

## RESPONDING TO MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BIAS

(Can be used alone or in combination)

- **STAY STOP.**
  - “Just stop. It’s not funny.”
  - “Come on. Cut it out.”
- **RESTATE OR PARAPHRASE.**
  - “I think I heard you saying \_\_\_\_\_ (paraphrase their comments.) Is that correct?”
- **ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OR FOR MORE INFORMATION.**
  - “Could you say more about what you mean by that?”
  - “I’m wondering how you’ve come to think that.”
- **SEPARATE INTENT FROM IMPACT.**
  - “You probably didn’t realize this, but when you \_\_\_\_\_ (comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because \_\_\_\_\_. Instead, you could \_\_\_\_\_ (different language/behavior).”
- **SHARE YOUR OWN PROCESS.**
  - “I noticed that you \_\_\_\_\_ (comment/behavior). I used to say/do that too, but then I learned \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS.**
  - “When you \_\_\_\_\_ (comment/behavior), I felt \_\_\_\_\_ (feeling), and I would like you to \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **CHALLENGE THE STEREOTYPE.** Give information, share your own experience and/or offer alternative perspectives.
  - “In my experience \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - “I think that’s a stereotype. I’ve learned that \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - Another way to look at it is \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **APPEAL TO VALUES AND PRINCIPLES**
  - “I know you really care about \_\_\_\_\_. Acting in this way undermines whose intentions.”

(Responding to Microaggressions and Bias cont.)

- **PROMOTE EMPATHY.** Ask how they would feel if someone said something like that about their group, or their friend/partner/child.
  - “I know you don’t like the stereotypes about \_\_\_\_\_ (their group), how do you think he feels when he hears those things about his group?”
  - “How would you feel if someone said that about/did that to your sister/friend/girlfriend?”
  
- **TELL THEM THEY ARE TOO SMART OR TOO GOOD TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.**
  - “Come on. You’re too smart to say something so ignorant/offensive.”
  
- **MIRROR.** Repeat what they just said or did.
  - “Where are YOU really from?”
  - “Can I touch YOUR hair?”
  
- **USE HUMOR.** Exaggerate the comment, use gentle sarcasm.
  - “She plays like a girl? You mean like Serena Williams?”
  
- **POINT OUT WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON WITH THE OTHER PERSON.**
  - “I’m tired of hearing your Muslim jokes. Do you know they’re also studying \_\_\_\_\_ and like to \_\_\_\_\_? You may want to talk with them about that. You actually have a lot in common.”
  
- **W.I.I.F.T (What’s in it for them.)** Explain why diversity or that individual/group can be helpful/valuable.
  - “I know you’re uncomfortable with \_\_\_\_\_ but they can help us better reach out/serve other groups in the community.
  - “We are going to have to work with all sorts of people, so we might as well learn how to do it here.”
  
- **REMIND THEM OF THE RULES OR POLICIES.**
  - That behavior is against our code of conduct and could really get you in trouble.”

Adapted from: Goodman, D. (2011). *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) New York: Routledge.

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