

WORDS MATTER: BUT SO DO WHAT, WHEN, WHY, AND HOW WE SAY THEM

TOP TIPS TO SPOT MICROAGGRESSIONS

Microaggressions are subtle, but offensive actions or comments that reinforce preconceived perceptions which can marginalize some people. It's challenging to recognize when our actions may be offensive to others. Often the persons making the comments may be otherwise well-intentioned and unaware of the potential impact of their words.

Here are some of the most common microaggressions to watch out for in ourselves:

1. Ignore or overlooking some individuals or their contributions.
 2. Expecting others to have inferior abilities and treating them that way through words or behaviours.
 3. Talking down to others, treating others as “stupid” or treating others rudely because they don't comply with your expectations.
 4. Minimizing and devaluing ideas based on who offered them.
 5. Treating others in an overly intimate way or protective way.
 6. Staring at, objectifying or tokenizing others.
 7. Excluding some people from conversations or activities whether intentional or not.
-

Microaggressions have been linked to a host of mental health problems. In the last decade, an increasing number of scientific reports have found a connection between the cumulative effects of microaggressions and negative outcomes, including stress, generalized anxiety, depression, low self esteem, psychological distress, alcohol abuse, substance abuse, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and even suicide.

**adapted from Emtrain Tips to Spot Microaggressions 2020*