages of Republicans and Democrats who view individuals from the opposing party as immoral have increased by about 25 percentage points for members of both parties since 2016 – from 35% to 63% of Democrats and 47% to 72% of Republicans.[4] These feelings of contempt generate language that inhibits problem-solving among policymakers and diminishes the sense of connection among Americans. The Dignity Index serves as a tool to decrease partisan division

and promote productive discussion by shining a light on the way people speak to each other.

A Dignity Index pilot project undertaken by UNITE and the University of Utah received a warm reception from the public and revealed several important learnings that can be applied to future development and application of the Index. Although the Dignity Index tool and process are still being revised in light of pilot project findings, these learnings suggest the Index could play a meaningful role in addressing widespread partisan division.

prompts researchers to test a plan by enacting it, observing the results, and implementing changes that would improve the result. Each time students coded passages, the UNITE/University of Utah team reviewed both their codes and their reasoning for the codes with an eye to whether the training materials, or the Index description itself, could be revised in a way to provide more accuracy and consistency among student coders. Ideally, these steps would be distinct. However, within the context of finite resources and the condensed timeline of a political campaign season, some steps necessarily overlapped during this pilot.

Passage selection and coding. Two sets of students were assembled for the public launch. The first group were passage selectors and the second group were coders. There were four passage selectors and three student coders for each debate. Politically diverse students were assigned to both groups as a protection against implicit and explicit bias in coding. Additionally, the UNITE/University of Utah team instructed passage selectors to identify passages reflecting high levels of dignity and contempt for each candidate in recognition that a manual coding process by a small team would not allow for all candidate statements to be considered, and that any selection process would be vulnerable to bias. By selecting high and low instances of dignity in each candidate's speech, the UNITE/University of Utah team aimed to introduce the Dignity Index to the public and show how it could provide insight into making candidates' dialogue more productive and dignified. [3]

As an additional step to ensure a full discussion, both groups were instructed to select or code passages individually first and then work to achieve consensus with their group. Since one of the purposes of the pilot project was to revise student coder training

and more clearly delineate Dignity Index levels, passage selectors were instructed to select more passages than would be needed for the public release. This allowed for the UNITE/University of Utah team to select the scores that best represented the Index for release and use feedback from the other scores to inform training material revisions. The UNITE/University of Utah team members participated in the pilot project process by individually selecting potential debate passages for consideration, reviewing coded passages for all types of speech, amending student coder training, and making the final determination on which coded passages were released to the public.

During the live debates, the student passage selectors and members of the UNITE/University of Utah team took note of passages that represented the highest and lowest levels of dignity for each candidate. When the debate concluded, the students and UNITE/University of Utah team members used debate transcriptions to ensure accuracy of their selected examples of dignified and contemptuous speech for each candidate. All of these examples were entered into a shared document. Student passage selectors entered their own selections into the shared document and then reviewed the full list to select which passages were most and least dignified and why. Students first made their individual choices, and then met as a group to agree upon which passages should be coded.

The morning after each debate, the student coder group reviewed the passages selected the night before and provided each with an individual code and reasoning before meeting with the other students in the group to reach a consensus code for each passage. The student consensus process allowed them to share their reasoning with each other and come to agreement on a consensus code on all of the passages. Next, the UNITE/

Leaders of the Dignity Index pilot project identified six lessons learned:

1 **CONSISTENCY**

Individuals with differing political backgrounds can code passages with consistency. In analyzing coder agreement and reliability (described later) analysts discovered that careful and structured application of the Dignity Index increases the consistency of results. Thoughtful dialogue and well-reasoned analysis can lead people of differing viewpoints to jointly identify contemptuous speech.

2 **MIRROR EFFECT**

The application of the Dignity Index frequently prompts personal reflection on contemptuous and dignified language in day-to-day life. The Dignity Index caused coders and UNITE team members to personally reflect upon and assess their own use of language. The Dignity Index can inspire personal reflection and behavioral change, which can prompt societal awareness and change.

University of Utah team reviewed the codes and reasoning for each passage and released passages that were coded consistently with the intent of the Index and reflected a balanced number of passages for each candidate when possible.

After the debates concluded, two students collected passages based on a weekly speech theme such as fundraising materials, social media, or political speeches. The student passage selectors searched through candidates' social media accounts, fundraising email lists, and media mentions to collect information from each candidate. Although the passage selectors worked to collect all of the material possible for each candidate, the amount of material available varied by candidate and campaign. This was partly because none of the House of Representative races were considered competitive. The House of Representative Republican candidates, all incumbents, were favored to win each of their races. Consequently, their Democratic challengers frequently had less funding and fewer campaign materials. The race for the Senate seat was much more competitive, which heightened national interest in the race leading to millions of dollars in campaign contributions and political ads. This heightened interest and greater quantity of political speech examples prompted the Utah pilot project to focus on the Senate race during the last two weeks of the campaign. The Utah pilot project concluded with scores for available post-election statements for candidates in all five federal races

The UNITE/University of Utah team released coded passages to the public the day following a debate or on a Friday at the end of a themed week. A contextual and explanatory statement accompanied the coded passages.

As described earlier, the passages released represented highly dignified or contemptuous speech for each candidate, but did not represent the totality of what was said by any candidate. Nonetheless, some news outlets began to take an average of a candidates' scores in order to rank the candidates in terms of their comparative dignity. While an average candidate dignity score may become possible after development and testing of a sophisticated artificial intelligence tool to score every instance of public speech in a candidate's campaign, no such comparison is possible through the current scoring process. Moreover, taking an approach to highlight instances of high and low dignity for each candidate also best serves the purpose of the Index - easing divisions, preventing violence and solving problems – because it highlights examples of strength and weakness for each candidate. It also sets the stage for a conversation about dignity and contempt rather than reproducing the divisive habit of categorizing candidates into, "these are the good people, those are the bad people."

3 AGENCY

Interacting with the Dignity Index can increase individuals' awareness of actions they can take against division. Related to the mirror effect, staff and coders involved with the pilot realized for themselves, and heard from others, that the Dignity Index highlights people's own agency in choosing dignity over contempt not only in what they say, but in what they read, watch, hear, and post.

4 APPLICATION

Members of the media and others are inclined to ask for, or create, an average assessment of dignity when reviewing scores for each candidate. Care should be taken to emphasize that the Dignity Index is currently a tool for assessing the dignity of individual statements. It cannot assess the entirety of what a candidate has said. One of the intended outcomes of the Dignity Index is to stimulate conversation.

Agreement and Reliability

Improving agreement among coders, including among student coders and between student coders and the UNITE/University of Utah team, was an important consideration for the entirety of the Utah pilot project. Tracking and responding to coder agreement and interpretation began during the first student coder training. For the duration of the pilot project, the UNITE/University of Utah team reviewed student coders' work and highlighted areas where the Dignity Index explanations needed refining in an effort to improve agreement among coders. For more information regarding student coder recruitment and training, see the above section "Training Process."

Measuring Coder Reliability in Training. Coder reliability was analyzed with the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) and Fleiss's kappa. While Fleiss's kappa is the statistic most commonly used to examine inter-rater reliability, it is designed for nominal ratings (binary presence/absence of a construct) and is therefore not ideal for an ordinal scale like the Dignity Index. For this reason, the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient was used for the ordinal scale, and Fleiss's kappa was applied to a dichotomized version of the Dignity Index ratings (1-4 indicating absence of dignity, 5-8 indicating presence of dignity). In the first round of coding, the ICC was 0.78 and kappa was 0.82, indicating reasonably good reliability between the coders. As mentioned in the Training Process section, the UNITE/University of Utah team then discussed these passages with the coders, focusing on any discrepancies in coding and any areas of confusion.

In a second round of coding, student coders moved from coding canonical historical passages to coding Utah campaign materials. For this round, reliability dropped slightly (ICC = 0.75, kappa = 0.74). This drop was not surprising given the move from canonical examples to actual campaign materials. Again, the UNITE/University of Utah team met with the coders and discussed any discrepancies and areas of confusion. In a third round of coding, which included an opportunity to recode passages after discussion, the coders again rated actual Utah campaign materials individually. In this round the reliabilities were very good (ICC = 0.96, kappa = 0.89), providing the confidence to adopt a gold-standard consensus approach to the coding process.

According to a consensus approach, groups of coders code passages individually, then compare codes and discuss any discrepancies, eventually coming to a consensus on each code. Although the proportion of student coders who coded passages as intended by the UNITE/University of Utah team did not increase, the span of variation between the scores decreased notably. By the time students were prepared to code for the public launch, student codes only differed by about one point, instead of the 2 to 4 point differences seen during the earlier training sessions. See the section "Public Launch" for a detailed description of the coding process.

Releasing Scores. In some cases, the student consensus code differed from the code that would have been given by the UNITE/University of Utah team. In those cases, the Unite/University of Utah Dignity Index team reviewed the students' reasoning for the agreed-upon code to see if there was an indication of where the training could be revised to better clarify the types of statements embodied by each point on the Index. This iterative coding and training process was a key element of the Plan, Do, Study, Act methodological approach used in the pilot project. Individual student codes and reasoning were collected throughout the process to continually update the training and refine the training materials. For a detailed discussion of this process, see the "passage selection and coding" segment of the "Public Launch" section.

5 TRAINING

Thorough training that combines both an explanation of the Dignity Index and an interactive review of how to apply Dignity Index codes to political speech is critical in order for groups of coders to systematically analyze speech. Training can take place over several weeks and be composed of many rounds of didactic instructions on coding, review of the index, and refining of interpretation and application of the Index.

6 EASING DIVISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

During Dignity Index development, UNITE team members reported something unanticipated: as the expression of dignity rises in conversation, so did curiosity, humility, vulnerability, and the ability to see the good in others and the flaws in oneself. Observations such as these underscore the premise that treating others with dignity and easing divisions and solving problems *are the same set of skills*. This suggests the Dignity Index could be a helpful tool in easing political division and supporting productive public dialogue.

Index and Training Materials Refinement. At several points during the pilot, student coding data and team/student coder discussion were used to both refine the coding training materials so that students had greater clarity of the Index intent and improve agreement in application of the Index. This refinement also improved distinction between the Index levels. These refinements reflect a more detailed and nuanced understanding of how the Dignity Index functioned in day-to-day speech as the pilot provided an opportunity to code a wider variety of passages than had been examined during Dignity Index development.

Areas of refinement included:

Defining a shared context – As the result of training discussions, Dignity Index level examples, short descriptions, and more detailed reasoning were added to the coding materials. Additionally, student feedback regarding the influence of context on passage interpretation highlighted varying levels of political knowledge among students. To standardize varying levels of context, students were directed to restrict their interpretation of each passage to shared knowledge of the passage. The considered context included the type of political speech being examined (debates, fundraising materials, etc.) and the political parties of the speaker and his or her opponents.

'Intent to engage with other side to solve problems must be explicitly stated (not in the spirit of engagement) to be considered higher than a 5 on the Dignity Index. – Intent to engage with the other side to find areas of common ground emerged as a critical part of the difference between a level 5 and a level 6 in the Index. Discussion between the UNITE/University of Utah team and student coders highlighted the difficulty of determining the intent of the speaker and the opportunity for personal bias or a lack of shared context to color the coding determination. Consequently, students were instructed to require explicit evidence of working with the other side (e.g., a bill co-sponsored with a member of the other party) in order to code a passage a six rather than a five.

Distinguish references to authoritarian governments and heinous actions from other references – After the first round of debate coding, UNITE/University of Utah team and student coder discussion highlighted the difficulty of coding passages where authoritarian governments or heinous actions were referenced. Student coders were instructed to focus on the candidate's portrayal of their opponent and his/her party when the topic involved heinous acts or authoritarian regimes. This clarification allowed the Dignity Index to highlight the types of contempt that divide Americans.

Identify false portrayals of an opponents' point of view – Additionally, students were instructed to consider a passage to be on the contemptuous side of the Index if the candidate uses language that distorts the opponent's position in order to make it sound less persuasive.

Dignified criticism/Specify actions and concerns – A final campaign season addition to the student coder training followed team/student coder discussion of the Senate debate. Some of the passages coded for this debate highlighted the importance of being able to talk about controversial political issues in a dignified way. As a result of team/student coder discussion about passages addressing the events of January 6, 2021, students were provided with examples of how candidates could raise concerns about actions they considered a threat to America's democratic system of government while still maintaining dignity. Specific examples of action and clearly stated concerns about their possible effect were highlighted as critical to a meaningful discussion, but name calling and broad generalizations of evil intent were considered based in contempt and unlikely to advance productive dialogue.

Concluding the Pilot

Efforts to refine the Index and training materials continue. The UNITE/University of Utah team plans to meet with student coders and solicit their feedback on specific language for the coding guide and future training to determine if the refinements made during the campaign season are clearly articulated. Additionally, the UNITE/University of Utah team will outline procedures for future efforts, including:

- A systematic process to follow should coders fail to reach a consensus.

- Whether an expert coding review will be part of future coding processes.

- Whether expert review will have input on which codes are released to the public.

- Who chooses which segments to score.

- Determining which coded passages are released to the public.

Pilot Project Reflections

UNITE/University of Utah team members and student coders had two major takeaways – how to operationalize the Dignity Index for coding political speech and the potential of the Dignity Index to influence individual awareness of dignity and contempt in everyday life.

"I can't say how much I personally learned from going over the early training… we were trying to learn to code ourselves. We had the Index, we were trying to apply it, but we hadn't done a lot of passages and as we walked through, I learned a ton about how the Index worked and how it can't work by listening to [student coder] feedback … the value of [student coder] feedback and support was enormous."

– UNITE/University of Utah team member

"The best and happiest surprise came when people heard about the Dignity Index and thought they were getting a tool for judging others, and then they found it was a mirror for seeing themselves."

– UNITE/University of Utah team member

"I don't think it was the goal of the project to change the students, but … it did influence the way we view ourselves and the way that we respond to other things around us."

– Student coder

"Oftentimes, [before working on the pilot project] I would look at [language] from a third party and think "oh but they didn't mean it that way" and I realized it doesn't matter, this is how it effects other people who are hearing that. It definitely took a lot of my bias away …."

– Student coder

"We started to apply the guide in our own lives. We were reflecting on it, we understood it and we trained on it and talked about it, and so …. how do we communicate it in an effective way to capture what it really means [so that politicians understand the value of the Index]?"

– Student coder

Plans for Future

In addition to refining the Index and training materials, the UNITE/University of Utah team plans to adapt and promote use of the Dignity Index for diverse applications in Utah and nationwide, including developing a Dignity Index Toolkit that can be adapted to elevate civil discourse for a variety of settings and conversations.

Potential settings or conversations include:

- Municipal leaders improving and elevating civil discourse (beginning with a partnership with the Utah League of Cities and Towns).

- K-12 leaders improving dialogue in classroom and public settings.

- Students and professionals in higher education encouraging civil discourse on campuses.

- Healthcare professionals improving provider-patient dialogue.

- Business leaders shaping workplace culture.

The UNITE team also has plans to deepen and expand the conversation in Utah and other states by:

- Coding political speech in the 2023 Salt Lake City mayoral race.

- Embedding the Dignity Index in the 2024 Presidential campaign.

- Mobilizing higher education student groups.

- Developing and applying artificial intelligence tools.

- Hosting informational and productive Dignity Index retreats.

- Creating a cross-partisan fundraising coalition to insist on more dignified public speech from candidates.

UNITE's long-term vision for the Dignity Index is to promote a growing number of people who are committed to using more dignity and less contempt in their own speech, prompting them to expect the same from the people who represent them, entertain them, and inform them, and leading to a constituency that rewards dignity and challenges contempt in a diverse range of settings.

Endnotes

1. Read more about the Dignity Index at: https://www.dignityindex.us/index
2. https://www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/HowtoImprove/ScienceofImprovementTestingChanges.aspx
3. Implicit bias is "attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner." (Cheryl Staats, "Understanding Implicit Bias What Educators Should Know," *American Educator*, v39 n4 p29-33, 43 Win 2015-2016)
4. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/08/09/as-partisan-hostility-grows-signs-of-frustration-with-the-two-party-system/

The Dignity Index

The Index is an eight-point scale that measures the level of contempt or dignity in a passage of speech. The following summary is currently being reviewed in light of learnings from the pilot project. Updates will be made to increase the clarity of different Dignity Index levels.

1 **Level one escalates from violent words to violent actions**. This is the highest level of contempt. It's a combination of a feeling that the other side is subhuman and is destroying everything we value, and calling for, or approving of, violence to eliminate them. Level one speech suggests it is a moral duty to destroy the opposing side before "they destroy us."

2 **Level two does not call for violent action, but accuses the other side of promoting evil.** This level suggests the people on the opposing side are not just bad but evil – they are viewed as a danger to everything of value. Level two perspectives are "They will ruin us if we let them," "It's us or them," and "They are an existential threat."

3 **Level three attacks the other side's moral character**. According to this level, the other side is not just different, or losers, or failures; they are morally bad people who hate us and want to hurt us. Criticism of the other side takes the form of: "We are the good people and they are the bad people." At this level, credit is claimed for the good outcomes and blame placed for the bad outcomes, even in complex situations. Cooperation with the other side is impossible: "It's us vs. them" and "The country can't win unless they lose" according to the level three perspective.

4 **Level four mocks or attacks the other side's background, beliefs, or commitment**. This is the first stage of contempt. According to this perspective, "we are better than those people," "They are different," "They don't really belong," "They don't share our values," "They're not one of us," and "We shouldn't trust them." Level four attacks competence or performance in vague, unanswerable ways.

5 **Level five listens to the other side's point of view and respectfully explains their own goals, views, and plans.** This is the first stage of dignity. According to this perspective, everyone has a right to be here and be heard. Even if the other side doesn't share a point of view, it's their country too. Both sides belong, so there should be no name-calling or negative labels. This level supports a working relationship, and can involve respectfully putting forward ideas and proposals, and explaining views, goals, and reasoning, but it does not involve actively engaging the other side to find common interests and values. Criticizing with dignity means challenging the other side's words, actions, decisions, and outcomes without using any name-calling or personal attacks.

6 **Level six sees it as a welcome duty to work with the other side to find common ground and act on it**. At this level, an individual is curious about the other side and wants to engage them in discussion, compare ideas and proposals, and talk about beliefs. The defining feature of this perspective is an effort to identify common values and interests and use them as a basis for cooperation. At this level, working with the other side provides a feeling of pride.

7 **Level seven wants to fully engage the other side – discussing even their deepest disagreements and the values and interests they *don't* share so to build an understanding of where the other person is coming from.** At this level, individuals have strong convictions, but they fully engage with people from other groups and are open to learning from their disagreements. Attitudes such as "I'm not afraid of being criticized, losing an argument, or being told I'm wrong," "I see how we divide ourselves by believing we're always right and the other side is always wrong," and "I'm willing to admit mistakes and change my mind if people can show me something I haven't seen" typify this level's perspective.

8 **Level eight believes everyone has inherent worth and therefore treats everyone with dignity no matter what.** At this highest level of dignity, individuals love their own group, but can connect with most any group. They see themselves in others and will talk and work with anyone to find solutions. Phrases such as "I don't insist on my approach," "I don't need to be right," "I don't care who gets the credit," and "I just want decisions and solutions that protect the dignity of everyone" represent the level eight perspective.

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Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute | 411 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111 | 801-585-5618 | gardner.utah.edu