

MICROAGGRESSIONS

In Occupational Therapy

What are microaggressions:

Sue et al. (2007) Microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward individuals. Perpetrators of microaggressions are often unaware that they engage in such communications when they interact with people.

QUICK EXAMPLES IN HEALTHCARE

- Saying "you speak English very well" to someone born and raised in the US.
- Are you a nurse? To a female physician
- Are you the sitter? To a black physician
- You look too masculine? To a self-identified lesbian physician

TAKE ACTION.

BECOME AWARE

If you were called out for being microaggressive, here are some guides to remember/handle the situation

- The person, who called you out cares enough to say something
- Being defensive will not help, and virtue-signaling will not either
- Apologize for the bias and explain that you want to understand better
- Listen with empathy and compassion

REFRAME

- I'm wondering what message this is sending her? Do you think you would've said this to _____
- What would happen if _____?
- Could there be another way to look at this

ASK THE SPEAKER TO ELABORATE ON WHAT THEY MEANT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PERSPECTIVE

Paraphrase

• Examples

- You're Saying
- You Believe
- So it Sounds like you think

This gives you the opportunity to understand how they feel and for them to clear up any misinterpretations

"I" AND "PREFERENCE" STATEMENTS

- I felt ___ when you said ___ and it ___ (describe impact on you)
- I don't think this is funny. I would like you to stop
- It would be helpful to me if ___

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Responding to Microaggressions to Help

- **"I KNOW YOU DIDN'T REALIZE THIS, BUT WHEN YOU _____ (COMMENT/BEHAVIOR), IT WAS HURTFUL BECAUSE_____. INSTEAD YOU COULD_____ (DIFFERENT LANGUAGE OR BEHAVIOR.)"**
- **"I NOTICED THAT YOU _____ (COMMENT/BEHAVIOR). I USED TO DO/SAY THAT TOO, BUT THEN I LEARNED_____."**
- **ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OR MORE INFORMATION.
"COULD YOU SAY MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU MEAN BY THAT?"
"HOW HAVE YOU COME TO THINK THAT?"**
- **PRETEND YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. AS PEOPLE TRY TO EXPLAIN THEIR COMMENTS, THEY OFTEN REALIZE HOW SILLY THEY SOUND.
"I DON'T GET IT....."
"WHY IS THAT FUNNY?"**

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Resources

QUIZ

<https://bit.ly/37jtWAd>

Have you ever wondered if you are microaggressive or wanted to get a snapshot of your current thinking? If so, the above link is a great way to find out. you won't receive a formal score, but it will provide information about how you answered each question.

MODULE

<https://unc.live/3ChjEiv>

The purpose of this module is to be able to understand microaggressions and implicit bias, describe how they are formed and how they can impact individuals lives, and to give you the opportunity to examine your own biases and their effects on yourself and others.

Resources

**Gonzaga, A. M. et al. (2019).
“Microaggressions: What they are?
How can we avoid? How can we
respond? Retrieved from
<https://www.chp.edu/-/media/chp/healthealthcare-professionals/documents/faculty-development/microaggressions.pdf?la=en>**

**Project Ready: Reimagining Equity
& Access for Diverse Youth. (n.d.).
Module 4: Implicit bias &
Microaggressions. Retrieved July
18th, 2021 from
<https://ready.web.unc.edu/section-1-foundations/module-4-implicit-bias-microaggressions/>**

**Silverman, R. (2007). Are you
microaggressive? Take this quiz and
see. Retrieved July 18th, 2021
from
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/you-microaggressive-take-quiz-see-robin-silverman/?articleId=6624845280741212160>**

**Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M.,
Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M.,
Holder, A. M., Nadal, K. L., &
Esquilin. M. (2007) Racial
microaggressions in everyday life:
Implications for clinical practice.
Am Psychol.62(4):271-86. doi:
10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271**