Microaggressions 2.0

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Agenda/Objectives

1. Review of Microaggressions
2. Assessing our own personal biases
3. How to address microaggressions
   ◦ The oppressed/targeted
   ◦ The bystander
4. What would you do?
Racial Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.

Microaggressions

Brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership

- Dr. Derald Wing Sue
Monday:
Your hair is so beautiful! Can I touch it?
Thanks, but no.

Tuesday:
How do you wash your hair? Does it smell?
I'd rather you didn't.

Wednesday:
What does that stuff feel like?
Hey! Hands off, please.

Thursday:
May I touch your—
Not a petting zoo!

Why are Black people so touchy?
#itooam
harvard

“Oh, I heard her say she was going to Harvard. I just assumed she misspoke.”
- white parent to my mother

#itooamberkeley

“You’re Mexican, aren’t you? A Chicano Studies major?”

This girl sitting next to me moves to sit closer to someone she’s talking to, and this white guy whispers loudly that she moved & I smell like rice.

No, my family did not have to flee the Sudan. Sorry I don’t have a more ‘ethnic’ African story.

“Are you even legal?”

“...I’m not doing hormone pills, you’re just being too sensitive...”

So when are you gonna really transition?
Hidden Biases of Good People

Research based on Race Implicit Association Test (IAT) Results for the past decades:

- Automatic White preference is pervasive in American society: 75%
- Race IAT predicts discriminatory behavior even among research participants who espouse egalitarian beliefs. (significantly better prediction than self-report measure on "prejudice")

BlindSpot: the Gender-Career Test (bit.ly/SY5lF4)
BlindSpot: the Race Test  (bit.ly/TtkoCZ)
### Racial Microaggressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MicroInsult (Often Unconscious)</th>
<th>MicroAssault (Often Conscious)</th>
<th>MicroInvalidation (Often Unconscious)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral/verbal remarks or comments that convey rudeness, insensitivity and demean a person’s racial heritage or identity</td>
<td>Explicit racial derogations characterized primarily by a violent verbal or nonverbal attack mean to hurt the intended victim</td>
<td>Verbal comments or behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Environmental MicroAggressions (Macro-Level)
- Ascription of Intelligence
- Second Class Citizen
- Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles
- Assumption of Criminal Status
- Alien in Own Land
- Color Blindness
- Myth of Meritocracy
- Denial of Individual Racism (Dr. Derald Wing Sue)
Please Reflect on Your Experience

Use the sheet provided to:

Write: your macroaggression experience (oppressed/targeted or bystander)

Response: did you respond/address the macroaggression?

2 mins
Please refer to the previous slide

- Discuss two themes with your table partners
- Try to determine if it’s a:
  - MicroInsult
  - MicroAssault
  - MicroInvalidation
Addressing Microaggressions

• The oppressed
  • It shouldn’t be the oppressed’ s job to educate the oppressor
  • But we can’t just sweep these situations under the rug
  • When harm goes unaddressed, it keeps happening

In a caring, neutral tone, say something like:

“You just said X/did Y. What were you thinking when you did/said that? Although you may not have intended it that way, your statement/action harmed me. I would like you to consider the impact of your statement/action, to apologize, and to work not to say/do something like that again.”
Addressing Microaggressions

The bystander

Bystanders can make a difference in two ways:

1. Bystanders can intervene before violence/event occurs.
2. Bystanders can broaden support systems for those targeted. Research shows that support from friends in the aftermath of trauma can help recovery for those targeted.
Addressing Microaggressions

BECOMING AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

Observe: Realize that something is happening or has happened.

- Am I aware there is a problem or risky situation?
- Do I realize someone needs help?
- Do I see others and myself as a part of the solution?
Addressing Microaggressions

Assess: Consider what information or help you need to intervene safely.

- How do I keep myself safe?
- What are my available options?
- Are there others I may call upon for help?
- What are the pros/cons for taking action?
Addressing Microaggressions

**ACT : Choose to take action.**

- Ask for help
- Create a distraction
- Talk directly
Addressing Microaggressions

Follow Up: Determine what follow up support can be offered.

- Is the issue over?
- What else needs to be done?
- What additional resources and support are available?
Handout: Macroaggression Response

Microaggression Response

Goal is to build fluency in reducing microaggressions versus blaming or shaming.

Passive
- Remain silent
- Move away from the situation
- Avoid the person in the future
- Change the subject

Assertive
- "What has your experience been that contributes to that idea?"
- "Tell me more about what that means for you."
- "I know it's not what you meant, but that could also mean..."
- Self-talk, emotionally regulate before responding

Aggressive
- Respond with a voice tone that is rude, sarcastic, or condescending
- Report person to supervisor or human resources
- Express a microaggression in
What Would You Do?