

## 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 truth, in love, 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 be 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 since the early 1990s.

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.

She currently resides in the Charlotte, North Carolina area with her husband and three sons where she works as an engineering instructor. Visit her online at [LLHargrove.com](http://LLHargrove.com) or [17Seeds.org](http://17Seeds.org).