

17Seeds

10 Ways to Have a Healthy Dialogue on Race

With Someone of Another Race

- 1. Be patient.** Start small. Share a cup of coffee once a month and talk about a book. When it's time to move into deep water, you'll know.
- 2. Be honest.** Maybe you're scared. Maybe you're angry. Speak the love in truth, and keep moving forward.
- 3. Be brave.** Take a deep breath, say a prayer, and dive in. Quick conversation starter: talk about childhood memories.
- 4. Be happy, don't worry.** Don't worry about 'doing it' right. Don't take yourself too seriously. Relax. Share a laugh.
- 5. Be vulnerable.** Tap into your soft an' fuzzy side, or at least the side that still has a heart beat. Be real. Take off the masks.
- 6. Be affirming.** Practice some good old-fashioned interactive listening. You've got great ears. I just know it.
- 7. Be free.** Have your 'talking partner' over for dinner. Volunteer in the community together. Visit one another's church.
- 8. Be responsive.** Don't a doormat. Speak up. Engage. Show how much you care.
- 9. Be angry and sin not.** It's okay to be angry, just don't let your racially-charged anger lead you into harming yourself or others.
- 10. Be consistent and committed.** Show up. On time. Every time. If you can't, be courteous enough to call ahead.



About Linda Leigh Hargrove:

Ms. Hargrove has co-led racial reconciliation discussion groups and conducted panels on racism in the church.

Her published writings include two novels: *The Making of Isaac Hunt* (June 2007) and *Loving Cee Cee Johnson* (September 2008). She blends suspense, humor, and faith into compelling stories about race and class in America.

The former environmental engineer currently resides in Greensboro, North Carolina with her husband and three sons where she operates 1721 Media, LLC, a graphic design company catering to small and medium sized nonprofits and small businesses. Visit her online at LLHargrove.com or 17Seeds.com.