

Microaggressions and microaffirmations - why do they matter?



microaggressions are:

“Micro-aggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership” (Sue & Rivera, 2010).



why they matter

Neuroscience research reveals how the brain is impacted with violations of dignity, respect

Mental health considerations: depression, anxiety
Workplace considerations: lower productivity, attrition, morale

Uncivil behaviors, if unchecked, may cascade into bullying and even violence



how to avoid them

- Be vigilant about your own biases and fears
- Don't be defensive
- Seek out others who are different than you
- Be an ally, an upstander, to rally against all forms of discrimination and bias
- Be curious and open to explore others' experiences
- Be open to acknowledge impact and hurt



microaffirmations

“small acts in the workplace fostering inclusion, listening, comfort, and support for people who may feel unwelcome or invisible in an environment” (Rowe, 2008).



why they matter

Small acts of kindness can increase a sense of inclusion BUT they do not undo the harm of a microaggression!



intention vs. impact

Remember: impact ALWAYS supersedes your intention!