Can We Talk? Addressing the Effects of Microaggressions

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2012 MizzouDiversity Summit: What’s Civility Got to Do With It? Engaging Effectively in a Diverse Community
Watch, listen, feel, and reflect

“Philadelphia” Movie Clip
Overview/Agenda

- Introduction
- Defining Microaggressions
- Ground Rules for Dialogue
- Our Experiences
- Group Dialogue on Microaggressions
- Debrief and Next Steps
Meet the Facilitators

- Michelle Bollinger
- Marvyn Arevalo Avalos
- Andre Brown
- Bryana French
Microaggressions

“Microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual-orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group. Perpetrators of microaggressions are often unaware that they have engaged in an exchange that demeans the recipient of communication.”

- Derald Wing Sue 2010
Ground Rules for Dialogue

1. Active Listening
2. Respect
3. “I” versus “We”
4. Step Up Listening / Step Up Involvement
5. Confidentiality
6. Dialogue Not Debate
7. Have an Open Mind
Facilitator Experiences
Dialogue on Microaggressions
Debrief: What can we do?

Suggestions from participants

Suggestions from D. W. Sue

- Make the invisible visible
  1. Learn from constant vigilance of your own biases and fears
  2. Engage in experiential reality: interact with people who are different from you in social identities
  3. Don’t be defensive
  4. Be open to discussing your own attitudes and biases and how they might have hurt others or may have revealed biases on your part
  5. Be an ally – Stand personally against all forms of bias and discrimination
Suggested Readings

- *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory*

- *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*
  - Derald Wing Sue (2010): Wiley

- *Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics, and Impact*
  - Edited by Derald Wing Sue (2010): Wiley

- Microaggressions Blog
  - http://microaggressions.tumblr.com/
Thank you!