ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF MICROAGGRESSIONS IN LEARNING

What are microaggressions? "Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, etc., whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target people based solely upon their marginalized group membership." Dr. Derald Wing Sue

Your name is too hard to pronounce.

Everyone can succeed if they work hard enough.

You look like you would be good at Math.

Micro-insults

An (unconscious) way of communicating with someone that shows insensitivity and ignorance which demeans a person's identity.

Micro-assaults

A (conscious) and often aggressive way of explicitly communicating with someone using prejudice (verbal, non-verbal, environmental) with the intention of harmful discriminatory acts based on their identity.

Micro-invalidations

An (unconscious) way of excluding, demeaning, and sabotaging the thoughts, feelings, emotions, and experiences of a person based on their identity.

Treating someone/or Feeling excluded or being treated differently excluding the lived based on the color of their experiences and identities skin, gender, sexuality, abilities, intelligence, accent, which do not appearance, social status, fit the dominant norms beliefs, values, successes, or narratives. and failures. Pathologizing others or What could feeling stigmatized based this look/feel on a form of power and Difficulty privilege associated with like? Doubting abilities, processing a dominant group. skills, and and recalling intelligence information Lack of Distraction and engagement in class, lack of focus on groupwork, and connection academic work to the university Feelings of Low grades,

slower degree progress and difficulties with achievement

How do microaggressions impact your learning? isolation and not asking for

academic/personal

help

Learning Strategy: What can I do?

Ask for help – Speak to a university staff member about your needs. Attend student training workshops and opportunities to learn about tools and strategies for addressing microaggressions.

Calm yourself. Take deep breaths and walk away from an unsafe situation. Reflect on your experience; freewrite your thoughts and feelings to acknowledge what happened.

Try to work on rebuilding the relationship with yourself. Practice positive affirmations and a language of strength and self-worth.

Learn More: studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success





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