

# Preventing Microaggressions

## *What are microaggressions?*

Microaggressions are subtle, intentional or unintentional interactions or behaviors that communicate bias toward historically marginalized groups. People may experience marginalization due to their race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. These can be comments, interactions, body language, or other behaviors that make a person/group feel less worth than another person/group. The difference between microaggressions and discrimination is that people who commit microaggressions might not even be aware of it.



## *Why should I be concerned about microaggressions?*

The effects of microaggressions go well beyond hurt feelings or poor communication. They may cause their victims mental stress that can stay with them well past the date of occurrence. This stress may result in mental and/or physical ailments like higher levels of depression and anxiety.

## *How should I respond to a microaggression?*

If you are responsible for the microaggression and someone wants to talk to you about it:

- Listen to them. Ask them for clarification or more information.
- Do not discount how the victim feels or reacts or try to tell them their feeling are not real.
- Sincerely apologize and be mindful of the things you say moving forward.

If you are the victim of a microaggression:

- Speak up if you feel comfortable. Be clear and direct.
- Do not attack the person making the comment. Simply explain how the comment made you feel.
- Practice self care by speaking with a support system.

*For more information:* [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/microaggressions](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/microaggressions)



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