Microaggression: The power and impact of words

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Disclosure

I have no conflicts of interest or relationships with commercial companies to disclose.
At the end of this presentation the participant will be able to:

Define and explore the meaning of Microaggressions

Recognize and understand the varying types of Microaggressions through self-reflection

Analyze the effects of exposure in training and the workplace

Explore ways to mitigate conflict based in implicit bias and microaggressions

Evaluate current areas for improvement including the inclusion of the ACGME milestones on Wellness

Create solutions to combating and eliminating Microaggressions
Define: Merriam-Webster

a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)
History

**Chester Pierce, MD (1927-2016)**
- Emeritus Professor, Education and Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School
- Past-president, American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology
- Past-president, American Orthopsychiatric Association.

**Mary Rowe, PhD**
- Adjunct Professor of Negotiation and Conflict Management
- MIT Sloan School of Management
- MIT ombudsperson (1978-2014)
Difference Between...

Bullying: use superior strength or influence to intimidate (someone), typically to force him or her to do what one wants.

Microaggressions: *unconsciously* or *unintentionally* expresses a prejudiced attitude
[Derald Wing] Sue first proposed a classification of racial microaggressions in a 2007 article on how they manifest in clinical practice in the *American Psychologist* (Vol. 2, No. 4). There, he notes three types of current racial transgressions:

- **Micro assaults**: Conscious and intentional actions or slurs
- **Microinsults**: Verbal and nonverbal communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity
- **Microinvalidations**: Communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color.
Who’s included?

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Immigration Status
- Age
- Education
- Mental Health
We see the world, not as it is, but as we are -- or, as we are conditioned to see it. When we open our mouths to describe what we see, we in effect describe ourselves, our perceptions, our paradigms.

— Stephen Covey —
Implicit Bias

Am I biased?
Implicit Bias

Implicit Association Test

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

- Sexuality IAT
- Race IAT
- Gender IAT
- Age IAT
- Weight IAT
Each program requires a lead administrative person, frequently referred to as a program coordinator, administrator, or as titled by the institution. This person will frequently manage the day-to-day operations of the program and serve as an important liaison with learners, faculty and other staff members, and the ACGME.

The program coordinator is a member of the leadership team and is critical to the success of the program.
Effects of Continued Bias

Anxiety
Frustration
Power loss
Disconnect
Isolation
Reduced self esteem
Distrust
Embarrassment
Anger
Burnout
Responding to Microaggressions

- Acknowledge
- Separate
- Express
- Challenge
- Promote
- Humor

Remind
The Learning and Working Environment

Excellence in professionalism through faculty modeling of:

- Commitment to the well-being of the students, residents, faculty members, and all members of the health care team