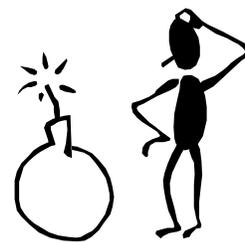


RESPONDING TO RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS USING FOCUSING FRAMES



Purpose:

This protocol assists individuals in both planning and practicing responses to racial microaggressions.

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING:

10 – 15 Minutes

Step 1:

Prepare for the conversation by writing out the racial microaggression that has hurt or offended you. Identify:

- The theme of the microaggression;
- The message or impact of the microaggression.

Identifying these two components of the microaggression helps you, when you are hurt or offended, to clarify the “impact” portion of the conversation within the focusing frame.

Theme	Microaggression	Message/Impact

Step 2:

Choose the focusing frame that seems to fit the situation and is most natural for you. Using that frame, write your opening statement. Remember to use the focusing frame as a guide, not a recipe. Choose the wording that works best for you and feel free to revise that statement until it feels right.

Opening Statement:

Step 3:

Consider how you will follow-up on the opening statement. Extend your thinking by using Focusing Frame 3 as a planning tool to outline what you need, why you need it, and what you might need to explain or share in more detail.

What do I need or need to know?

Why do I need that?

Next steps in the conversation: What might I want to say or to share in more detail?

PRACTICE THE CONVERSATION:

5 minutes/partner

Step 4:

In pairs, role play the opening statement and continuing conversation with as much authenticity as possible. As the person who responds to the speaker in each conversation, you may consider assuming a particular persona to respond to the speaker who approaches you for the conversation. Will you be:

- Someone who is completely unaware that what he/she has said or done has any negative impact—but who is open to learning?
- Someone who becomes defensive once the speaker shares her/his concern?
- Someone who just doesn't get it—even when the speaker tries to explain clearly?
- Someone who dismisses the speaker's concerns as unimportant or overreaction or . . . ?
- Someone who becomes angry and tries to turn the tables on the speaker?
- Some who . . . (you fill in the blank)

[If you wish to extend this protocol and if time allows, participants can play out their conversations in two or three different ways to get more practice in using focusing frames and in responding to racial microaggressions.]

DEBRIEF

5 minutes

Step 5:

Share with one another:

- What you heard: Was the conversation clear and focused? Were you both able to stay positive, to move forward, to respond with civility?
- How you felt at different points in the conversation:
 - What were the high and low points of the conversation?
 - Where did you stuck?
 - Where were you frustrated?
 - Where were you happy with your statements and responses?
- The moments that went well and moments that weren't so strong;
- Any insights or ahas you experienced during the process.

