How do microaggressions impact your learning?

Low grades, slower degree progress and difficulties with achievement
Distraction and lack of focus on academic work
doubting abilities, skills, and intelligence difficulty processing and recalling information lack of engagement in class, groupwork, and connection to the university feelings of isolation and not asking for academic/personal help

Micro-insults
An (unconscious) way of communicating with someone that shows insensitivity and ignorance which devalues a person’s identity.
Treating someone/or being treated differently based on the color of their skin, gender, sexuality, abilities, intelligence, accent, appearance, social status, beliefs, values, successes, and failures.

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.

What could this look/feel like?
Treating someone/or being treated differently based on the color of their skin, gender, sexuality, abilities, intelligence, accent, appearance, social status, beliefs, values, successes, and failures.

Doubting abilities, skills, and intelligence
Difficulty processing and recalling information
Lack of engagement in class, groupwork, and connection to the university
Feelings of 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