



## LEADERSHIP FOR A THINKING ENVIRONMENT®

# The Ten Components of a Thinking Environment

### 1. ATTENTION

Listening with palpable respect and without interruption

- *The quality of your attention profoundly affects the quality of other people's thinking.*
- *As the listener you must be more drivingly interested in what is real and true for people than you are frightened of being proved wrong.*
- *As the thinker, knowing you will not be interrupted frees you truly to think for yourself.*

### 2. EQUALITY

Treating each other as thinking peers

Giving equal turns and attention

Keeping agreements and boundaries

- *Even in a hierarchy people can be equals as thinkers*
- *Knowing you will have your turn improves the quality of your attention*

### 3. EASE

Offering freedom from internal rush or urgency

- *Ease creates. Urgency destroys.*
- *When it comes to helping people think for themselves, sometimes doing means not doing.*

### 4. APPRECIATION

Offering genuine acknowledgement of a person's qualities

Practicing a 5:1 ratio of appreciation to criticism

- *The human mind thinks more rigorously and creatively in a context of specific, sincere, succinct praise.*



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### **5. ENCOURAGEMENT**

Giving courage to go to the cutting edge of ideas by moving beyond internal competition

- *To be 'better than' is not necessarily to be good.*

### **6. FEELINGS**

Allowing sufficient emotional release to restore thinking

- *Listening through anger makes way for thorough thinking.*
- *Crying can make you smarter.*
- *After laughter thinking improves.*

### **7. INFORMATION**

Supplying the facts

Dismantling denial

- *Withholding or denying information results in intellectual vandalism.*
- *Facing what you have been denying leads to better thinking.*

### **8. DIVERSITY**

Welcoming divergent thinking and diverse group identities.

- *The mind works best in the presence of reality.*
- *Reality is diverse. Homogeneity is a thinking inhibitor.*

### **9. INCISIVE QUESTIONS™**

Removing assumptions that limit our ability to think for ourselves clearly and creatively

- *Right inside an Incisive Question lies the liberation of the human mind.* — HELEN ELLIS

### **10. PLACE**

Creating a physical environment that says back to people, "You matter."

- *When the physical environment affirms your importance, you think more boldly.*
- *When your body is cared for and respected, your thinking improves.*