

Microaggressions

“

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

—Maya Angelou

DEFINE

Microaggressions – a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

SELF-REFLECTION ACTIVITY

PRINT: Microaggressions Worksheet (*on final page of this document*)

As you read through the statements on the worksheet, put a check mark next to each statement that has been said to you or that you have said.

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Before moving on to the next table, answer the following reflection questions:

- What were your first reactions of these examples?
- If you did check “I have said,” what was your intention?

Statement	Message
“You speak good English.”	You aren’t American.
“You are so articulate.”	It’s unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent.
“When I look at you, I don’t see color.”	Deny a person of color their racial/ethnic experience.
“My best friend is Black.”	I’m immune because I have friends of color.
“Smile! You’re too pretty for people to not see your smile.”	Your appearance defines what people think of you.
“I like you, but why do others have to shove it in our faces?”	The LGBTQ experience is offensive and abnormal.



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COMMITMENT

1. Educate yourself on your own hidden biases

2. Educate others in your organization

3. Collect relevant data that shows hidden biases

4. Evaluate the "subtle messages" within your organization

5. Hold each other accountable and have leaders do the same



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LISTEN

[Microaggressions Are A Big Deal: How to Talk Them Out and When to Walk Away, NPR's Life Kit](#)

READ

[Microaggressions: Power, Privilege and Everyday Life.](#)

WATCH

[Microaggressions in the Classroom](#)

"So, who's the man in the relationship?"	Implies that a "normal" relationship must involve a man and a woman.
"You don't look Jewish!"	All Jewish people look the same.
"That's ghetto."	Being poor is associated with negative and undesirable characteristics.

ADDITIONAL SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What is your reaction to the messages of these statements?
- What is your "takeaway"?
- What are some other examples of similar statements you have heard? What messages do they convey?

EDUCATE

INDIVIDUALS:

- Recognize that dismissive attitudes are harmful.
- Engage in self-reflection to identify times that you may have been micro-aggressive in your life.
- Participate in continuing education activities.
- Avoid making assumptions and labeling individuals.

ORGANIZATIONS:

- Foster inclusive and supportive environments.
- Collaborate with groups and organizations.
- Offer trainings and opportunities for continuing education and DEI workshops.

ACTION



What should we/I START DOING?

List ideas/items:

- Things that are not being done but should be done
- Things to begin doing to get better results
- Things worth trying or experimenting for better results



What should we/I STOP DOING?

List ideas/items:

- Things that are not working or helping
- Things that impede or are not practical
- Not delivering desired results
- We or others dislike



What should we/I CONTINUE DOING?

List ideas/items:

- Things that are working well
- Things that we want to keep
- Worth continuing to see if they're worthwhile
- We like or need

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION RESOURCES

developed in partnership by North American Interfraternity Conference
and Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values (AFLV)



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SELF-REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Statement	I have said	Said to me
"You speak good English"		
"You are so articulate"		
"When I look at you, I don't see color"		
"My best friend is Black."		
"Smile! You're too pretty for people to not see your smile."		
"I like you, but why do others have to shove it in our faces?"		
"So, who's the man in the relationship?"		
"You don't look Jewish!"		
"That's ghetto."		