# Tools to Respond in the Moment

# ADDRESS It!

**Directions**:

Choose 1-2 examples of microaggressions and exclusionary situations. Write each one in the left-hand column. Then discuss and note how you could ADDRESS the situation in the other column.

**Consider as you discuss**:

* + - * What is the probable impact if **no one speaks up** in this situation?
      * What could be the **positive outcomes if someone does intervene** and speak up?
      * What could you do to ***ADDRESS\**** the situation?

**A** = Acknowledge (that something occurred)

**D** = Dialogue (in the moment or afterwards)

**D =** “Document” (tell someone; use the Bias Reporting System)

**R** = Redirect (the conversation)

**E** = Educate (the person)

**S** = Stop (the exclusionary behavior)

**S** = Support (the people impacted)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Microaggression, Exclusionary Situation** | ***WHAT COULD YOU DO?*** |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Developed by Naomi Sigg, Director of Office of Multicultural Affairs,   
Case Western University, 2015** [**nxs399@case.edu**](mailto:nxs399@case.edu)

# *PAIRS*: EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE SKILLS

P: PAN the environment and yourself; describe what you notice or engage others based on what you see (Pay Attention Now)

* I’m noticing I’m feeling...anyone else?
* I noticed how quiet everyone got; I’m wondering what is going on for folks?
* It seems some people were impacted by that statement, am I right?
* I’m noticing you’re speaking with a lot of energy and emotion…
* I’m noticing that people get interrupted as they try to share...
* You seemed to have a reaction to what I just said...

A: ASK about the specifics behind the person’s comment or behavior

* Could you say more about that…Tell me more...
* Can you give us an example of what you’re saying…?
* Help me understand what you meant by that?
* What were you hoping to communicate with that comment?
* Can you help me understand what your intent was when you said/did...?
* Can you give me some background on this situation...?
* How were you impacted when...? What were you feeling when...?

I: INTERRUPT the dynamics

* Let’s slow down the conversation and talk about what just happened…
* I’m going to interrupt and try a different approach to this conversation…
* We are not engaging according to our group norms.
* Let’s take a breath…

R: RELATE to the person or their comment/behavior

* I relate to what you’re saying, I \_\_\_\_\_.... I have felt the same way...
* I remember a time when I... I did the exact same thing...
* How do others relate to that comment?
* What you’re saying seems to relate to what so-and-so just said…

S: SHARE about yourself ~ self-disclose with a story or example; your feelings in the moment; the impact of a comment or behavior, etc.

* When I hear you say that I think/feel...
* Just last week I... I remember when I...
* I was socialized to believe...
* I’m beginning to feel \_\_\_\_...
* My heart aches as you tell that story...
* I notice I’m feeling a little triggered...

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Engaging Skills | Examples/Descriptions |
| **Ask the person for more information ~ seek to understand** | * Can you tell me more? * Can you give me an example? * Can you give me some background on this situation? * What do you mean when you say \_\_\_? * Help me understand what you disagree with…find frustrating… * Help me understand how you came to that conclusion? * What were you feeling when…? * What’s your perspective? * What led you to that conclusion? |
| Paraphrase the person’s comments | * So, you’re saying that... * So, you feel that... * So, you think that… * Are you saying that…? * So from your perspective… |
| **Explore their INTENT** | * Help me understand your intent when you… * What had you wanted to communicate with your comment? * What was your intended outcome? * What is underneath your comment/question? |
| TRACK/PAN the person’s body language, tone, and comments | * I notice you had a reaction to what I just said... * I don’t believe she was finished with her comment… * I notice you just got very quiet...looked away…shook your head… * I’m noticing your tone of voice… * I’m noticing your body language… |
| **Explore the IMPACT on them** | * It seems my behavior had an impact on you... * How did that impact you? * What were you feeling when… |
| **Acknowledge and validate their points as much as possible** | * I hear that you feel... * I can see that from your perspective you think… * I’d probably feel \_\_\_\_, too... |
| **Explore possible solutions** | * What do you think we can do? * What do you see as the next steps? * One thought could be to…what do you think? * Might it be possible to… I wonder if X might be useful…. |
| **State your desired outcome** | * This is what I suggest we do… * I want to…I need… |
| **Summarize the dialogue** | * Summarize the dialogue without stating opinions or judging the dialogue. * So we’ve discussed...we agreed to… |

# Four (4) Types of Panning Responses

1. **Redirect:   
   Refocus the group without any reference to the current group dynamics**

* I’d like to move on to the next agenda item.
* Getting back to what we were talking about…

1. **Indirect:   
   A more vague, general comment to refocus the group on the topic and effective group dynamics.**

Pose possibilities**:**

* It might be useful…
* I'd suggest we consider…
* One way to proceed could be…
* It may be more productive right now to…

1. **Direct:   
   Acknowledge the current situation, and/or the uninclusive or disrespectful dynamic**

State your thought or opinion:

* I think that… I need…
* I believe it's important that…

Share your observation directly:

* I noticed that every time we start to talk about our team dynamics, someone shifts the conversation away from the topic.
* I’m noticing that the only time we talk about our group effectiveness is when I bring it up.
* I’ve noticed that when we started to discuss our dynamics, a number of folks look down, start writing notes…I’m curious what others have noticed? And what is going on for folks?

1. **Connect:   
   Invite others to connect to what you are saying, and share what they notice**

* Anyone connect to what I am saying?
* I’m curious what others are noticing?

# Dig into Your Roots: What’s Fueling Your Behavior?

**When you notice or are confronted about your racist actions, ask yourself**:

1. What were the racist biases fueling my actions or inactions?
2. When and how were these taught and reinforced around me?
3. If the person had been white, how might I have reacted? How have I treated whites in similar situations?
4. When have I done or thought this before?
5. How can I interrupt this racist pattern in the future?

# 

## Interrupt & Shift Our Racist Internalized Dominance

**When we notice we have a racist thought, we need to ask ourselves:**

1. **Is it true?** Really true? (Adapted from Byron Katie, *The Work*)
2. What is my **evidence** that this is more true for People of Color than white people?
3. When **white people exhibit the same behavior,** how do I make meaning of that?
4. **Who does it serve** for me to think this thought right now?
5. What is **my pay-off** for having and maintaining this racist thought?

**To be more effective, more of the time:**

**Respond in ways that…**

* Interrupt racist dynamics,
* Engage others to reflect on the impact and intentions of their racist actions,
* Educate why the comment, behavior or policy has a racist impact, and
* Build connections and relationships with white people for further dialogue, learning, and organizational change

**What can we do when we are confronted about our racist impact?**

* Breathe; choose to listen deeply, learn & own your part
* I apologize for my impact…
* Are you open to saying more about the impact of my behavior?
* So, when I …. (share back what you understood)
* I regret my impact on you…. What I did/said...
* I commit to learning more…. changing my behavior in the future….
* If there is ever more you want to share with me, I am open to listening….

# Steps to Engage in Difficult Dialogues

**1. Get grounded in more productive intentions ~ The DESTINATION:**

* + Create a teachable moment
  + Stir cognitive dissonance
  + Demonstrate respect and dignity
  + Leave them feeling whole…
  + Plant seeds…Influence hearts and minds…
  + Help person(s) explore the impact of their behavior, understand the reasons their behavior has a negative impact on others/building an inclusive community
  + Re-establish the boundaries for civil discourse
  + Do no harm!
  + Make a human connection; build the relationship for future dialogue
  + Support those impacted by the comments/actions

**P.A.I.R.S. ~ Skills to Engage**

**P: PAN/observe the environment, yourself   
 ~ as data to diagnose; name your pan/observation as an intervention**

**A: ASK questions to explore**

**I: INTERRUPTthe process**

**R: RELATE to others, their comments**

**S: SHARE, use self-disclosure as your response**

**2. Based on what you PAN, engage others in the conversation**

* + I noticed that…. I overheard your conversation and thought I heard you say….
  + I notice that folks were laughing…I’m curious what that’s about?
  + I noticed how quiet everyone just got...I’m wondering what is going on for folks?
  + It seems some people were impacted by that statement.
  + I’m noticing you’re speaking with a lot of energy and emotion…
  + We’ve had some comments from this side of the room, what are other thoughts and reactions? (looking at the other side of the room)
  + I’m wondering if people are feeling triggered right now.
  + The energy in the discussion seemed to shift after…

**3. A: ASK about the specifics behind the person’s comment or behavior**

* + Gives you time to center, better understand the comment, choose a response
  + May help the person hear themselves and reflect on what they said, the impact…

**4. A: ASK clarifying questions**

* + I want to make sure I understand your point…you think that…
  + Are you saying that \_\_\_\_?
  + Help me understand what you meant by that?
  + I don’t understand your point…
  + What do you mean when you say \_\_\_\_?
  + Come again? Or Can you repeat that?

**5. A: ASK questions to gather more information**

* + Could you say more about that…Tell me more...
  + Can you give us an example of what you’re saying?
  + Help me understand what you disagree with…find frustrating…
  + Help me understand how you got to that conclusion?
  + What has been your experience that led you to that conclusion?
  + What readings or research are you referencing?

**6. A: ASK questions to get them to reflect on their comment**

* + When was the first time you heard that?
  + How do you think others could be impacted by your comment? Behavior?
  + Why might others disagree with your comment?
  + What if I gave you a convincing argument and data that was counter to your perspective? What might that mean for you?
  + How do you think others will view you when you make similar comments?

**7. A: ASK questions to explore their intention**

* + What were you hoping to communicate with that comment?
  + Help me understand your intent when you said...
  + What did you mean to say with that comment?
  + What is underneath your comment/question?

**8. I: INTERRUPT the process and give space to process**

* + Let’s slow down the conversation and talk about what just happened…
  + I’m going to interrupt and try a different approach to this conversation…
  + We are not engaging according to our group norms.
  + Let’s take a breath…
  + That comment has no place here…
  + Can we take an equity pause?

**9. R: RELATE to the person who made the comment, reflect:**

* + How are you just like this person? Were just like them? (search in other categories of difference)
  + When have you said or done something similarly?
  + When might you say or do something like this in the future?

**10. R: RELATE to the person or their comment/behavior**

* + I relate to what you’re saying, I…
  + I have felt the same way...
  + I remember a time when I...
  + I did the exact same thing...
  + How do others relate to that comment?
  + Who can relate?
  + What you’re saying seems to relate to what so-and-so just said…

**11. S: SHARE: “Put a Face on the Issue”**

* + Share a personal example or one you have heard from a credible source
  + Invite others to share personal examples and stories ~ verbally; in writing
  + Offer to share resources, articles so they can review different perspectives
  + Offer to meet with them and talk about your life experiences inside and outside the organization
  + Ask them to talk with 2-3 other people in the near future to hear their experiences and stories

**12. S: SHARE: Share about yourself ~ self-disclose with a story or example; your feelings in the moment; the impact of a comment or behavior, etc.**

* + My heart aches as you tell that story…
  + As a \_\_\_, I… (tell a story, give an example)
  + I’d like to share the impact of your comment...
  + I’m feeling uncomfortable with what you’re saying…
  + I’m noticing I’m feeling\_\_\_, anyone else?
  + I notice I feel triggered right now....
  + That’s a trigger word/phrase for me...
  + I need to stop a moment and talk about what just happened. I…

**13. Give the “benefit of the doubt” if you directly confront their comment  
 ~ a face-saving tactic**

* + I trust/know you didn’t intend this…
  + You’re probably not aware of the impact of your comment…

**Further Resources**

Obear, K. H. (2013). Navigating triggering events: Critical competencies for social justice educators. In L. M. Landreman (Ed.), *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators*. Stylus.

Obear, K. (2016). *Turn the Tide: Rise Above Toxic, Difficult Situations in the Workplace*, Difference Press.

# Helpful Tactics

1. Gather more information

* Help me understand more about what you mean?
* I’m curious when you first heard that term or phrase?

2. Clarify what you “heard”

* I want to make sure I understand your point…you think that…
* Are you saying that \_\_\_?
* So, you feel…
* You believe that…

3. Ask the person to walk you through their thought process so you can better understand how they came to their assumptions and conclusions

* Can you help me understand how you came to that conclusion?
* What has been your experience that led you to that conclusion?
* What assumptions are underneath your conclusion?

4. Focus the discussion on the PROCESS of the discussion

* I noticed that we tend to spend more time talking about these issues, and far less time talking about these other ones…
* I’m noticing that the only time we talk about \_\_\_ is when I bring it up…
* It seems that whenever we start talking about \_\_\_, someone changes the topic back to something else.
* I’ve noticed that when we are discussing \_\_\_\_, a number of folks look down, start writing notes…I’m curious what others have noticed?

5. Name the group’s process or dynamic and shift the focus to be more inclusive

* We’ve talked about how this policy could impact People of Color and white women…. I’m wondering how it may impact LGBTQA+ employees across gender and race?
* I’m noticing that whenever we talk about race, a white person turns and asks a question of one of the People of Color. I’d like to hear from some of the white people in the room: What do you notice that white people, as a group, tend to say, do, and feel around issues of race in the workplace?
* This has been a great discussion about the chilly climate for People of Color. I don’t want to move off this too soon, and I also want to make sure we have time to have a similar conversation related to dynamics of age, hierarchy, and length of service in the organization...

6. Give the “benefit of the doubt”

* You probably already thought of this… You probably noticed that…
* An unintended outcome of that idea could be that…
* I know you didn’t intend this, but when you have a side conversation while I’m speaking….

7. If you think someone misunderstood or is misrepresenting what you said

* I believe I said something different than that...What I said was…

8. Recognize comments and behaviors that help create greater inclusion before you give further feedback

* I appreciate the several best practices you’ve gathered for us to review, and I was wondering if there also were some that more specifically address…
* I appreciate your working to be inclusive in your language…and I understand the term “LGBTQA+” to be more inclusive and current than “homosexuals”

9. Acknowledge the accumulative impact of what you are experiencing

* I know I’m having a strong reaction to what you said….and this is only one of many times I have heard similar comments recently…. OR, and, as you know, this seems to be a pattern we keep running into that creates an obstacle…

**10. Ask questions to raise their awareness**

* When did you decide/choose to be heterosexual?
* What are some of the ways that Christianity is embedded in the way we interact, and in the policies and practices of our nation? Organization?

**11. Invite others to get engaged in the dialogue**

* I’m curious what others are thinking? What other ideas do people have?
* Name your reaction and test to see where others are: I’m feeling unsettled about this possibility, is anyone else?
* Ask if others feel differently than what is being proposed: This is one way we could proceed. Does anyone have a different suggestion?
* Ask others to take the "pulse" of the situation and reflect on the process: I’m curious what people are noticing about our group dynamics?
* Ask if others have heard and experienced the situation as you did: That scene in the video hit me as Islamaphobic…What do others think?

**12. How to Confront Repeated Inappropriate Behaviors…1st, 2nd, 3rd time…**

1st time:

* Describe the behavior you observed
* State what you want to be different

\* I’d appreciate it if you’d…

2nd time:

* Describe the behavior: I believe this is the 2nd time we’ve talked about this…This is the IMPACT when you do that…. I need you to change your behavior ….

3rd time:

* Give clear consequences if they continue this behavior: This is the 3rd time I’ve asked you to…
* If you do this again…

**13. Questions to explore possible and unintended (hopefully) exclusionary practices and attitudes in planning and decision-making discussions:**

* Do we have the full breadth of social identity groups and perspectives at the table? Involved in the process?
* Does our process seriously consider the input and perspectives of a broad range of group memberships?
* How might our unconscious attitudes and assumptions about \_\_\_\_ be playing out in this decision?
* What could be the impact of this on leaders and staff from various and multiple privileged and marginalized groups?
* How might this inadvertently advantage some and disadvantage others?
* How can we make this inclusive for members of various and multiple group memberships?

**14. Diagnosing Privileged and Marginalized Group Dynamics**

Use the following prompts to diagnose the potential privileged and marginalized group dynamics as you analyze a recent situation, case study, etc.

1. What are the various group memberships of the people involved, and which privileged and marginalized group memberships seem central to this situation?

2. What are the probable perspectives and feelings of each party?

3. How might unconscious attitudes, assumptions, and biases be playing out in this situation?

4. What are the possible privileged and marginalized group behaviors and dynamics in the situation?

5. What organizational issues are relevant in this situation, such as formal and informal policies, norms, procedures, organizational practices, etc.

6. What are the probable outcomes if this situation is left unaddressed? For members of marginalized groups? Members of privileged groups? For the team? For the organization?

7. Given your diagnosis, what and/or who should be the focus of a response and why?

8. What might be some effective ways to respond? And by whom?

**15. Different Communication Styles**

**a. Direct**

* I think that…I need…
* It's important that…. We need to…

**b. Pose possibilities**

* It might be useful…
* I'd suggest we consider…
* One way to proceed could be….
* A dilemma I see is…
* I wonder about…

**c. Competing style**

* State your thought or opinion right after another person, with no connection to their comment
* I think…Well I think…. My idea is to…this is how we should proceed…

**d. Debating style**

* Reference the other person's ideas in order to negate them or disagree with them

**e. Connecting style**

* Acknowledge what was said by others
* Connect your comment to theirs
* Build on what has been said, i.e., Connected to what you're saying; Building on that thought; Similar to what she said, I think; I like your idea and another way to go about this is…

**f. Engaging style**

* If a direct statement is made, ask a question to gather more information, deepen understanding, gain time to respond…
* Tell me more…
* Can you give me an example?
* What's your intended outcome? Your intent behind that?
* How might that impact others?
* What's your thinking behind how that helps us meet our goal?

**16. Continuum for how to engage others:**

* **Redirect**: Refocus group on topic/task without any reference to current group dynamics
* **Indirect**: A more vague, general comment to refocus group on topic and effective group dynamics
* **Direct**: Acknowledge the current situation, and/or the uninclusive or disrespectful dynamic

# How to be an Ally: Things to Keep in Mind

**A. The following behaviors may negatively impact the quality of the discussion:**

Conversation stoppers

* Interrupting, speaking over each other
* Mostly using a telling and directive style
* Giving too much advice without asking questions to help others come up with their own solutions
* Pushing your point; insisting others do things your way
* Avoiding giving constructive feedback or using vague generalizations
* Overly critical focus on what they did wrong, what needs to change
* Always jumping right into task mode, without spending time developing and deepening relationships
* Assuming responsibility for the others’ situations and trying to fix it for them
* Inappropriate jokes, gossip or stereotypic comments
* Making assumptions based on social group memberships, including gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion/spirituality/ways of knowing, age, sexual orientation, nationality, im/migration status, educational background, disability status, veteran status, etc.

**Common Dialogue Pitfalls/Traps** (Adapted from materials developed by EYCA Associates)

1. Perfectly Logical Explanations (PLEs)

2. Yea, but….

3. That happens to me/my group, too….

4. I know someone who…and they don’t agree with you….

5. I don’t see it that way; therefore, it doesn’t really happen….

6. That doesn’t happen to me... (so it doesn’t exist)

7. Don’t you think that…

8. You’re overreacting…you’re too sensitive…

9. He/she’s a good person…they never meant to do that….

10. That was not my intent! You misunderstood me!

**B. Be Aware of Cumulative Impact**

This concept occurs when a marginalized group member experiences repeated negative oppressive incidents, either in a short period of time or over a long period. Their feelings of anger, fear, distrust, frustration, etc., may build up and then POP for a number of reasons, including:

* It is not safe for them to challenge the people who treated them negatively
* They are tired of intervening and trying to educate others

An ally understands that many marginalized group members may be carrying the cumulative impact of a long series of negative treatment. If they seem irritated or unusually upset, the ally tries to not take it personally, but instead, tries to offer support to the marginalized group member by:

* Acknowledging the degree of feelings the marginalized group member is experiencing
* Offering to listen to stories of how the person has been negatively treated (without interrupting, arguing, justifying, or trying to “give advice” and “fix it”)
* Asking if there is anything they can do to be supportive

**C. Recognize Intent AND Impact**

When a member of a privileged group says/does something hurtful or inappropriate, their tendency is to want to EXPLAIN their INTENT (I didn’t mean it! It was just a joke! I didn’t do it on purpose...). However, the pain and hurt, the IMPACT, is still very real to the marginalized group members.

An ALLY first acknowledges their impact, apologizes, and asks to hear more about how they have negatively impacted the marginalized group member. And then asks how they can help, be supportive, make amends, avoid similar transgressions in the future, etc.

**D. Recognize Varying Levels of Differential Risk and Credibility**

It is important that all people, marginalized and privileged group members, work to intervene and stop oppression wherever they see it. AND privileged group members are generally given more credibility, listened to more seriously, and have fewer risks when they intervene, as compared to members of marginalized groups.

An ally consistently recognizes opportunities to speak up and intervene, knowing that it is their responsibility to take action, regardless of the risks involved.

**E. Recognize and Use your Discretionary Power**

All people have some personal power, and possibly positional power from which to speak up and intervene. They have the discretion/the choice of when or how or if to intervene. Privileged group members tend to have MORE discretionary power, given how often they are in positions of authority, and because of the greater credibility and positionality they have in society.

**F. Distinguishing Behavior**

Most privileged group members will be perceived as “just another man...white…administrator” UNTIL they show THROUGH THEIR ACTIONS that they are actively working as an ally to create greater equity and inclusion. When privileged group members speak up and intervene, they DISTINGUISH themselves from the overall privileged group who generally both consciously and unconsciously perpetuate oppressive dynamics and structures.

**G. Intervening in Oppressive Situations**

Allies take the initiative to try to STOP inappropriate behaviors and situations. They then look for ways to EDUCATE the person(s) who made the comment/took the action, in hopes that they may learn why what they did was harmful and to not repeat it in the future. Allies also offer SUPPORT to the target of the negative treatment when possible.

**Adapted from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates**

# Tools and Tips: Responding in Cross-Cultural Conflicts

**A. Responding to Common Dialogue Blockers**

**1. Perfectly Logical Explanations (PLEs)**

* That may be true, but here’s how I see it.... or another way to view it...
* There may be a number of factors that contributed to this situation. Another one that does have to do with equity and inclusion might be......
* When you say that, I feel you’re discounting my experience. In that situation I felt...
* You could be right that this one specific time it had nothing to do with prejudice. But it feels so similar to so many other times in my experience when I have been treated negatively/experienced discrimination...it’s hard to not assume this is just like all those other times....
* Your opinion that this has nothing to do with prejudice could be true...But what would it mean if my perception was true: that this person reacted to me out of their bias and stereotypes?

**2. Yea, but…**

* What do you think the impact on me is when you say that?
* You may not have intended this, but when you give a “YEA, BUT” I feel discounted and that you have dismissed my perspective and experience.
* I’m curious what you were hoping to communicate with that statement?
* Honestly, I’m rather upset about what happened. And I can’t hear your perspective right now. What I need is for someone to just listen to me and acknowledge what I experienced and am feeling....
* I’m curious why you chose to give me a “Yea, But” just then?

**3. That happens to me/my group, too….**

* This dynamic/situation does happen to other groups, too. The difference might be HOW OFTEN how often it happens to them, and WHY it happens to them. For instance: most white people have received bad customer service. It rarely happens to them because someone has prejudice towards them because of their race. And it probably doesn’t happen to them as frequently.
* How does it feel when it happens to you? How often does that happen? Why does it happen to you? So you have a “window of understanding” to connect to what I and my group experience much of the time.

**4. I know someone who…and they don’t agree with you…**

* There might be some people who don’t see this as I do. That doesn’t discount my experience or perception.
* Not all \_\_\_\_ may feel like I do. And, unfortunately, there are many around here that do agree with me and have had very similar experiences. Are you open to hearing more about my experiences?

**5. I don’t see it that way... (therefore, it doesn’t really happen….)**

* You might not have ever recognized this dynamic before or seen it happen. There was a time I didn’t see it this way, either. But after having it happen SO MANY times and when I can’t find any other explanation, that I now believe that there most often is some prejudice underneath this type of reaction....

**6. That doesn’t happen to me... (so it doesn’t exist)**

* + - I’m glad and hopeful that it doesn’t. And hope you never do experience this. And this is what happened to me, and I’ve heard many other folks describe all too similar experiences....
    - It might not or you may not notice it happening to you.... but here’s what I’ve experienced and noticed in my life....

**7. Don’t you think that…**

* + - I’m wondering if you have a statement behind your question....
    - Do you have a specific example that illustrates what you’re trying to ask or say?
    - I’m curious what you think about that....

**8. You’re overreacting…you’re too sensitive…**

* + - You may not agree, but I feel very strongly about this. And I would appreciate your respecting me enough to at least acknowledge my perspective.
    - When you say that, I want to end the conversation and would probably never talk to you about these serious issues again.
    - Your intent might be to try to help or support me, but the impact of that statement is infuriating.

**9. He/she’s a good person…they never meant to do that….**

* + - That comment just dismissed and discounted my experience.
    - Many “good people” do very inappropriate and harmful things.
    - Regardless of the intent, this was the impact of their actions....
    - I’m not questioning if they’re good or bad, I’m talking about the impact of their actions.

**10. That was not my intent! You misunderstood me!**

* + - I’m open to hearing your intent, but I’d first appreciate your acknowledging the impact of your comment/actions....
    - What was your intent.... I hear your intent was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and I hope you can also realize the impact was different than what you intended.

**11. That had nothing to do with \_\_\_\_\_ (an “ism”)!! It’s just their personality!**

* + - That may be what you believe, and I have observed/experienced this type of situation so many times...and I have tracked an equity cut to this... Here’s the way I see it...

**B. Responding When Someone is Triggered**

* + - I’m noticing you’re speaking with a lot of energy and emotion…
    - I’m wondering if you’re feeling triggered right now.
    - This response is unusual for you…. I’m wondering what else is going on for you.
    - I’m wondering if something else is going on or did something happen that’s related to why you’re feeling this way?
    - You’re raising issues I want to talk about and I’m also noticing that the depth of your emotions seems somewhat out of proportion to this situation…
    - I notice I’m feeling a little triggered, and I wonder if you are, too?
    - I think we’re both a bit triggered right now….
    - I want to talk about this further and I can hear you better when you’re not so triggered. What if we take a break and then come back to talk about this?

**C. Responding When Someone is Reacting out of Cumulative Impact**

* + - Obviously, I’ve said/done something to trigger you. What’s going on?
    - I can see you have a strong reaction to this. What happened?
    - My guess is this is:
      * an example of what has happened to you a lot in the past....
      * what happens to you all the time...
      * not the first time something like this has happened...
    - I’m open to hearing what happened if you want to talk....
    - Is there anything I can do to be supportive of you?

**D. Responding When *Your* Comment/Action Has Had a Negative Impact   
 on Someone Else**

* + - It seems what I said had an impact on you. I’m open to hearing it.
    - I want to apologize for what I said/did.... I was wrong...and I’m open to hearing how I’ve impacted you....
    - Thank you for letting me know this. It is my intention to change my behavior in the future...
    - Is there anything I can do to make amends?

**E. Responding When You Feel Triggered**

* + - I notice I feel triggered right now....
    - That’s a hot button word/phrase for me...
    - I need to take a break and come back to this later....
    - I need to stop a moment and talk about what just happened. I’m feeling reactivated and this is why....
    - This may have more to do with me than you, but I’m feeling triggered by what you just said....

**Adapted in part from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates**