Martin Luther King Jr. Week at Lewis & Clark College is aimed at generating honest and reflective conversation and action about the relevance and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.’s teachings. By participating in the MLK Week, you are agreeing to the following:

-To seek understanding before seeking to be understood. We ask that you ask questions in order to gain an as-accurate-as-possible comprehension of what your partner is expressing.

-To be vulnerable and uncomfortable. Growth and learning happen when we are open to it even though it may mean experiencing a measure of difficulty.

-To listen carefully and thoughtfully to your partner.

-To understand that this conversation is not the end all be all, but one of many conversations; not everything can be learned or discussed in a few conversations.

-To challenge yourself to think critically about the information you are receiving.

Tips for having a conversation:

* Use “I” statements. We suggest that you only speak about your feelings, your thoughts, and your experiences. Some examples of this are “I feel….” or “I think…”
* If you do not know something, admit it. For example, if you are unsure of how to word something, say, “I am not sure of how to say this...”
* Be aware that verbal language is not the only way we communicate. Pay attention to body language, gestures, tone, and voice volume. Other things to keep in mind are time of day and the location of the conversation with your partner. All of these factors are crucial for facilitating a thorough understanding of what someone says.
* Come into the conversation with a pen and paper so you can take notes on what the other person says. It is okay to jot down an idea and think about it before you speak.