**RESPONDING TO MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BIAS**

# (Can be used alone or in combination)

## RESTATE OR PARAPHRASE.

“I think I heard you saying (paraphrase their comments). Is that correct?”

## ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OR MORE INFORMATION.

“Could you say more about what you mean by that?” “How have you come to think that?”

* **ACKNOWLEDGE THE FEELINGS BEHIND THE STATEMENT**.

Express empathy and compassion. “It sounds like you’re really frustrated/nervous/angry"

“I can understand that you’re upset when you feel disrespected.”

## SEPARATE INTENT FROM IMPACT.

“I know you didn’t realize this, but when you (comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because . Instead you could (different language or behavior.)”

## SHARE YOUR OWN PROCESS.

“I noticed that you (comment/behavior). I used to do/say that too, but then I learned ”

## EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS.

“When you (comment/behavior), I felt (feeling) and I would like you to ”

* **CHALLENGE THE STEREOTYPE**.

Give information, share your own experience and/or offer alternative perspectives.

“Actually, in my experience ”

“I think that’s a stereotype. I’ve learned that ”

“Another way to look at it is ”

## APPEAL TO VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

“I know you really care about Acting in this way really undermines those intentions.”

* **PROMOTE EMPATHY**.

Ask how they would feel if someone said something like that about their group, or their friend/partner/child.

“I know you don’t like the stereotypes about (their group), how do you think they feel when they

hear those things about their group?”

“How would you feel if someone said that about/did that to your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?” (someone close to them)

## TELL THEM THEY’RE TOO SMART OR TOO GOOD TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.

“Come on. You’re too smart to say something so ignorant/offensive.”

* **PRETEND YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND**.

As people try to explain their comments, they often realize how silly they sound.

“I don’t get it…….”

“Why is that funny?

* **USE HUMOR**. Exaggerate comment, use gentle sarcasm.

“She plays like a girl?” You mean she plays like Serena Williams?” Or Mia Hamm?

### POINT OUT WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON WITH THE OTHER PERSON.

### “I’m tired of hearing your Muslim jokes. Do you know they are also studying \_\_\_\_ and likes to ? You may want to talk with them about that. You actually have a lot in common.”

* **W.I.I.F.T. (What’s in it for them).**

Explain why diversity or that individual/group can be helpful/valuable.

“I know you’re not comfortable with but they can help us reach out to/better serve other groups

on campus/in the community.”

“In the real world, we are going to have to work with all sorts of people, so might as well learn how to do it here.”

## REMIND THEM OF THE RULES OR POLICIES.

“That behavior is against our code of conduct and could really get you in trouble.”

Adapted from: Goodman, D. (2011). *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups*. New York: Routledge. Excerpt available at [www.dianegoodman.com](http://www.dianegoodman.com/)

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