

Creating Inclusive Campus Environments: Addressing Incivility and Microaggressions

Facilitated by:

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Learning Guidelines

1. ENGAGE IN OPEN AND HONEST DIALOGUE
2. PARTICIPATE FULLY (@ COMFORT LEVEL +1)
3. SPEAK FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
4. LISTEN RESPECTFULLY; SEEK TO UNDERSTAND; LISTEN HARDER WHEN YOU INITIALLY DISAGREE
5. MOVE IN, MOVE OUT; ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE
6. BE FULLY PRESENT
7. BE OPEN TO NEW AND DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES
8. ASSUME GOOD INTENT; EXPLORE THE UNINTENDED IMPACT OF COMMENTS AND BEHAVIORS
9. TAKE RISKS: LEAN INTO DISCOMFORT; BE BRAVE
10. RESPECT AND MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY
11. NOTICE AND SHARE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE GROUP, IN YOU
12. RECOGNIZE YOUR TRIGGERS; SHARE IF YOU FEEL TRIGGERED
13. TRUST THAT THROUGH DIALOGUE WE WILL REACH DEEPER LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING
14. ENGAGE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

Classroom & Meeting Guidelines ~ Your Intentions

*To create a meeting environment where all members feel heard, involved, supported, and respected

*To create a productive and engaging meeting environment for the open and respectful exchange of ideas, perspectives, and opinions

*To promote respectful dialogue, fair discussion of issues, and mutually respectful conversations

- Engage in respectful discourse
- Create a positive, collegial atmosphere
- Demonstrate mutual respect for the comments and views of all
- Consider and explore new ideas and perspectives
- Express opposing ideas in a respectful manner
- Consider the potential impact of your comments and actions
- Accept responsibility for the overall welfare of the entire group
- Engage in respectful disagreement: Argue passionately about issues without personalizing it to the person
- Respectfully address unproductive and exclusionary behaviors from other group members

Common Unproductive Reactions During Difficult, Triggering Situations

Fight Responses

- Aggressively argues and debates
- Raises their voice, yells
- Tries to silence others
- Tries to compete, win at any cost
- Interrupts
- Self-righteous, arrogant, or condescending behaviors
- Controlling, manipulative behaviors
- Intimidating, threatening behaviors
- Forces change
- Aggressively attacks and berates
- Dismisses or minimizes the comments of others
- Explodes and directs their feelings onto others
- Sarcastic or off-handed remarks
- Belittling comments
- Intentionally tries to embarrass others
- Criticizes or accuses with the intent to humiliate and shame
- Bullies others into submission
- Turns their words against them

Flight responses

- Gets defensive
- Becomes overly guarded
- Withdraws
- Ignores or avoids issues
- Tries to smooth over conflict
- Placating to keep things under control
- Minimizes, downplays the issues or conflict
- Shuts down
- Disengages
- Uses humor and jokes to distract and smooth things over
- Quickly changes the subject
- Pretends to agree to avoid conflict
- Uses crying to distract and not engage

Freeze responses

- Blanks out, forget what wanted to say or do
- Zones out
- Feels frozen, like they can't move
- Doesn't respond or interrupt exclusionary comments and actions
- Overly anxious and scared

Flounder Responses

- Giving contradictory comments/examples
- Stream of consciousness, blabbering
- Off on tangents; way off topic
- Can't decide: maybe this or maybe that
- Out of your body, still talking

*Increase your awareness of what is happening inside of you and around you
by using the skill:*

PANNING

Just as a movie camera “pans” the environment to see the whole picture, we need to continuously **PAN** all around us and inside of us as we increase our ability to notice the patterns of treatment and experiences of members of both privileged and marginalized groups.

Some guidelines for using the skill of PANNING:

PAN:

PAY

ATTENTION

Now

- Intentionally observe and notice behaviors, comments, feelings, patterns of treatment...
- Wonder: Is this an isolated incident or a possible pattern of experience?

*****AVOID falling into the trap of making a *SNAP JUDGMENT* ~
creating a “story” about what you see.**

- **PAN** the specific details and facts of what you see, feel, hear...
- Describe what you **PAN** without any assumptions, interpretations, conclusions, or prejudgments
- Notice the group memberships of people involved as you **PAN**, and describe the group memberships ***if this information is useful to the discussion...***

Adapted from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates, Inc. 1994 Delyte Frost, et al. Tracking™

Panning Group Dynamics with an Inclusion Lens

Observers ~ Use the following prompts as you use an Inclusion Lens to observe and track/pan group dynamics:

1. What differences are present in the group? Which group memberships? and how many from various groups?
2. Who is talking?
3. Who initiates the topics?
4. Whose ideas get discussed in-depth? Whose ideas don't get much discussion and/or are discounted?
5. Who is quiet? Doesn't speak as often as others?
6. Who interrupts others? Who gets interrupted?
7. How much air time do people take?
8. Who do people look at when they are talking?
9. Who has eye contact with whom while others are talking?
10. Who engages in side conversations?
11. How do decisions get made?
12. Who brings up issues of inclusion and diversity?
13. How do people respond when different issues of inclusion are raised?
14. As you notice interpersonal dynamics that are not inclusive, wonder: Is this an isolated incident or a possible pattern of experience?
15. What issues of inclusion are not being discussed?
- 16.
- 17.

Privileged and Marginalized Group Patterns

Privileged Groups

- Greater access to power and resources
- Make the Rules
- Define what is normal, “right,” the “Truth”
- Assumed to be leader, smarter, competent...
- Given the benefit of the doubt
- Often unaware of privileged group membership and privilege
- Less aware about uninclusive and discriminatory treatment of marginalized group
- Are more comfortable with members of marginalized groups who share similar behaviors, appearance, and values to them
- Hold to privileged group cultural beliefs, often without examination
- Collude, and if challenge, risk being ostracized/punished
- Focus on “how far we’ve come”

Marginalized Groups

- Less access to power and resources
- Often seen as less than, inferior, deficient...
- Often assimilate, collude, abide by the rules, try to fit in...
- Track the daily indignities they experience; very aware of oppression
- Punished if challenge the status quo
- Have their truth and experiences questioned and often invalidated
- Know more about members of privileged groups than privileged group members know about them
- Often struggle with finding a balance between who they are and who they are told they need to be to be “acceptable”
- Often struggle with finding their voice and speaking up to challenge
- Focus on “how far we need to go”

Key Concepts of Privileged/Marginalized Group Dynamics

- Not always about numbers
- Visible and Invisible; Innate and Chosen
- Multiple Group Memberships
- Not always about individual behaviors or feelings
- You didn’t ask for it and you can’t give it back

*Adapted from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates

PRIVILEGED GROUP		MARGINALIZED GROUP
Late 30's to 50's/early 60's	1. Age	Younger; Older
White	2. Race	Person of Color; People who identify as Biracial/Multiracial
Male	3. Sex	Female; Intersex
Cisgender	4. Gender Identity	Transgender; Gender Nonconforming; Gender Queer; Androgynous
President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Faculty, Supervisors	5. Hierarchical Level	Students, Graduate Teaching Assistants, direct service staff
Heterosexual	6. Sexual Orientation	Gay; Lesbian; Bisexual; Queer; Questioning
Upper class; Upper middle class; Middle class	7. Social Class	Working class; Living in poverty
Graduate or 4-year degree; highly valued school; private school	8. Educational Level; Credential; Certificate	High school degree; 1 st generation to college; less valued school; public school
Christian (Protestant; Catholic)	9. Religion/Spirituality	Muslim, Jewish, Agnostic, Hindu, Atheist, Buddhist, Spiritual, LDS, Jehovah Witness, Pagan, ...
U.S. born	10. National Origin	"Foreign born;" Born in a country other than the U.S.
Not disabled	11. Disability Status	People with a physical, mental, emotional and/or learning disability; People living with AIDS/HIV+
"American;" Western European heritage	12. Ethnicity/Culture	Puerto Rican; Navajo; Mexican; Nigerian; Chinese; Iranian; Russian; Jewish...
Fit society's image of attractive, beautiful, handsome, athletic...	13. Size, Appearance, Athleticism	Perceived by others as too fat, tall, short, unattractive, not athletic...
Proficient in the use of "Standard" English	14. English Literacy	Use of "non-standard" English dialects; have an "accent"
Legally married in a heterosexual relationship	15. Marital Status	Single; divorced; widowed; same sex partnership; unmarried heterosexual partnership...
Parent of children born within a 2-parent heterosexual marriage	16. Parental Status	Unmarried parent; do not have children; non-residential parent; LGBTQ parents...
More years on campus	17. Years of experience	New; little experience on campus
U.S. citizen	18. Immigration Status	People who do not have U.S. citizenship, are undocumented
Suburban; valued region of U.S.	19. Geographic region	Rural; some urban areas...less valued region
Light skin; European/Caucasian features	20. Skin color; phenotype	Darker skin; African, Asian, Aboriginal features...
Nuclear family with 2 parents in a heterosexual relationship	21. Family Status	Blended family; single-parent household; grandparents raising grandchildren; foster family...
Extrovert; task-oriented; analytical; linear thinker	22. Work Style	Introvert; process-oriented; creative; circular thinker

“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.”

Blog by Dr. Derald W. Sue, Microaggressions: More than Just Race - Can microaggressions be directed at women or gay people? Published on November 17, 2010

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race>

Microaggressions: Characteristics

- 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
- 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

Potential impact and emotional toll on members of marginalized groups

- Uncertainty – never knowing when they will experience another microaggression
- Constantly vigilant, always tracking their surroundings
- Self-doubt ~ given the ambiguous nature of some situations, some might obsess over questions like, “Am I over-reacting? Being too sensitive? Misinterpreting what just happened? Just being paranoid?”
- If they bring it up to the member of the privileged group, often met with denial, defensiveness; fear that this could hurt their relationship, career path
- Left feeling “I don't belong, I can't be successful here”
- May change their behavior in hopes that this may lessen their experiences of microaggressions; may come across as overly friendly, helpful, passive, soft-spoken, ingratiating....
- Feel pressure to “act right” or their actions could be used to reinforce stereotypes about their marginalized group; carry the group on their shoulders
- Damages the respect they may have for members of privileged groups; may not use them as resources in the future
- Often invest time and energy trying to diagnose what happened, manage the impact and feelings, decide if and how to respond
- If choose to “let it go,” may judge self as colluding; feel guilty for not stepping up

Unproductive Meeting Behaviors

- a. In the 1st column, check-off any unproductive behaviors which you have observed in meetings.
- b. Then in the 3rd column, check-off any of these behaviors that you have ever done.
- c. Look back over this list, and imagine what needs the person/you were attempting to fulfill with each of these behaviors. Write these unmet needs in the 4th column. Examples of needs: recognition, inclusion, understanding, clarity, safety, connection, mutuality, collaboration, acknowledgement, efficiency, honesty, respect, competence, trust, fun, make a difference, etc.

Others do this	Unproductive meeting behaviors, when someone:	I've done this	Unmet needs
	1. Makes inappropriate comments or "jokes"		
	2. Belittles the input or comments of others		
	3. Minimizes or rationalizes away the frustrations and comments of group members		
	4. Interrupts or talks over others		
	5. Engages in side conversations		
	6. Dominates the conversation		
	7. Makes snide or sarcastic comments		
	8. Only interacts and makes eye contact with people like them; people they like		
	9. Gives unsolicited "advice;" tell someone how they should have felt or responded differently		
	10. Dismisses or ignores the input of others		
	11. Disregards feedback from group members		
	12. Laughs at or makes fun of other group members		
	13. Treats peers with disrespect		
	14. Gives someone the "silent treatment" or "cold shoulder"		
	15. Uses a negative, judgmental tone		
	16. Uses an overly aggressive or forceful style		
	17. Refuses to participate in the discussion or the activity		
	18. Is silent, shut down or withdrawn		
	19. Challenges the validity of the information being presented to serve a personal agenda		
	20. Questions the usefulness of an activity or a discussion to serve a personal agenda		
	21. Gives excuses or PLEs (Perfectly Logical Explanations) for disrespectful comments and behaviors		

	22. Raises their voice to try to silence others		
	23. Emphasizes “good intent” and does not also listen to the impact of actions		
	24. Makes negative stereotypic comments about others or self		
	25. Tells others they are “too sensitive”		
	26. Repeats or rewords what members with lower status have just said		
	27. “Hears” and acknowledges ideas only if they come from members with higher group status		
	28. Does not engage or “hear” comments from members with lower group status		
	29. Judges or dismisses input from members of lower status groups if they express anger or frustration		
	30. Only asks members of lower status groups to repeat what they have just said		
	31. When confronted, frames the situation as an “attack”		
	32. Go to lunch or socializes only with certain group members		
	33. Acknowledges and praises only certain group members		
	34. Rolls their eyes or makes other negative nonverbal behaviors when others are talking		
	35. Chastises others publically		
	34. Critiques and questions only the ideas and materials presented by lower status members		
	35. Bullies other group members		
	36. Has a patronizing or condescending manner		
	37. Derails the planned format and agenda to serve a personal agenda		
	38. Criticizes the personal character of group members		
	39. Takes credit for the work or ideas of others		
	40.		
	41.		

What Could You Do?

1. Over time you have noticed that most students do not greet or interact with a student who is using a wheelchair like they do to other students walking by.
2. You observe a student asking a person you think might be multiracial or biracial, "What are you?"
3. You notice new staff members get talked over or ignored in discussions.
4. A staff member talks louder and more slowly when addressing a student from Korea.
5. You hear some students making fun of an "overweight" student.
6. You notice in team meetings, the men only talk to men; whites only talk to whites; and overlook, don't engage other members.
7. During a discussion about how to celebrate the end of the fall semester, several staff are pushing the idea of a Secret Santa party to celebrate Christmas. You notice a few student staff look down or seem restless.
8. You hear a student asking someone who they think is Asian, "Where are you from? And where did you learn to speak English so well?"
9. Someone is writing, "That's so gay!!" on the bulletin board.
10. You notice a male student standing really close to a female student. As she backs away, the male student moves closer.
11. In the hallway you overhear a student discussing what accommodations that they will need in the class, and the professor seems distracted and frustrated.
12. You notice that some students seem to react negatively when they see a woman wearing a veil/hijab on campus.
13. A student talks about being LGBTQ and another student says, "I'll pray for you."
14. As an adviser, you notice that the activities the group plans to do always require individuals to pay between \$20.00-50.00 each.
15. You see a group of U.S.-born students approach an international student in the corner and ask him to teach them swear words in his native language.
16. A staff member continues to call two student workers by the wrong names, confusing them for each other even though they look nothing alike; except they both are men of color.
17. A manager refuses to use the preferred gender pronouns/PGPs and preferred name of a transgender staff member.
18. You notice some staff regularly looking women up and down, staring at their breasts.
19. A manager doesn't agree with a staff member and seems to raise their voice to silence them and end the conversation.
20. You notice a student wearing a baseball cap with a team "mascot" that is Native American.
21. A student tells you that their academic adviser told them, "Someone with your type of learning disability will probably not be successful in law school."

22. You overhear someone saying to an African American woman, "You're very articulate!"
23. In a group discussion you overhear a woman confronting a male staff member and see him turn to a friend and say, "What a B_____!"
24. A Latina student is talking to some of the white students in the hallway about a racist situation that happened on campus. One of the other students says, "Why do you have to make everything about race? They were probably just having a bad day..."
25. Students who are Black or Latino have to show 1-2 forms of ID to use a computer lab, while white students do not.
26. You notice that some students and staff repeatedly mispronounce an international student's name.
27. As the class starts to discuss the Black Lives Matter movement, all of the students and turn to the only African American in the class and ask, "What do you think about what is going on?"
28. You overhear a few other students make disparaging comments about Islam and Muslims.
29. A staff member shows a video in workshop that includes a scene of two men kissing, and a few students laugh and make derogatory comments under their breaths.
30. Students are forming into small teams, and no one has asked the two international students to join their group.
31. You see a couple of students treating a custodial staff member with disrespect.
32. As some students are talking about how a female student was sexually assaulted at a party over the weekend, you hear one of them say, "Given me a break! Did you see what she wore to that party?!?"
33. After finishing eating, someone leaves their tray on the table as they start to leave. When someone reminds them to bus their dishes, she says, "These workers get paid to clean up after us."
34. When someone points out the racist comment a staff member just made, their 1 st reaction is, "I'm not racist. I was just kidding. I didn't mean it."
35. During a team discussion about sexism you notice that while a female staff member is talking about her experiences on campus that a couple of men are talking to each other and smiling.
36. As a 1 st generation student is talking about some of their struggles on campus, someone says, "That happens to me, too, and it has nothing to do with being 1 st generation to college."
37. You overhear a staff member saying to a woman of color, "You should straighten your hair. You'd be much more attractive."
38. You notice that a student doesn't bring the textbooks to class. Before one class session you overhear a student saying to that student, "No you can't borrow my textbook. What, are you too cheap to buy your own?"
39. When a staff member gets confused during a discussion, someone says, "She's having a blonde moment!"

40. A manager listens and considers new ideas when a more experienced staff member raises them, but quickly shuts down new or younger staff who ask questions or offer innovative ideas.
41. A female manager is assumed to be the secretary of the department.
42. You see people shaking their heads as they watch an overweight person putting food on their plate in the cafeteria.
43. A student sees two men holding hands and say, I don't care what you do in your bedroom, just don't flaunt it in public."
44. A comment to a person of color: "You got this job because of your race!"
45. Standing talking to a colleague at the desk of the administrative assistant while s/he is there trying to get work done.
46. A student group organizes social activities that usually cost between \$20-\$35 to participate.
47. Managers who chastise publically staff if they are a few minutes late but then will casually walk in 10 minutes late to a meeting and not apologize for keeping others waiting.
48. A male manager of color is working on the weekend in jeans and a t-shirt and is assumed to be a maintenance worker.
49. You observe a staff member talking to an "average looking" student who seems to get distracted when a "very attractive" student approaches; and quickly stops talking to the original student and turns their attention to the more attractive one.
50. Asking someone who presents male what his wife does.
51. Asking someone who presents female if they have children.
52. If more than 3 men of color are standing around, people may assume they are "in a gang."
53. Using certain terms to describe situations or people, "That's so gay!" "She's such a retard!" "He's such a pussy!"
54. Search committee comments about candidates from privileged groups: "He seems like he'd fit into the group;" "She'd be a team player."
55. A 6-foot person patting the head of someone who is 5'2", someone they hardly know.
56. Introducing the male manager as Dr. __, and the female manager with a doctorate as Ms. ____ or by their first name.
57. A staff member who often raises issues is not invited to lunch when the supervisor organizes an informal gathering among most staff.
58.
59.
60.

What Could You Do?

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 (with the person in the moment, 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	<i>WHAT COULD YOU DO?</i>

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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...

Developed by Kathy Obear, Ed.D., www.drkathyobear.com kathy@drkathyobear.com

Engaging Skills	Examples/Descriptions
Ask the person for more information ~ seek to understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So you're saying that... • So you feel that... • So you think that... • Are you saying that... • So from your perspective...
Explore their INTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hear that you feel... • I can see that from your perspective you think... • I'd probably feel ____, too...
Explore possible solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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...
State your desired outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is what I suggest we do... • I want to...I need...
Summarize the dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the dialogue without stating opinions or judging the dialogue. • So we've discussed...we agreed to...

Steps to Responding in Difficult Dialogues

1. Get grounded in positive 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 the environment, yourself ~ as data to diagnose; name your pan as an intervention

A: ASK questions to explore

I: INTERRUPT the 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 your 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...

9. R: RELATE to the person who made the comment (Reflectively)

- 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 on and off campus
- 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... I
- You're probably not aware of the impact of your comment...

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. H. (2016). *Turn the tide: Rise above toxic, difficult situations in the workplace*. Difference Press.

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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. Focus the discussion on the PROCESS of the discussion

- I noticed that you mentioned we need to focus on issues of race and gender, and I wonder why you also didn't mention sexual orientation? Or gender identity or gender expression?
- The list of differences includes 6 areas...I'm curious why issues of ableness and religion aren't on the list...
- I'm noticing that the only time we talk about issues of sexism on campus is when I bring it up...
- It seems that whenever we start talking about issues of race, someone changes the topic back to age or gender....
- I've noticed that when we are discussing the work environment for classified employees, a number of folks look down, start reading a document, check their Blackberry...I'm curious what others have noticed?

4. 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 GLBT employees across gender and race?
- I'm noticing that whenever we talk about race, whites turn and ask a question of one of the people of color. I'd like to hear from some of the whites in the room: What do you notice that whites, 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 women and men 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 and experience in the organization...

5. Give the "benefit of the doubt"

- I trust you didn't intend this, and I was impacted by your comment...

6. 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?

7. If you think someone is misrepresenting what you said

- I believe I said something different than you heard....What I said was...

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

- I appreciate your working to be inclusive in your language...and I understand the term "GLBT" to be more inclusive and current than "homosexuals"

9. Acknowledge the accumulative impact of similar comments

- 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....

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 other participants to get engaged in the dialogue

- Name your feelings or reaction and test to see where others are: I'm feeling uncomfortable with this conversation, is anyone else?
- Ask if others have heard and experienced the situation as you did: That scene in the video hit me as Islamophobic...What do others think?
- Ask others to take the "pulse" of the situation and reflect on the process: I'm curious what others are noticing about our group dynamics?

12. 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....

c. Competing style

- State your thought or opinion right after another person, no connection
- 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?

Steps to respond when someone makes an inappropriate remark

1. Check out what you heard:

Ask them to repeat what they said

Did I hear you say _____ ?

I thought I heard you say _____. Am I right?

2. If they disagree with your version, you may decide to end the conversation. If you suspect they are trying to “cover their tracks,” you may consider continuing the dialogue:
I’m glad to hear I misunderstood, because, as you know, those types of comments....”

3. If they acknowledge they said the comment:

a. Explore their intent behind making the comment

- Help me understand what you meant by that?
- What were you hoping to communicate with that comment?

b. Explore the impact of their comment

What impact do you think that comment could have?

What do you think others would think of you when you make that type of comment?

What message do you think that comment sends?

c. Share your perspective of the probable impact of these types of comments

- When I hear you say that I think/feel...
- Many people would take that comment to mean....
- That comment only perpetuates negative stereotypes and assumptions...
- Negative comments only cause division, isolation, gossiping...
- People will judge you for making these negative types of comments and could assume you are close-minded, bigoted, difficult to work with....

d. Ask them to change their behavior

- I’d appreciate it if you’d stop making these types of negative comments....
- I respect co-workers who respect me and other team members....
- I expect you to stop making inappropriate comments...

Biased Comments or Behaviors: Tools for Engaging Others

Consider the following tools and prompts as you prepare to have a conversation with the person whose behavior you believe came out of some conscious or unconscious bias.

1. Get clear on your intention for speaking with the person

- What do you hope to accomplish?
- How can you engage the other person in a way that they leave feeling whole and respected?

2. Relate to the person who made the comment

- Think about times you have said or done something similarly...
- Imagine how you might say or do something like this in the future...

3. Choose an appropriate time and place to engage the person about what you observed.

Sometimes it's helpful to talk with them privately. Other times it may be useful to discuss the issue in the moment in front of all of the people who heard the comment or observed the interaction.

4. Get clear on the "facts" of what you observed and tracked

- Think through the specific behaviors you tracked
- Mentally practice describing what you observed without any interpretations, conclusions or judgments.

5. Initiate a conversation with the person

- I'd like to talk with you about what I just observed. Is this a good time to talk for a few minutes? (If not) When might you have a moment?

6. Gather more data about the situation you observed

- I overheard you talking with that client/staff member. Can you give me some background on what was going on? OR Can you help me understand the context for what was occurring?

7. Check out what you tracked:

- Can you tell me again what you remember saying?
- I thought I heard you say....Is that accurate?

8. Assume "good intent" and that the person is unaware of the probable negative impact of their comments/actions, and then describe the facts of what you tracked

- You probably didn't notice what the impact of that comment was when you said....
- We're so busy these days, you probably didn't realize the impact of what you did just then, when you...
- I don't know if you're aware of it, but when you said _____, I think/saw/observed the client have a clear reaction...I observed (describe the specifics of what you observed)
- I trust you didn't intend for your behavior/comments/actions to have a negative impact, but I noticed...OR I felt...

9. Do not assume the person recognized what they had said or done

- My guess is you weren't aware of how your tone was coming across to the client...OR what your nonverbal behaviors were saying to the client...
- My guess is you're not aware that the phrase you used has a negative impact on others...
- I know you were making a joke, and my guess is you're not aware how uncomfortable that comment can make others....

10. Ask the person what might be the unintended impact of their comments and actions

- How do you think the client felt?
- How might they have interpreted what you said/did?
- What message do you think that comment/action might send?
- How might they now feel about future interactions with us?

11. Acknowledge the probable impact of the comments/actions; **offer additional ones**, if applicable

- I agree that the unintended impact probably was...
- In addition to what you said about the probable impact, I also think that....
- I agree and I've had friends from this Outsider group who have told me that when they hear these comments they feel....because...
- When I hear you say that I think/feel....
- Many people would take that comment to mean....

12. Acknowledge the probable differential and disproportionate impact based on Insider and Outsider group memberships. (i.e. Heterosexuals and Gays/Lesbians/Bisexuals; Whites and People of Color; Married and Single; Older, Middle-aged, and Younger, etc.)

- As you know a number of people may feel uncomfortable by this type of comment, and, it may have a different level of negative impact on people in Outsider groups given the pattern of treatment they experience in many aspects of society, and how often they have heard similar comments...experienced similar treatment...

13. Explore the person's intent behind their comment/action

- What were you wanting to accomplish with your comment? Action?
- What was going on for you when you said/did ____?
- What were you feeling when you said/did. ____?

14. Acknowledge the person's intent behind their comments and actions, **and begin to explore alternative ways** they could have responded

- I understand you were feeling _____. As you look back, what might have been a more effective way to respond in that situation?

15. Acknowledge the effective tactics they offer, and add any additional ones, if applicable

- I think your idea would have been one way to respond. Another thought for next time might be to _____...
- I like your idea, and recently when I was in a similar situation I _____...

- That's one possibility, and someone once suggested to me to ...

16. Explore the impact of your raising this issue with the person

- I appreciate your discussing this with me, and I'm curious how this conversation was for you?

17. Offer to be of support in the future

- I'm still picking up pointers and techniques as well. And if you ever want to talk situations like this through in the future, I'd be more than willing to offer my best thoughts.

Specific Tools for Engaging Comments

- Offer a differing viewpoint (gently), and then redirect the conversation back to the activity at hand.
- If you assess that the person's behavior has continued to cross a line, consult with your supervisor.

WHAT IF???

1. The person doesn't agree they said what you heard...

- a. You may decide to end the conversation and give them the benefit of the doubt
 - I must have misunderstood...
- b. If you suspect they are trying to "cover their tracks," you may consider continuing the dialogue:
 - I'm glad to hear I misunderstood, because, as you know, in this organization those types of comments...

2. The person is defensive and doesn't appear receptive to your comments

a. Relate in and make a connection with the person

- I can relate to thinking the same thing, and then someone gave me some feedback recently...
- I remember saying something pretty similar not too long ago, and someone gave me a heads up about the unintended impact of my comments...I appreciated knowing because I don't want to offend others or make them uncomfortable...

b. Clarify your expectations of them

- In the future, I'd appreciate if you would...OR I expect that you will...
- I'll be very concerned if this happens again...

c. Clarify organizational expectations

- You may not agree with what I'm saying...and as you know, this organization is committed to creating an inclusive work environment for all staff and is committed to providing exceptional service to the wide diversity of current and potential students. Your comments/actions do not support our mission and goals. In the future I expect you to...

d. Check to see they understood your message

- I want to make sure you understand what I'm saying. Can you tell me what you're taking away from this conversation?
- Would you repeat back the essence of what I'm saying?

e. Invite them to ask any questions or give you any feedback

- Do you have any questions or comments related to what we're talking about?
- Do you have any feedback for me?
- If you ever have feedback for me, I'd appreciate hearing from you....

f. Re-establish the relationship

- I value your contribution to this team...
- We work well together, and I appreciate that...
- It's my hope we can put this behind us and keep working well together...OR It's my hope we can use this as a learning experience for us both and continue to have conversations about inclusion and diversity in the future

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

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

A good 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.

A good 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. A good 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 position 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 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 against oppression. When privileged group members speak up and intervene, they DISTINGUISH themselves from the overall privileged group who generally both consciously and unconsciously perpetuate oppression.

G. Intervening in Oppressive Situations

Good 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 by Kathy Obear
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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 diversity 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 whites have received bad customer service. It rarely happens to them because some 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 tracked 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 a diversity 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 a 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 Are Triggered

- I notice I feel triggered right now....
- That's a trigger 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 triggered and this is why....
- This may have more to do with me than you, but I'm feeling triggered by what you just said....

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