

# MICROAGGRESSION

Telling people you “don’t see color,” asking “what are you?” and making assumptions about someone’s citizenship or immigration status without knowing anything about them are examples of microaggressions.

Microaggressions refer to verbal and nonverbal communications that indirectly, and often without much thought, devalue a person.

Microaggressions can happen to anybody, regardless of their race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability level, or social standing. Although microaggressions may seem like a small offense, they can build up over time and cause harm to the targets.



**CONSIDER THIS** *Consider the following questions. Challenge yourself to think of answers from multiple perspectives, & to understand what might bias your response. Discuss these topics with someone else in your class.*

**Have you personally experienced microaggressions? Can you think of a time that you may have perpetuated them?**

Several In|Dignity participants discuss their experiences with microaggressions.

**What other examples of microaggressions can you think of? How would you respond to the types of remarks made in the picture above?**

**Microaggressions often target people from minority groups. Are microaggressions directed toward dominant group members different or the same in content, intent, and outcomes?**



“Understand yourself and forgive yourself. I think so much judgment comes from how we perceive ourselves, and how much we bully ourselves, and berate ourselves for things that we do or don’t do. So, that when we see these actions in others, it’s so easy to say, ‘Oh my gosh, I can’t believe this woman brought her child out without shoes.’ Well, you don’t know their story. And chances are, that’s something that’s within you, that you don’t want to exhibit. So, be kind to yourself, and forgive yourself, and accept yourself.” — Paola

“Most people deserve to be taught a lesson. And if you can do that without punching them in the face, it makes a big difference. My words are powerful. There’s times when people want to make you feel stupid about something you’re very smart at. I like that. You can challenge all you want to. But you’re not gonna break me down. What I’m gonna do is show you something else. How about that? Let me show you something else. Let me show you that I don’t have to [punch you in the face].”

— D-Skyy

## CALL TO ACTION