



A CLOSER LOOK AT MICROAGGRESSIONS IN ANTI-RACISM WORK

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Peña Room-Irving K. Barber Learning Centre

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our shared learning will be taking place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Səwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səlilwətat (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



CONVERSATION AGREEMENTS

We commit to creating a space that respects and honours the intersecting identities and experiences of all participants. We agree to:

- Use accessible and inclusive language
- Take space and make space
- Recognize that the journey to becoming antiracist is unique for everyone
- Listen deeply with an open heart and open mind
- Lean into discomfort
- It's okay to make mistakes; we will take responsibility to own ours and support others when they make mistakes too
- Expect and accept non-disclosure
- Avoid the mindset of persuasion



microaggression **noun**

mi·cro·ag·gres·sion (ˌmī·krō-ə-ˈgre·shən ◀)

: a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)

A digital photo project run by a Fordham University student about "racial *microaggressions*" features minority students holding up signs with comments like "You're really pretty ... for a dark-skin girl."

– Jinnie Spiegler

There is a real and worthy conversation taking place in this country now, particularly among young people, around the idea of *microaggressions*—slight, often unintended discriminatory comments or behaviors.

– Charles M. Blow

also : behavior or speech that is characterized by such comments or actions

... argues that the power of *microaggression* lies in its invisibility to the perpetrator, who typically finds it difficult to believe that he or she possesses biased attitudes.

– Emily Skop

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing in a notebook. The person is wearing a light-colored, textured sweater. The left hand holds the notebook open, while the right hand holds a black pen with a wooden grip, writing on the page. The background is blurred, showing a textured surface, possibly a wall or another person's clothing.

QUIET WRITE:

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT
MICRO-AGGRESSIONS?

WRITE, DRAW, QUESTION AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

BE PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR THINKING.

WHAT MIGHT BE THE MENTAL HEALTH REPERCUSSIONS OF MICRO- AGGRESSIONS?

<https://youtu.be/aC71bdD1hq0?si=FDYXXXb5y3FgrAyL>

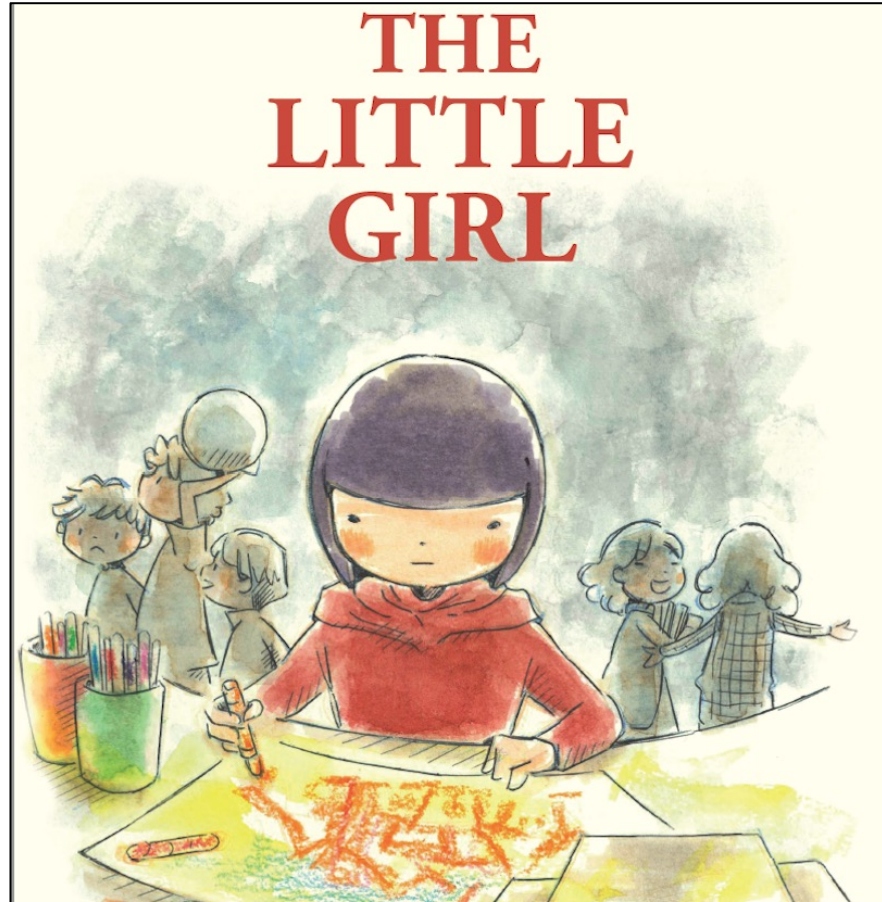


THE THREE TYPES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

Anyone can be micro-aggressive. But the data shows the majority of occurrences are towards people of marginalized groups.

- Micro-assaults – the most overt form of microaggressions, which come in the form of slights and insults that can be verbal or behavioral
- Micro-insults — which assert prejudiced stereotypes through insensitive comments that make presumptions about an individual's intelligence, morality, or belonging to an in-group
- Micro-invalidations — comments that have the effect of devaluing or denying the lived experience of marginalized people.

Source: Sue, Dr. Derald Wing



HEAD, HEART, HANDS STRATEGY:

1) AS YOU LISTEN, WRITE, DRAW OR RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS UNDER ANY ONE OR ALL THREE HEADINGS AS YOU SEE APPROPRIATE.

2) BE PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR THINKING.

DEBRIEF

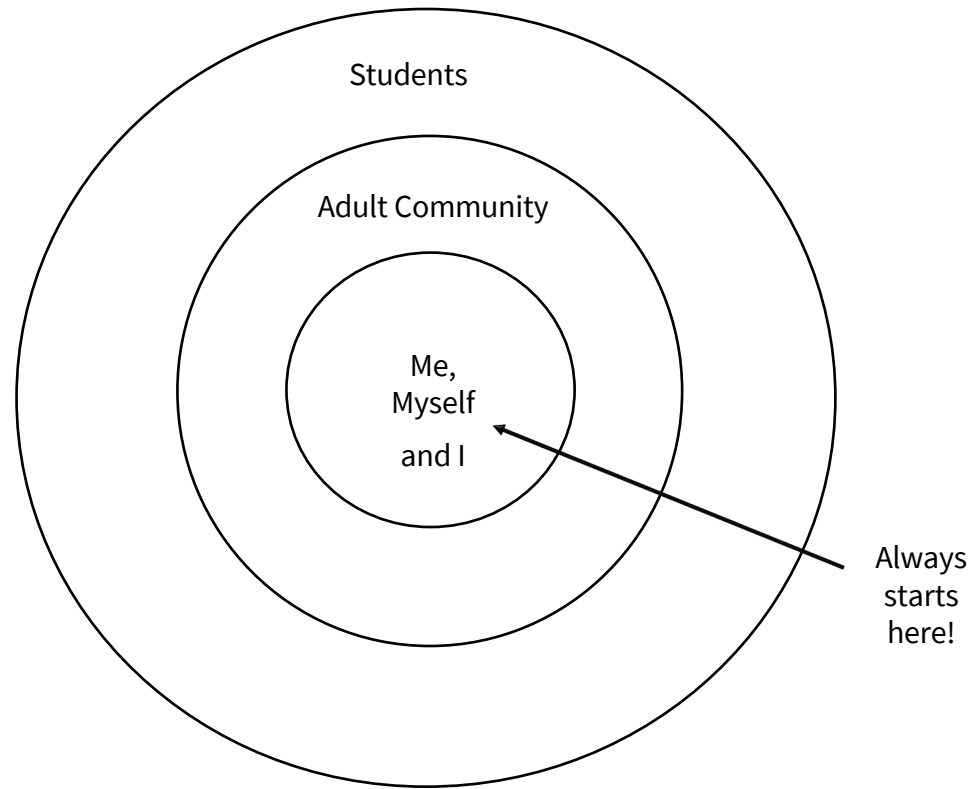
- What kind of micro-aggression(s) did you observe in this story.
 - Micro-assaults
 - Micro-insults
 - Micro-invalidations
- How does micro-aggression get internalized by the people targeted (in this case the little girl and her Mother)?
- Go back to the future in this story. How do you think micro-aggressions affect the Mother? The little girl? The teacher and the students in the class?

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

DISMANTLING MICRO-
AGGRESSIONS
THROUGH CONNECTION

DR. TOYA WEBB, CHICAGO





HOLDING SPACE FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Shane Pointe,
Sulksun

VIDEO: SULKSUN – 6 SALISH
TEACHINGS

<https://vimeo.com/799656838>

Thee eat “Truth”

Eyhh Slaxin “Good medicine”

Nuts a maht “We are one”

Whax hooks in shqwalowin “Open your hearts and minds”

Kwum kwum stun shqwalowin “Make up your mind to be strong”

Tee ma thit “Do your best”

The Teachings

QUIET REFLECTION:

1. CHOOSE ONE OR TWO OF THE FOLLOWING 6 COAST SALISH TEACHINGS.
2. ANSWER THE CORRESPONDING QUESTION.

Truth - How do you showing up in your truth each day?

Good medicine - How are you good medicine to the people in your care?

We are One - What do you do each day to break down the silos of a colonial education system?

Open Your Minds and Hearts - How do you hold yourself accountable to keep your mind and heart open?

Make up Your Mind to be Strong - How do you commit to being strong in the face of opposition and disagreement?

Do Your Best - How do you hold yourself accountable to do your best?

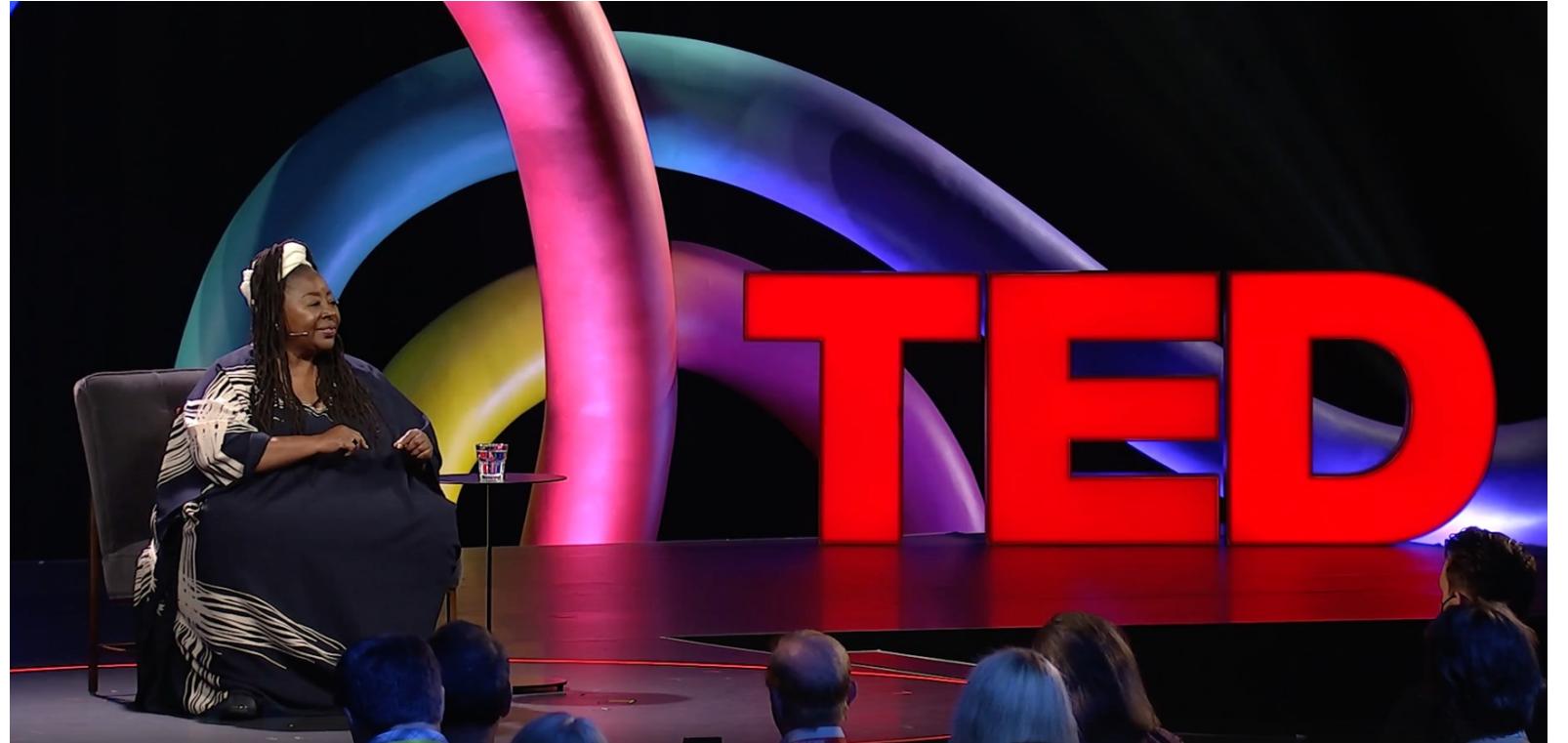
STRATEGY #1:


**Approach
conversations with
agreements intact**

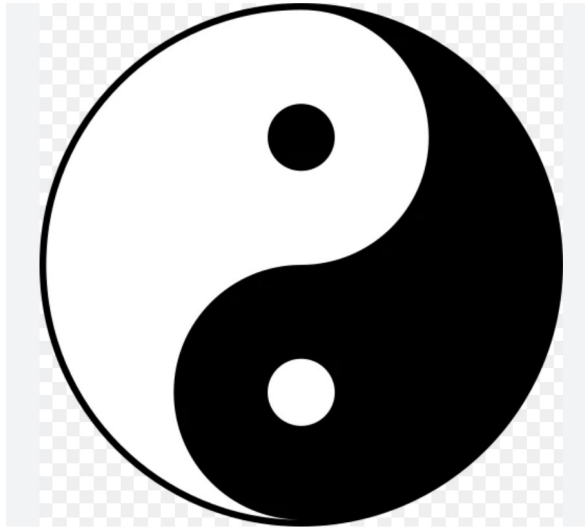
Some tried & tested samples:

- Take space and make space
- Listen deeply with an open mind and open heart
- Lean into discomfort
- It's okay to make mistakes
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Avoid the mindset of persuasion

**STRATEGY #2:
CALL IN,
DON'T CALL OUT**



- 
- I need to stop you there because something you said...
 - I need to know what you mean, please tell me more...
 - In this class we hold each other accountable, so we need to press pause for a moment and talk about how what just happened...
 - ??



STRATEGY #3: LET GO OF BINARIES AND LABELS

- Binary thinking is often flawed and not true.
- When we label, we put people and concepts into a box. Labels build the very walls that trap our thinking and ultimately our good intentions.
- However, a trusting community must be able to interrupt harm when it occurs.

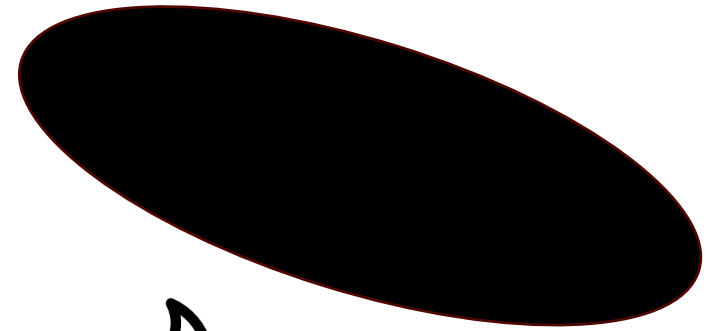
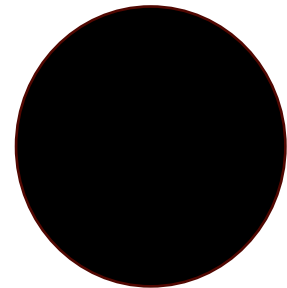


SAMPLES OF UPSTANDER QUOTES:

- “What you just said is harmful.”
- “That’s not a joke. It’s a stereotype/putdown etc.”
- “What you just said is not holding up our community agreements.”
- ??

Conversation Skills is a competency that takes time to develop.

- Make conversations apart of your daily routine
- Practice with easier issues
- Never force anyone else to contribute – be aware
- Sometimes, you just simply hold space



LET'S PRACTICE!

**LET'S HAVE A DIFFICULT
CONVERSATION!**

In groups of 3 or 4 people,
take a case scenario and
practice.



QUESTIONS?

