

DEI Microlearnings Facilitator Guide

UWHealth



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Setting the Tone and Clarifying Expectations

Adapted from Race Forward and YWCA Madison

It is the responsibility of the facilitator to clarify expectations and set the tone of the dialogue to ensure participants will feel safe and more inclined to take ownership of the process. Facilitators are encouraged to be clear about the purpose for coming together, the roles of both participants and co-facilitators, and the conversation practices at the beginning of every session. This document provides a framework and advice for completing these tasks.

Facilitators are not experts (but knowledgeable)

- Facilitators are here to help guide the group and focus on the process not the content. Facilitators will build expertise in debriefing simulation and facilitating conversations around microaggressions, but participants' collective experiences, thoughts, knowledge and feelings will all contribute to the expertise of the group.

We come together to draw out the wisdom and experience from within the group.

Feelings as well as thoughts and ideologies are invited

- Wisdom comes in the form of our feelings, intuitions, hunches, as well as our thoughts, theories, knowledge, and ideas. We must create an environment where these aspects of our being can be shared safely.

Getting Started

Before each simulation session, participants will engage in a pre-brief as a group. The specifics of the pre-brief are outlined elsewhere. Main points included in the pre-brief are:

- **Group introductions, if group members are not all well known to each other already**
- **Review goals and outline for the day**
- **Discuss fiction contract for simulation**
- **Display suggested Conversation Practices.** Read the Practices or ask each of the members of the group to take turns reading one of the items listed on the Conversation Practices.
- **Briefly explain the role of facilitators during sessions and debriefs**

Practices and Format

During general simulation facilitator training, you were (or will be, if you've not taken it yet) trained to use a standardized format that is considered best practice for all simulation debriefing. The basic outline of this format is shown below:

Debrief

Debriefing tool

This tool was created for you to use during the scenario to take notes and help guide your debriefing session. This tool is based on the PEARLS Debriefing Framework.

GOAL of debriefing is uncovering the learner's frame where performance gaps exist and then help redefine the appropriate frame.

Quick pointers for debriefers:

- Maintain a safe environment and curious approach
- Maintain an engaging context for learning where everyone is participating and re-direct conversation when needed
- Speak as little as possible, allowing learners to arrive at their own thoughts and uncover their frameworks that led to performance gaps

Introduction

"Welcome. Before we start the debrief, I want to remind everyone of our simulation rules established during the prebrief. We will hold any discussions regarding feelings and performance in confidence within this group and that everyone within this group is intelligent, capable, and is only trying to improve their patient care. (4)

We will use a plus/delta framework to discuss these cases. The PLUS means exploring what went well. The DELTA means exploring what might be done differently next time.

(For some scenarios, there may be time to repeat the simulation after the debrief. If you predict that will be the case, you can set that expectation now.)

Goal is to get emotions, not how the case went.

Reactions Phase

Simulation often invokes emotions in the participants. In simulation, we like to identify those emotions before discussing the specific aspects of the case.
I'd like to go around and have everyone tell me one word to describe how that simulation felt."

Description Phase

"To reflect and ensure we are all on the same page about the scenario, would someone mind sharing a brief synopsis of the scenario today?" (if no one volunteers, this can be directed toward the learner who participated directly in the scenario)

"Does anyone have anything to add to that synopsis?"

"Next, we would like to specifically name the microaggressions that occurred in this case. What microaggressions did you identify?"

Description Phase

We'd like to refresh you on the specific learning objectives for this simulation.
This can help frame our discussion around what went well and what could be improved.

Simulation Objectives: By the end of this simulation, all learners
These will be specific to each case.

PLUS: *"Next, what do you all think went well with (specific objective)?"*

DELTA: *"What could be improved for next time?"*

Each case will have additional prompts/discussion questions that you can use to guide the discussion.

- *You may not get to every question for each case.*
- *The Plus/Delta format should be used for every case.*
- *Any other must-ask questions will be noted in the customized Debrief tool, which will be formatted exactly like this one.*

Allow learners to respond to peers.

Count to 7 before speaking.

Analysis Phase



Phrases to ask another learner's input:

- ***"What do you think, (member's name)?"***
- ***"Does anyone else have comments about (topic being discussed)?"***

Phrases if you want to bring up something concerning:

- (Occurred during the simulation): ***"Let's think back to the case. I notice that you _____. I am concerned because _____. Can you help me better understand your thought process?"***
- (Occurred during the debrief): ***"I want to pause (or circle back) to something that was just said. I heard you say (or observed this body language) _____. I am concerned because _____. Can you help me better understand your thought process?"***

At the end of the session:

"In the essence of time, we need to move into our final phase of the debrief. Today we discussed _____ (summarize what has been discussed thus far in the debrief session).

Say: ***"We would like to close the session with asking each of you to share a take-away-point you will use in your future.***

Or: ***"What strategies utilized our discussed here today, do you think will be helpful in your future?"***

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- David O. Kessler, MD, MSc*; Adam Cheng, MD; Paul C. Mullan, MD, MPH *Corresponding Author. E-mail: dk2592@cumc.columbia.edu, Twitter: @y2kessler.

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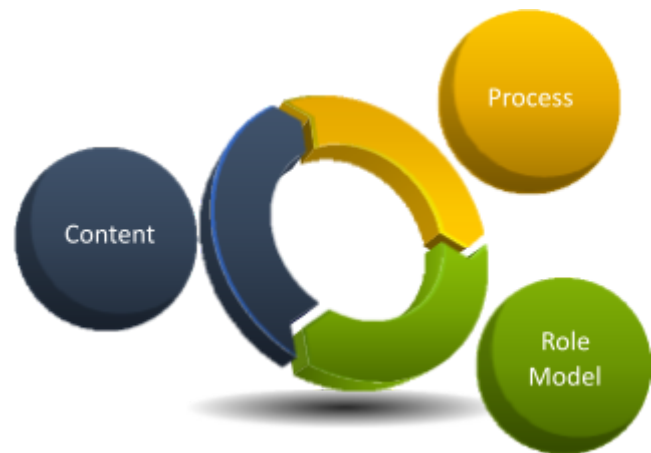
The Role of the Systemic Facilitator

As a facilitator, we facilitate an environment for others to share stories and listen to each other. We facilitate this opportunity for them to interact and learn from each other and for them to learn about themselves. We facilitate their dialogue, and how we interact with them influences trust.

To facilitate means, “to make easy.” The group facilitator’s job is to make it easier for the group to do its work. By evolving in their role as the group develops, the facilitator helps participants to arrive at realizations, understandings and/or decisions. The facilitator’s role is one of assistance and guidance — not of control.

A systemic facilitator has three main roles: *content delivery, process functions and role modeling.*

- **Content delivery** includes clarifying confusing statements, identifying themes or common threads in a discussion, summarizing, and organizing the ideas put forth, and testing the climate by expressing the direction and decisions that appear to emerge from the group process. These functions focus on what the group is talking about.
- **Process functions**, on the other hand, relate to how the group is working. They include making sure that everyone gets a chance to participate, acknowledging emotions that come up in the group, and helping others to express and deal with their conflicts. Content and process are both vital and basic elements to achieving the group’s purpose.
- **Role modeling** from the facilitator is also important. Guiding a group calls for careful observation and attention. In addition to listening closely to what people are saying, the facilitator should watch the participants’ faces and posture for non-verbal clues about how the process is working. Eye contact can be used to acknowledge people’s wishes to speak and to let them know their ideas are being heard. When facilitating, you must be fully present and role model this for others.



The group facilitator should abstain from participation in partisan discussions. Systemic facilitation is process oriented. This is hard work, and it is not possible to attend to the group’s dynamics and needs as well as to your own personal wish to urge a point. A little distance is important for keeping the whole picture in view and to guide the group towards its goals.

Below some good practices for process functions:

Keep the group focused and on target:

- As facilitator you may be viewed as the “expert”; however, you are not. You do not know everything.
- Avoid becoming the focus. When that happens turn it back to the group, “What or why do you think _”
- Find your comfort level. This is not the time to work on your issues. You are to remain neutral.

There are times when you may need to share a brief personal story in order to:

- Draw people out
- Illuminate a point

- Ask a question, i.e., “Has anyone else felt like that?”

Facilitation as a System

Stage	Group Need	Examples in Debriefing
Reactive Learning Context: Informative Facilitator Role: Presenting	Purpose: Why are we gathered? Who is everyone and why should we trust them with my personal reflections? How will we function as a group?	Pre-Brief Introduction Reactions
Receptive Learning Context: Instructional Facilitator Role: Instructing	Learning: What can I learn here? In what formats? With whom? Having what resources available?	Description Phase
Proactive Learning Context: Supportive Facilitator Role: Encouraging	Exploring: How does my personal story fit into this? How does it relate to other social structure? How can I be a part of the healing and making of solutions?	Plus/Delta Queries Discussion Questions Addressing Concerning Situations
Interactive Learning Context: Socializing Facilitator Role: Context	Community: How can I continue my learning beyond this training? How can I stay connected and look to interrupt microaggressions in my every day work?	Discussion Questions Summary Phase

Facilitation Tools and Techniques

Active Listening

Active listening is an essential tool for good facilitation. This is how facilitators show they are listening without speaking. Active listening shows that you are interested and listening and encourages the speaker to keep sharing. This includes making eye contact, nodding your head, facing the speaker, having no distracting movements, and verbal cues.

Keeping the Discussion on Topic

Since most issues have many facets and ramifications, it is common to get sidetracked. Facilitator should be aware of this tendency and be ready to help the discussion get back on track. The importance of this function is a major reason that a facilitator should remain neutral. The facilitator who notices that the group discussion has shifted from original intent can interrupt with comments like, “I think we’ve wandered away from our focus,” “How does what we are talking about here relate to the objectives for this simulation?” At such times, the facilitator has the responsibility to interrupt the discussion and even the individual. Be gentle but firm; use eye contact to make a friendly connection with the person you interrupt.

Clarifying and Rephrasing

The facilitator may act as an interpreter if members are not being understood. This skill may be called for if participants are talking past each other and not understanding each other’s points, and if feelings are rising as the miscommunication continues. One other possibility in such situations is to rephrase the difficult points. Be sure to check your interpretation with the speaker for accuracy. Clarification can be helpful throughout the course of group discussions. It can improve participants’ understanding of the individual opinions as well as of the issues at hand, and it can save time that might otherwise be lost to confused and unnecessary interaction that is based on misunderstanding.

Reflective Listening

A facilitator uses Reflective Listening to affirm and help focus the speaker and assure that everyone else could hear and understand the speaker’s point. The facilitator repeats back in their own words what they heard in a concise, condensed form, highlighting main points. Facilitators use phrases like: “So what I am hearing you say is...” “I heard...is that correct?” “Let me see if I understand.”

Asking Clarifying Questions

Facilitators often need to ask for more information, using open-ended questions, to better understand what a speaker is talking about. Asking clarifying questions helps the group gain a deeper understanding and encourages the speaker to explore the situation. Facilitators who are asking clarifying questions will use phrases such as, “What does that mean?” “Tell us more about that” “How did that make you feel?” Be careful not to ask questions to which you already know the answer because people may feel trapped. Avoid using “why” questions—people may feel that they must justify themselves—“why” questions can usually be replaced by “how” questions.

Equalizing Participation

participation. Some members may speak more or less than others for a variety of reasons: the interest and involvement in the subject, their knowledge of the issues and their confidence in speaking in groups. A variety of techniques are available for facilitators to use when guiding discussion:

- **Round Robin:** Speak in an organized fashion. Select a person or ask for a volunteer and go around. When you use this approach, remind participants that members of the group may choose to pass when their “turn” arrives.
- **Popcorn:** Participants speak when they have something to say. Often, debrief groups will be small enough that this free-form style of discussion works well.
- **Called On:** Participants indicate a desire to speak and wait to be called on by the facilitator. This can be helpful if the conversation gets unwieldy or a few people want to speak simultaneously, even when debriefing groups are small.

Facilitators should take care to equalize full involvement of all members in discussion. The most direct approach is simply to ask silent members if they have anything to say and requesting over-participating members to refrain from speaking at times. Remember that speaking and participating are not the same—some folks may prefer to listen and reflect; they can still be active participants.

Pacing

A subtle but important function of the facilitator is to pace discussion. A good group discussion moves at a comfortable tempo—neither too slowly so people get bored and listless, nor too fast leaving people feeling anxious, confused, or left out. You can slow down the pace of a heated discussion by asking for a moment of silence or by suggesting, “This is moving too fast for me. Let’s slow it down a bit.” Or “I think we need to spend a little more time on this. Did some of the others here have any comments or questions?” You can speed up the pace by advising the group of the time or requesting that people move along. Even sitting up straighter and showing more energy in your body can have an effect.

The Art of Acknowledging and Giving it Back to the Group

When someone is talking extensively, and you need to re-distribute participation in the group, a great way to intervene without breaking the flow of the conversation is to acknowledge what was said and open it back to the rest of the group. Here are some interventions that might be helpful to you:

- “I’d like to help you here “
- “You’ve said a lot. What I’d like to do is to take in what you’ve just shared. What you said was ... “
- “Did anyone notice what just happened here? “
- “Before you go any further...how are you feeling about what you have just shared? “
- “I want to ask you a question before you go on any further. Have you noticed anyone's reaction to what you have said? Why or why not?
- “Before you go on to another story, can anyone in the audience tell me one thing that they said that deeply moved you? “

Creating Transitions

Transitioning from one speaker to another is an art form. It requires a facilitator to have a sensitive ear and eye, as well as an ability to listen to the subtle connections within a communication. Here are some helpful transition techniques:

- Be aware of the similarities between the various speakers.
- Use the participants to notice the differences between various speakers.
- Summarize what is being said and what is not being said.
- Share your observations about their similar or different body language.
- If the primary speaker talks about feeling "unheard", use another participant to repeat back what they heard.
- If the primary speaker is discouraged, have another participant that might be of the same ethnicity or gender offer support.
- Always remember to summarize after each major experience to help educate the group on the subtleties of the communication process. This will help the group in practicing similar interventions in the future.

Additional Conversation Tools During a Difficult Debriefing

These were (or will be) discussed during the standard debriefing training (not specific to microaggression debriefing). In the in-person part of our training, we will address situations where each of these techniques may be particularly helpful during microaggression debriefing, as well as acknowledging situations where particular techniques could cause harm and should NOT be utilized.

- **Normalization**
This involves relating the behavior, feelings, or attitudes of the learners to a societal norm. This builds trust, calms fears, and helps learners cope. This can be very helpful for the emotional learner. Not all things should be normalized (for example, oppressive beliefs), but this can be helpful in some situations (for example, acknowledging that many people feel nervous interrupting a microaggression committed by a superior)
- **Validation**
This is recognizing and accepting another person's thoughts, feelings, or perceptions. You don't have to be in agreement with what they said, you are just acknowledging that you understand how they could feel a certain way. This confirms that you as the educator are listening to them and shows them that their point of view is important to you.
- **Generalization**
This can help drive home a certain concept by relating it to something more broad. It helps form the learners understanding of certain concepts and can help them see why something in the simulation could be considered relevant if they cannot see that themselves.
- **Paraphrasing**
This can be very helpful for clarification. If you are not understanding why a learner did something or is saying something, it is important to paraphrase what they have said so they can confirm that is what they mean. This can also mean that an educator will call out the "elephant in the room." by putting to words feelings that are not being outwardly said in the group setting.
- **Broadening**
Widening the discussion to include more learners. This can help shift conversation away from those dominant learners.
- **Previewing**
This helps shift the conversation to a new area if you need to keep a debriefing on track. If you need to cover something else during the session but time is running out you can preview what you are going to speak about next and possibly give it a timeline for how long you will talk about it.
- **Naming the dynamic**
This is helpful when learners are stuck on a specific issue and are having circular discussion about it or when there is interpersonal conflict among the learners in the group. This is another instance where you name the elephant in the room. You identify the controversial issue so it can be discussed openly and then you move on to the actual simulation objectives that you wanted to discuss in the first place.

Common Facilitator Pitfalls

by [Paul C. Gorski](#) for EdChange and the [Multicultural Pavilion](#)

- **Know your hot buttons and have strategies for dealing with them** – do NOT use the dialogue for your own processing. Process your hot buttons before and/or after, but never during a dialogue you're facilitating. If you work with a team of facilitators, plan meetings to process the issues that are difficult for you.
- **Be clear and honest about the purpose of the dialogue or experience you're facilitating** . Participants should never have to inquire about the purpose of the dialogue during or after the experience. This is one reason why we review the objectives during each debriefing session.
- **Provide airtime.** You should never talk more than your participants. In fact, the more airtime taken by participants, the better you've performed as a facilitator. Don't feel like you must respond to every comment. Work to ensure that you are not the central aspect of the dialogue. The content of the dialogue and interaction among participants should always be central.
- **Reject the first hand-up, first-called-on approach to facilitation.** Allow several seconds to pass before you call on someone (or speak yourself) so that quieter folks who reflect as the dialogue goes on can catch up and participate.
- **Call people on breaches of the Conversation Agreements early, if needed.** If you don't address breaches of ground rules early, you will not be able to enforce them when you most desperately need to do so.
- **You are responsible for providing everyone an equitable opportunity to participate.** Equitable participation does not mean that everyone speaks the same amount of time – it means everyone, regardless of participation style, has an equal opportunity to be heard. You can't be afraid to challenge people who dominate the conversation no matter how uncomfortable that sort of confrontation can be.
- **Never ask participants to share something that you are unwilling to share.** Make yourself vulnerable and be a model by sharing on activities, when appropriate.
- **Do not pretend to have the answer to every question** . When possible, bounce questions back to the whole group before you answer them yourself, even if they're directed to you from a participant.
- **Even if you want to be "objective" you cannot allow the dialogue to become yet another place where historically marginalized groups are oppressed.** Be an advocate for all participants, but particularly for those who have, until now, been silenced.
- **Maintain awareness of time, and facilitate progression through all phases of the debrief.** Ensure you leave enough time for the summary phase of the debrief. Too often, participants feel that dialogues end too suddenly without a clear progression to closure.

Conflict Facilitation Model

The topics that are addressed during these microaggressions can evoke strong emotions. Sometimes conflict may occur. Remind participants of the conversation practices, particularly: No interrupting, No threats or violence, and Confidentiality.

There are 3 ways to intervene in a conflict:

Personal Intervention: *Directly question the participant who seems hurt or angered by comments made by the group or another participant.* Ask questions like: “How did it feel when she said...?” “What kind of support do you want?” “What don’t you need?”

Intrapersonal Intervention: *Question the person who made the comments that seemed to bother the other person.* Ask questions like: “Did you notice the reaction of _____?” “Would you be willing to ask _____ what you said that might have affected them?” “Now that you have heard from _____, is there anything you want to share with them?”

Interpersonal Intervention: *Question the whole group after the intervention to get feedback about what happened.* This can be opened by asking: “What just happened here?”

Keep the following questions in mind when you are observing and facilitating a conflict:

- What were your first reactions?
- What was the identify-related context? (example: race, gender, ability status, weight status, etc.)
- Where did the disputants get stuck? Where did the communication break down or reach an impasse?
- What intervention would you suggest? Why?

Significant Conflict Between Two Individuals

You may observe a direct conflict between two participants. You may decide that the degree of conflict requires a departure from the debrief structure. It is best not to leave large conflict hanging, as this can lead to harm, particularly for individuals with particularly marginalized identities. State to the group that you will need to pause the debrief to address and mediate the conflict. Note that this may mean you do not finish the full structured debrief. Explain that one person will speak first and the other will listen and repeat back what they heard. Each will have a chance to speak.

- Facilitator (to speaker): What happened? What angered you about what happened?
- Facilitator (to listener): What did you hear _____ say?
- Listener: Did I leave anything out?
- Facilitator (to speaker): What hurt you about what happened?
- Facilitator (to listener): What did you hear _____ say?
- Listener: Did I leave anything out?
- Facilitator (to speaker): What do you need from _____?
- Facilitator (to listener): Are you willing to do that?
- Listener: Do you believe _____? (If the answer is no, ask “why not?”)

At the conclusion of the intervention, it is also key to check in with the disputants. Make sure they both felt heard. Thank those in conflict for participating in the mediation, summarize each disputant’s contribution and what is needed to continue understanding and communicating with each other. You may wish to gather feedback regarding what they felt was done well and what they felt could be improved. You may seek feedback from other participants, checking in on what facilitators did well and what could have been done differently.

Distancing Behaviors used when Discussing Racism

Distancing behaviors are used to avoid dissonance in dealing with painful topics, such as racism. You will facilitate microaggressions covering racism and other forms of identity-based oppression, such as sexism, xenophobia, fat bias, and more. Below, we are using racism as an archetype to describe these distancing behaviors. The distancing behaviors listed are often used by white people. While many of the listed behaviors are more common and prominent when discussing racism in particular, you may see them when discussing other facts of identity that have led to marginalization, especially among those in the position of privilege relative to any given facet of identity.

- **Definitions Game:** Requests for definitions of racism or related terms, usually leading to an involved discussion.
- **Where are the People of Color?** Assuming that to make progress in combating personal racism, we must be in a discussion with people of color. Asserting that if there are no or few people of color in each community, that racism is not a problem.
- **Racism is not the only problem:** Insisting racism is only a facet of a larger problem. While it is true that there are other oppressions, this can detract from the topic of a particular microaggression simulation.
- **Being an Expert:** Being an expert on the experience of another race or culture and how to deal with racism; “I’m the okay white person in the group” distinction. This leads to intellectualizing and not dealing with ongoing need to change.
- **Instant Solutions:** Oversimplification by pushing single solutions to racism may be avoidance and, even if sincere, may be unproductive because it is not looking deep enough.
- **Find the Racist:** Rather than acknowledging that we are racist by socialization and that all white people benefit from racism, it can be easy to focus on the person in the group who is more open about their racism, or has intellectualized least about racism, or has thought least about it. Regardless of how much we have done, we all still have more to learn.
- **After I...:** Focusing on all the things which prevent me from acting right now to challenge racism. It will be done when... (some magic occurrence).
- **Geography:** Focusing on places with a reputation for racism, rather than looking to discover how racism is affecting every community. For instance, in the sixties everyone thought racism only existed in the South. Now, many of us might think it only exists in large cities. In a white dominated society, racism is everywhere.
- **You’ve come a long way:** Focusing on what changes may have occurred since people of color began the recent struggle for civil rights, as though to suggest that they should be satisfied. Though we should acknowledge victories hard won, it is important not to discount what still needs to be done.
- **Feeling entitled to physical & emotional comfort:** Drawing attention to the ways in which we are experiencing discomfort, rather than focusing on how to move through this discomfort.
- **Talk of reverse racism:** Focusing on the idea that talking about race is racist, and that not including the experiences of white people is racist. Racism is prejudice +power, and thus there is no such thing as racism towards white people.

Common “detours” when talking about race

Adapted from [Race Forward](#) & Center for Social Inclusion’s [Talking About Race Toolkit](#)

As a facilitator, you must be prepared for difficult or confrontational questions and comments. Some questions

are rooted in a true desire for understanding, while others may be intended to “detour” or disrupt the group. Your role in any case is to model compassion and listening while continuing to build understanding, skill, and commitment for racial equity work. Again, race and racism are used as an archetype here; the microaggression simulations cover other facets of identity. You can extrapolate many of these questions to these situations.

Of note, we have strongly recommended that this microaggression simulation is nested within a broader curriculum on diversity, equity and inclusion (for residents, an example used at our institution can be found at www.UWEducationforChange.com). If this is not done, you may find that the simulation debriefs are derailed from the intended focus on developing the skill of interrupting microaggressions. Further, the complexity of these conversation deserves more time and depth than microaggression debrief sessions allow. Facilitators should be aware of the broader curricular context within which this session is being used.

Again, we are using race and racism as an archetype below, but you may experience similar questions when debriefing microaggressions based on other facets of identity.

Q-1: “Isn’t this just about class, why are we talking about race?”

A: Race and income are closely connected in the United States, and income inequities are large. We need to be working on reducing income inequality. What we know, however, is that racial inequities aren’t just about income. When we hold income constant, there are still large inequities based on race across multiple indicators for success—including education, health, jobs, incarceration, and housing. And at the same time, race continues to be the “elephant in the room.” For us to advance racial equity, it is vital that we can talk about race; we need to both normalize conversations about race and operationalize new behaviors, at both the individual and institutional levels. To do so, we need the active engagement of people who have more commonly focused on class, such as yourself.

Q-2: “Shouldn’t we be using a “colorblind” approach? I don’t see race / I don’t see color.”

A: Race is indeed a social construct, meaning it has no actual basis in biology. However, we do live in a highly racialized society with deep and pervasive differences based on race, across all indicators for success. In other words, while race is a construct, the impacts for people of color are real. If we don’t see color, we don’t see important characteristics about people, and we limit our own ability to develop strategies to advance racial equity. While it is now illegal to explicitly discriminate against people of color, systems, policies, and procedures still work to favor white people. Because of this, it’s important that we do talk about race, even though it can sometimes feel challenging. We need to both normalize conversations about race and operationalize new behaviors at the individual and institutional levels to advance racial equity. To do so, we need people like you to be actively engaged to work on new policies and practices.

Q-3: “Why do we need this if we have a diverse workforce already?”

A: We are continuing to make progress toward diversifying our workforce, and we can be proud of that progress. It is a great step for this organization. However, we still have a long way to go. We know that health equity improves when the identities in a physician workforce mirror the identities in the community—and we are still a long way off from that. And, although it’s an important part of an overall strategy, simply having a diverse staff isn’t enough to ensure racial equity. We still have deep and pervasive racial inequities in the community. It’s important to look at how all our systems, policies, and procedures can work to advance racial equity, not just in our workforce. We want to work with all of you on additional policies and practices that will advance racial equity.

Q-4: “What is the role of white people in doing work for racial equity?”

A: This is a complex and important question that I appreciate you asking. There isn’t a one-size-fits-all answer to this. Sometimes it means being quiet, so people of color have room to speak. Sometimes it means speaking up if you notice individual or institutional racism. Sometimes it means educating other white people about racism. For white people in the room, it can be helpful and important to think deeply about ways you have benefited from

systems, policies, and procedures that have harmed people and communities of color. We also know that when systems and structures are broken, they are frequently not working as well as they could for us collectively, and there are benefits to advancing racial equity for all of us.

Q-5: “Don’t ALL lives matter? Why do people say that only Black lives matter?”

A: Thanks for the question. To put it in context, Black Lives Matter is a movement in response to the deaths of Black people like George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, among others, at the hands of police officers. The unifying message of the movement has been “Black Lives Matter,” and some have responded to this message by changing the phrase to “All Lives Matter.” Yes, all lives matter, but not all lives have been affected by police and the criminal justice system, both historically and presently, in the way that Black lives have. The Black Lives Matter movement calls out the struggle the Black community faces regarding biased policing and inequities in the larger criminal justice system and beyond. When people of color call out ways their communities are particularly affected by issues, it’s important not to co-opt or change the message—but rather to support it when asked. All lives will matter when Black lives matter—and when our systems, policies, and outcomes reflect that.

IMPORTANT: be mindful of harmful impacts that participating in mixed-race discussions can have on people of color, including:

- The “expert” notion – one feeling like they must have all the answers to questions posed
- Being lessened by the “frame” of an activity
- Experience of internalized racism
- The expectation you are speaking for/representing an entire racial/ethnic group
- Feelings of alienation, exhaustion, frustration with expectations placed on participants of color
- Feeling limited in the amount of information, experiences that one can talk about
- Collateral effects from witnessing white awakenings
- Experiencing microaggressions during the discussion

Navigating Triggering Situations

Transforming Triggers into Strengths

Build a self-reflective practice to identify your triggers and create strategies for yourself

During an event:

- give yourself mental, emotional, and physical space by:
 - Intentionally pacing your breathing
 - Noticing where you feel your energy (head, hands, chest, etc.)
 - Re-directing this energy to the center of your body
 - Reminding yourself not to take things personally
 - Communicating and letting others take over when needed

Afterwards: Take a moment to look back, reflect and identify how you felt, what came up, what worked well and what you still need to heal to keep moving forward

Characteristics of a Triggering Event

Any event, either external or internal, through which you have an emotional reaction that may have some or all the following characteristics:

- Unexpectedness
- Strong intensity of feelings
- Disorienting
- Feeling out of control and overwhelmed
- Feeling “de-skilled”
- Requiring extra effort to manage

Examples of Triggering Events

Based on the scale below, write 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 next to each “trigger” based on your typical emotional reaction.

1 = no emotional reaction

2 = low level of emotional reaction

3 = moderate level of emotional reaction

4 = high level of emotional reaction

5 = extremely high level of emotional reaction

When someone...

- Makes an insensitive or offensive comment
- Interrupts or speaks over me or others
- Dismisses my point of view or that of others
- Demonstrates disruptive behavior including joking, side conversations, or laughing at me or others
- Makes snide or sarcastic comments
- Is belittling or demeaning
- Demonstrates bullying or threatening behavior
- Is arrogant or self-righteous
- Is patronizing or condescending
- Has a blunt or impersonal style

When I...

- Make a mistake or error
- Do or say something that is biased or offensive
- Do not know the answer to a question
- Fear I do not know how to effectively respond in a situation
- Start to cry or lash out in anger
- Believe the conversation is about to “get out of control”

When a colleague...

- Is triggered and experiencing deep emotions
- Mismanages a meeting or makes an ineffective decision
- Questions my competency
- Strongly disagrees with what I’m saying
- Changes the planned agenda without checking in with me
- Steps in as I am talking and takes over
- Tries to “correct”, coach, or criticize me in front of a group
- Takes credit for my ideas or work

Additional Common Triggers for you:

Adapted from Kathy Obear at The Center for transformation and change

Triggering Event Cycle



Interrupting Microaggressions Review

The remainder of this manual serves as a refresher on interrupting microaggressions. All facilitators are expected to have engaged in microaggression response training of some type prior to training as facilitators.

Microaggressions – Defined:

Everyday slights, indignities, put downs, and insults that Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and others who have been historically marginalized experience in their day-to-day interactions. **Microaggressions are rooted in a power differential, unique to historically marginalized identities**

Microaggressions tend to be:

- Subtle, unintentional, indirect
- Often occur in situations where there are alternative explanations
- Can represent unconscious beliefs
- Are the behavioral expression of bias
- The cumulative impact of experiencing microaggressions is like *death by a thousand nicks*

The Impact of Microaggressions:

There are at least four psychological dilemmas that arise from experiences with microaggressions.

Clash of realities: perpetrator thinks they are harmless while target thinks its a reflection of bias. e.g. use of incorrect pronouns. The person who has been misgendered is aggravated that this continually occurs but cisgender people who commit these view their behaviors as honest mistakes which are common or even accurate.

Invisibility of unintentional bias: people are socialized to learn biases due to systemic oppression and the superiority of dominant groups e.g. cisgender people may not realize there are no gender-neutral restrooms in certain public spaces because they have been socialized to believe that there are only two kinds of restrooms, for men and for women, are needed.

Perceived minimal harm of microaggressions: many people, particularly of privileged groups may view microaggressions as being unimportant or unworthy of discussion because the specific incidents are innocuous and minor but when they occur often it leads to an accumulation which can negatively affect mental health and wellbeing.

Catch 22- exemplifies why it is often difficult to respond to microaggressions because

- Not all individuals view the incident the same
- There usually are repercussions for confronting the perpetrator
- The target may not have the energy, time or mental energy to engage in such conversations

Sandoval RS, Afolabi T, Said J, Dunleavy S, Chatterjee A, Ölveczky D. Building a Tool Kit for Medical and Dental Students: Addressing Microaggressions and Discrimination on the Wards. MedEdPORTAL. 2020 Apr 3;16.

Frameworks for Interrupting:

There is no “right” way to do this work. Choose a framework that resonates with you and practice, practice, practice!

STOP TALK ROLL

- **STOP:** Stop refers to hitting pause on the interaction and assessing the situation. This could mean deciding whether to address it right then and there or realizing you need time to process and decide what actions to take next. Don’t allow discomfort to be the only thing that holds you back if you are in the position of power.
- **TALK:** Talk refers to what could possibly be said in the context of the scenario right then and there, whether it is addressing what just happened or diffusing a situation until a safer opportunity to address it.
- **ROLL:** Roll refers to seeking out support in debriefing the situation and/or also how to respond to the situation or if it’s best to respond to the situation.

ERASE

The ERASE framework is a stepwise standardized approach to recognize mistreatment and address it with patients.

- **Expect** such events will happen and prepare accordingly
- **Recognize** the mistreatment (STOP)
- **Address** the situation in real time (TALK)
- **Support** after the event (ROLL)
- **Encourage** a positive culture

DEARMAN

Dialectical Framework: This can be especially helpful when you are experiencing the microaggression as a framework to address it. It is a way to open communication in a clear way, that minimizes the recipient's need to feel defensive. It is an assertive and concise framework.

- Yes, AND
- Approach with curiosity
- Separate intent from impact
- Separate behavior from individual
- Two things that are seemingly in conflict can both be correct

DESCRIBE

- I observed, I noticed, I heard
- Use focused, neutral terms when possible (e.g., avoid “always,” “never”)

EXPRESS

- I feel...
- This is important to me because...
- I am worried...

ASSERT

- I will...
- I want you to...

REINFORCE

- I hope this will allow us to...
- I hope this will lead to...
- Thank you (for hearing me out)

MINDFUL

- Stay in the moment as much as possible

ACT CONFIDENT

- Interrupt with confidence
- (NO) Negotiation
- Do not allow space to negotiate whether there was harm.

Tools for Interruptions:

Key Phrases

1. (Institution Name) does not tolerate bigotry. Being a patient at (Institution) means treating people respectfully. Let's refocus on how I can help you today.
2. Our role is to take the very best care of you. We are here to help you as a team. We do not change (doctors, nurses, etc.) because of their (race, ethnicity, religion, etc.)
3. (Institution Name) is committed to being a diverse and inclusive environment for all.

Dialogue Skills

Ask for more information: seek to understand

- Can you tell me more...Can you give me an example...What do you mean when you say...Help me understand what you disagree with...What led you to that conclusion?

Paraphrase the comments

- So you're saying that...So you feel that...So you think that...Are you saying that...So from your perspective...
- Ask a question that repeats the statement

Examples:

"I came in the resident work room because I needed an order for Tylenol for my patient. I wasn't expecting to see you in here!"

Response: You were surprised to see resident Dr X in the resident work room?

"I came to listen to rounds and was surprised to see you were the consultant."

Response: I am Dr X, the attending consultant. You were surprised to see me on rounds?

Explore intent and impact

- Help me understand your intent when you...What had you wanted to communicate? What was your intended outcome? How did that impact you? What were you feeling when...

Be objective

- Provide factual information to point out inaccuracies

Examples:

"Erika is the best nurse I've ever had"

Response: I'd like to clarify something. This woman is your doctor, not a nurse. She has been managing your child's care for the past week.

"I didn't raise my son to be a girl. His life will be too hard."

Response: Actually, research shows that acceptance by their family is one of the most important factors in determining the long-term mental health outcomes of transgender youth. Youth whose parents demonstrate support, love, and respect for their gender identity can have similar mental health outcomes to cisgender youth. Your response is incredibly important at determining how easy or hard her life will be.

State your own and/or institutional values

- Reinforce UWHealth's and/or your commitment to diversity and to creating an inclusive space

Examples:

"I don't want a [discriminatory term] caring for my child."

Response: Dr X is an excellent physician. I would trust Dr X to care for my child.

(May combine with...) At UW Health, we are committed to taking excellent care of you. We do not change [doctors, nurses, etc.] because of their [race, ethnicity, religion, etc.].

Attempt unconditional positive regard

- Frame your response in a way that assumes the speaker was well intentioned and still points out the microaggression

Examples:

"Erika is the best nurse I've ever had"

"Dr X is so articulate!"

Response: It sounds like you are trying to complement ____.

Share the emotional impact on yourself

- Use “I” statements

Examples:

When I hear you say that I think/feel...Just last week I....I remember when I....I was socialized to believe...I’m beginning to feel ____...I notice I’m feeling a little triggered by what you just said...

- Use “AND” (rather than “BUT”) to link with a statement that assumes positive regard

Example:

“It sounds like you were trying to make X feel included, AND when you constantly point out that she didn’t go to medical school in the US, it makes me feel uncomfortable. She had excellent training and is very capable. There are lots of reasons learners might not be familiar with this process. Let’s talk it through together so we can all learn.”

Track body language/tone, interrupt unhelpful dynamics

- I notice you had a reaction to what I just said...I’m noticing your body language...I noticed you just got quiet...looked away...shook your head...Let’s slow down and talk about what just happened...I’m going to interrupt and try a different approach...

Redirect a dialogue

- Provide a firm pivot in the conversation so that you get back into control

Example:

“I can’t get any good food where I live because my neighborhood is full of [ethnic group] so none of the good grocery stores come to where I live.”

Response: I would like to hear more about the challenges you are facing with food access and transportation. I am uncomfortable when you describe that these challenges are related to a particular group of people. Everyone in your neighborhood deserves access to healthy food. Let’s focus on how we can make sure you get the healthy food you need. (This particular response combines stating the emotional impact on you, reiterating your own values, and redirection)

- Set clear boundaries as needed in the course of redirection

Example:

“I can’t get any good food where I live because my neighborhood is full of [ethnic group or racial epithet]. None of the good grocery stores will come there because they’ll probably get robbed. And it’s not safe for me to take the bus because of all the [ethnic group or racial epithet]”

Response: UW Health does not tolerate the use of that sort of language. Being a patient at UW Health means treating people respectfully. I would like to hear more about this challenge, but we will need to use respectful language when we communicate. Let’s focus on the lack of healthy food and transportation you are experiencing.

Find common ground

- Point something out that you can all agree upon. In pediatrics, you can almost always lean on mutually wanting what is best for their child’s health

Example:

Your patient appears visibly uncomfortable with one of the team members who is different from them and/or the other team members (gender, race, ability status, etc.). The patient has not made any specific comment, but generally avoids talking to or looking at this person.

Response: I noticed you’ve been asking me a lot of questions about your medications, and X is our pharmacist. He has the most expertise in this area. I know we all want to make sure your child gets the best care possible, so I’m going to redirect these questions to him. (This particular response combines being objective with finding common ground)

Some Pointers:

1. **Check your own pulse/biases**
 - Remember, implicit bias leads to differential treatment of colleagues and patients.
 - Use a Trauma-Informed Lens: Instead of focusing on “Why doesn’t this patient trust me?” asking, “What has our system done to earn trust?”
 - “How am I behaving that may be rooted in bias?”
2. **Be sensitive to nonverbal language, show empathy, curiosity and validate experiences of racism**
 - “I’m so sorry your experience with our healthcare system has been racist. What can I do to support you better?”
3. **Ask questions and *Listen* to the answers**
 - “What worries you the most?”
 - “What kind of support do you need?”
 - How would you like to see this situation resolved?”
 - “Who do you like to have involved?”
4. **Do your own learning and *UNLEARNING***
 - Learn about systemic racism and its impacts
 - Truly understand and feel a responsibility towards racial equity

Modeling Actions to Decrease Bias

1. **Individuation**
 - A healthcare provider is under no obligation to disclose personal information, but may choose to do so.
 - Recognize the imbalance in the relationship between provider and patient.
 - Consider intent
 - Finding commonality in a stressful or uncomfortable situation = good
 - Creating contention or pointing out difference = better not to
 - If you do not want to answer:
 - Redirect the conversation by saying, “I don’t mean to be disrespectful, but in the short amount of time we have I want to focus on the issue that brought you here.”
 - Immediately follow that with a specific question directed at the patient to regain control of the narrative
 - Never force someone else to individuate
2. **Mindfulness**
 - Name it to tame it: Identify the emotion in the room (such as, “It’s getting a little tense in here.”
 - May redirect back to common ground (such as, “I don’t think the way we are communicating right now is setting a good example for (child)”)
 - Encourage a pause: “Let’s take a pause for a minute”, “Why don’t we take a break and return to this later?”
 - Demonstrate a de-escalating technique: “Phew! I need to take a couple deep breaths before we keep talking.” “When I start to feel my body experiencing stress, sometimes I like to (look out the window for a minute; do a quick stretch; take a short walk; listen to a calming song, etc.). Would you like to join me in that before we continue?”
3. **Empathy**
 - Might be explicit:
 - i. How would you feel if someone said that about your (child, father, girlfriend, etc.)?
 - ii. Have you ever been (excluded, picked on, felt afraid, etc.). How did that feel? That is how I feel when you say/do that.
 - Might be subtle- finding commonality is one of the most powerful ways to build empathy
 - i. We are both...
 - ii. I like... just like you!
 - You and Dr X are both... (but be careful about revealing personal info about others– they have a right to privacy)

Additional Materials and Resources:

1. Watch the following videos:
 - [COVID-19 may not discriminate based on race-but U.S. health care does](#)
 - [Derald Wing Sue Defines Microaggressions](#)
 - [How unintentional but insidious bias can be the most harmful](#)
 - [How Racist Patients Impact Physicians of Color](#)
 - [A Trip to the Grocery Store: Joy DeGruy](#)
 - [Moving Past Guilt and Shame towards Curiosity, Empathy, and Humility](#)
2. Read the following articles:
 - [A Little Hurts a Lot: Exploring the Impact of Microaggressions in Pediatric Medical Education](#)
 - [Our Pain is Not Your Classroom](#)
 - [You Are In the Dark, In the Car](#)
 - [My Name is Not Interpreter](#)
 - [Say My Name: A Medical Student's Experience with Microaggression](#)