

Examples of Verbal and Non-Verbal Microaggressions

Microaggression	Theme	Implicit Bias/Context	Impact/Message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Where are you from?" • "Where were you born?" • "You speak good English." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alien in own land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When individuals who are Indigenous, Black or Persons of Colour (IBPOC) are assumed to be foreign-born 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are not Canadian • You are a foreigner.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You are a credit to your race." • "You are so articulate." • Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascription of Intelligence - assigning intelligence to a person of colour on the basis of their race. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of colour are generally not as intelligent as Whites. • All Asians are intelligent and good at Math / Science. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "When I look at you, I don't see colour." • "There is only one race, the human race." • "All lives matter" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colour Blindness - statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since race doesn't have an affect on me, I can't see why we can't all get along. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denying a person of colour's racial / ethnic experiences. • You must assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. • Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A White person clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latinx person approaches or passes. • A store owner following a customer of colour around the store. • Crossing the street when a person of colour approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminality –Assumption of criminal status on the basis of race. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person of colour is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are a criminal. • You are going to steal. • You are poor. • You do not belong. • You are dangerous.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Don't you want a family?" • "Have you ever had real sex?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heteronormativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people who aren't in heterosexual relationships are unable to have a family. • Assumptions that they all relationships must fall along heteronormative lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your relationship isn't real. • You can't be fulfilled. • You must pick a side.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You're going to stay home with the kids, right?" • "What she's trying to say is..." • "You should smile more" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That women must fall into gendered roles from the 1950's. • That male affect, presence, behavior is the standard and everything else is contrary to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You shouldn't be working. • You're a failure as a woman. • You're not good enough. • You're not being listened to and valued.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You have a mental illness, but you seem so normal" • "Why don't you just get out of bed and get some fresh air" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invalidation of Severity of Mental Illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That mental illness looks/behaves a certain way. • General misunderstanding of the effects that mental illness can have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must not be hurting that much. • It must not be that bad. • Why can't you get over this?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Oh! I wouldn't think you live here" • "Oh you haven't been to Europe, you really should go" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming someone doesn't live in a certain neighborhood because of how they look, talk, act. • Assuming that everyone has the means to travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't belong. • You're not going to lead a fulfilling life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmonton Eskimos, SFU Clan • Sir John A. Macdonald High School • Colleges with pictures of predominantly White heterosexual upper class males 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumes that harm cannot take place by racist names or visuals that have negative connotations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't belong. • You're not welcome here. • Causes shame and embarrassment and creates unsafe situations for persons of colour

Dismissive reactions that occur when bringing up that a microaggression has taken place:

- "You're making too big of a deal of things"
- Eye rolling
- "You're just being too sensitive"
- "You're always so difficult"

We'd like to acknowledge the City of Cambridge, Massachusettes for these examples.

Originally adapted from Sue, Derald Wing. *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation*. Wiley & Sons, 2010.