DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TRAINING: ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS, MICROAGGRESSIONS AND MORE

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Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

~Dr. Derald W. Sue
CHARACTERISTICS

(DR. DERALD W. SUE)

- Every day actions that occur all around us
- By people who believe they are fair-minded, without prejudice
- Possibly, without any conscious intent or malice
- Usually unaware of how their comment, tone, or behavior negatively impact others
CHARACTERISTICS
(DR. DERALD W. SUE)

- May be considered “no big deal”

- Few recognize the cumulative, enduring impact of constant barrage of microaggressions

- Some may not even recognize they experienced a microaggression until later
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Micro-Assaults</th>
<th>Name calling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jokes that are racist/sexist...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not being served in setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micro-Insults</td>
<td>Talking slowly or loudly to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>someone with an accent.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Displaying a confederate flag.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Where are you REALLY from?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Asking a same gender couple</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“who the ‘man’ or ‘woman’ is in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the relationship”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micro-Invalidations</td>
<td>I’m colorblind.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I don’t think you’re bisexual, I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>think it’s just a phase.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What’s your REAL name?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s just a joke, don’t be so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sensitive.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Maya Angelou
1928-2014
Think about a time when you either experienced a microaggression or heard/observed one in action.

- What feelings come up?
- Was this the first time you experienced something like this or was it familiar?
- What do you think the intent of the other person(s) in the situation?
- How did you process this if you did at all?
- What could be the messaging or cumulative impact of this situation on you or others?
There is a cumulative & enduring impact of constant barrage of microaggressions

- What are you
- I don't think of you as
- You're not like other...
- Where are you really from?
- You speak English well!
- What are you
Why is it important to deepen capacity of staff, faculty, and student leaders and student workers to recognize and respond to microaggressions?
How have national, regional, and local events contributed to campus climate issues in your community?

What is the pulse of your community today?

What academic dates and deadlines are upcoming?

Where do you gather information about campus climate and/or current issues, needs, or concerns of your community?
MICROAGGRESSIONS PUSHBACK

- The language isn’t strong enough. It’s not as “micro” as people think.
- I’ve done these things and they aren’t that big of a deal.
- What about free speech or academic freedom?
- We are “coddling” our students and are not preparing them for the “real” world
- Isn’t this all just political correctness?
- What about microaggressions towards dominant communities?
CREATING BRAVE SPACES

- Cultivating the Environment
  - Expectations and Learning Agreements
- Everyone must know the goal and the process
- Experts on Your Campus
- Where Do These Spaces Exist
“**DIALOGUE** is a process of genuine interaction through which human beings LISTEN to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn. Each makes a serious effort to take other's concerns into their own picture, even when disagreement persists.

No participant gives up their identity, but each recognizes enough of the other's valid human claims that they will act differently toward the other.”

~ *Sustained Dialogue* materials, Hal Saunders
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disengagement</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Dictation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance only</td>
<td>Conceptual and/or conversational</td>
<td>Collaborative, towards a sense of community understanding</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>1 way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or inappropriate feedback</td>
<td>Presents ideas, often in a &quot;clean&quot; or &quot;sophisticated&quot; way</td>
<td>Re-evaluate and acknowledge assumptions and biases</td>
<td>Succeed or win, often by proving others' logic to be 'wrong'</td>
<td>No feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share information, seek 'neutral' conclusions</td>
<td>Bring out areas of ambivalence</td>
<td>Focus on 'right' &amp; 'wrong' through evidence</td>
<td>My way is THE way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only effort is directed away</td>
<td>Seek answers &amp; solutions</td>
<td>Look for shared meanings</td>
<td>Look for weakness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No follow up</td>
<td>Give answers, often in accordance with academic standards</td>
<td>Discover collective meaning; reexamine &amp; destabilize long held ideas</td>
<td>Search for flaws in others' logic; critique their position</td>
<td>Silence &amp; Obedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence ≠ Obedience</td>
<td>Listen to find places of disagreement or to gather rational pieces of an argument</td>
<td>Listens without judgement &amp; with a view to understand</td>
<td>Listen to form counterarguments</td>
<td>Listening = Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not listening = no conflict</td>
<td>Avoid areas of strong conflict and difference</td>
<td>Articulate areas of conflict and difference</td>
<td>Focus on conflict &amp; difference as an advantage</td>
<td>Only authority is in speaker. No external conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Polite&quot; relationship</td>
<td>Retain relationships</td>
<td>Build relationships</td>
<td>Disregard relationships</td>
<td>Subservient relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence = opportunity to physically leave</td>
<td>Avoid silence</td>
<td>Honor silence</td>
<td>Use silence to gain advantage</td>
<td>Silence only option for listener.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content: No energy</td>
<td>Content: Low energy</td>
<td>Content: High energy</td>
<td>Content: High energy</td>
<td>Content: High energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship: Polite energy</td>
<td>Relationship: Low energy</td>
<td>Relationship: High energy</td>
<td>Relationship: Low energy</td>
<td>Relationship: Minimal energy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dialogue

Discussion

Disengagement

Debate

Dictation
USING DIALOGUE

How can you infuse dialogue on your campus?

- Staff Meetings
- Campus Decision Making
- Classroom Settings
- Student Organizations
Campus Dialogue Groups
Day of Dialogue Events
Community Dialogue after Bias Incidents
Classroom Dialogues
Common Reading Groups
Decision Making Processes
INTENTIONAL DIALOGUES

- Seek to understand then be understood
- Moderated
- Have clear expectations and learning guidelines
- Must include diverse perspectives
  - Need folks from all walks of life, experiences, philosophies, identities, belief systems
- Infuse relevant and timely topics
- Have common purpose and outcomes important to all members in the group
IMPLICIT BIAS

What biases, assumptions, or stereotypes MIGHT be fueling some of these microaggressions and exclusionary situations?

Where do these biases come from?
“Implicit bias is bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment, and personal experiences.”
(Unconscious Bias & Higher Education, Equality Challenge Unit, 2013).

In contrast to explicit bias, whereby we are aware of our biases toward a group, implicit bias operates outside of our awareness: we don’t even know it is there.”
(Marsh, 2009, p. 17)
...like smog in the air. We don’t breathe it because we like it. We don't breathe it because we think it's good for us. We breathe it because it's the only air that's available.

We’re all breathing in misinformation. We’re all being exposed to stereotypes, and we all have to think about how we have been impacted by that...if we have all been breathing in smog, we can’t help but have our thinking shaped by it somehow.

~ Dr. Beverly Tatum (2003)
We may not have polluted the air, but we need to take responsibility, along with others, for cleaning it up.

Each of us needs to look at our own behavior. Am I perpetuating and reinforcing the negative messages so pervasive in our culture, or am I seeking to challenge them? If I have not been exposed to positive images of marginalized groups, am I seeking them out, expanding my own knowledge base for myself...

~ Dr. Beverly Tatum (2000)
Intent ≠ Impact
POTHOLES TO AVOID

- That wasn’t my intent/I didn’t mean it that way.
- I’m a good person...
- Defensiveness and Explaining Things Away
  ✦ The reason I said that was...
  ✦ You took that the wrong way...
- Tug-of-war: You started it! You made me....
- You’re too sensitive, over-reacting.
- Jumping to solutions
Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle.

~Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Inclusive of the entire community, faculty, staff, students

Ongoing, not just one thing at one time

Training to build capacity

Keep up to date on your campus climate, current issues, nationally, regionally, locally, and on your campus

Infuse the work into your campus culture

- Vision
- Mission
- Values
- Onboarding/Orientation
■ **Partnership** with the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity

■ **3 hour module** for students

■ Co-Facilitated by faculty, staff, or students who have undergone extensive training

■ Interactive, relevant, and changing curriculum

■ Flexible module for staff and faculty with pre-work assigned
Increase **capacity to recognize and engage** in dialogue across the breadth of differences;

**Deepen understanding** of how affiliations in privileged and marginalized groups impact treatment on campus, campus climate and productivity.

Deepen **awareness of types of microaggressions** and how they affect experiences on campus and in the local community.

Discover ways to **become a change agent** and diversity champion with new knowledge, ideas, and resources about university policies, programs, and best practices.
MICROAGGRESSIONS COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

- Collect microaggressions from students, faculty, and staff and create a list of 40-60 examples
- Have ten volunteers read one microaggression out loud to the group

- Note your thoughts and reactions
1. What are your reactions to reading these?

2. Each person share 3-4 microaggressions that got your attention or feel familiar.

3. What do you think could be the cumulative impact of these types of negative, exclusionary experiences?

* On **student persistence and success**?
* On **staff and faculty retention**, Morale, Productivity?
BARRIERS TO INTERVENTION

- Personal
- Relationships
- Organization/Structural
- Cultural
allies = action
When have you/someone else spoken up?

a) How did you feel?
b) What was the probable impact of your speaking up?
When have you/someone else did not speak up?

a) Why not? What were your thoughts/concerns?

b) What was the probable impact of your silence on others? On you?
A TIME YOU RESPONDED EFFECTIVELY

Stimulus  Action  Impact
Practice makes perfect
MICRO-AFFIRMATIONS

Apparently small acts, which are often ephemeral and hard-to-see, events that are public and private, often unconscious but very effective, which occur wherever people wish to help others to succeed (Rowe, 2008).
EXAMPLES OF MICRO-AFFIRMATIONS

- Marketing/Publicity of Events
- Listening and Validating
- Acknowledgement of Presence and Contribution
- Appreciation Both Public/Private
- Bystander Intervention/ADDRESS
- Paying Attention to Details
  - Timing of Events
  - Food Options
  - Location Accessibility
NOW IT’S TIME FOR SOME QUESTIONS...
QUESTIONS?

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