Types of Microaggressions and What They Look Like

**Microassaults**
- Verbal or nonverbal acts aiming to attack a person’s group or identity or harm them through name calling, avoidance, and/or discriminatory actions.

**A faculty member tells a joke that mocks an ethnic group.**

**Microinvalidations**
- Comments or actions that disregard, exclude, or dismiss the thoughts, feelings, and/or experiential reality of an individual or a group.

**A woman physician is not introduced by their title at a conference.**

**Microinsults**
- Subtle snubs or humiliations that convey a stereotype, insensitivity, or a demeaning message about a person’s group identity.

**A Hispanic physician is mistaken for a nonphysician hospital worker.**

**Microaggressions Triangle Model**

Viewing microaggressions from a human interaction standpoint allows each perspective (that of the recipient, source, and bystander) to be considered and helps each participant construct responses that begin to rebuild relationships and restore justice.

**What Can Recipients Do?**
- Ask clarifying questions to understand underlying intentions.
- Request that appropriate action be taken.
- Come from a place of curiosity, not judgment.
- Explain in a factual manner what they observed as problematic.

**What Can Bystanders Do?**
- Speak up and provide safe spaces.
- Empathize and avoid judgment.
- Ask questions to gain perspective.
- Be a mentor and a sponsor.

**What Can Institutions Do?**
- Prioritize funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Publish explicit policies against hate.
- Correct policies that have the potential to cause discrimination.
- Create programs that promote the hiring, mentoring, and networking of diverse learners, faculty, and staff.

**Microaggressions are subtle verbal, behavioral, or environmental snubs, slights, and insults directed at individuals or groups based on their social characteristics (e.g., race, class, sexuality, gender)—whether intentional or unintentional—that implicitly communicate and/or engender a hostile, derogatory, or negative sentiment. 1, 2**

In academia, this results in discriminated groups being less likely to achieve advancements 3:

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**References:**