

MOLINA CONSULTING

Interrupting Microaggressions

Strategies for Speaking Up



Who am I?

- Attorney
- Non-profit leader
- Facilitator
- Diversity Practitioner



NORMS

- BE FULLY PRESENT
- SPEAK FROM THE "I" PERSPECTIVE
- LEAN INTO DISCOMFORT
- TAKE RISKS, BE RAGGEDY, MAKE SOME MISTAKES--THEN LET GO
- TREAT THE CANDIDNESS OF OTHERS AS A GIFT
- SUSPEND JUDGEMENT OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS



CHECK-IN

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE
ABOUT PEOPLE WHEN YOU
FIRST MEET THEM?

WHAT DO YOU THINK
PEOPLE NOTICE ABOUT
YOU (UNCONSCIOUSLY OR
CONSCIOUSLY)?

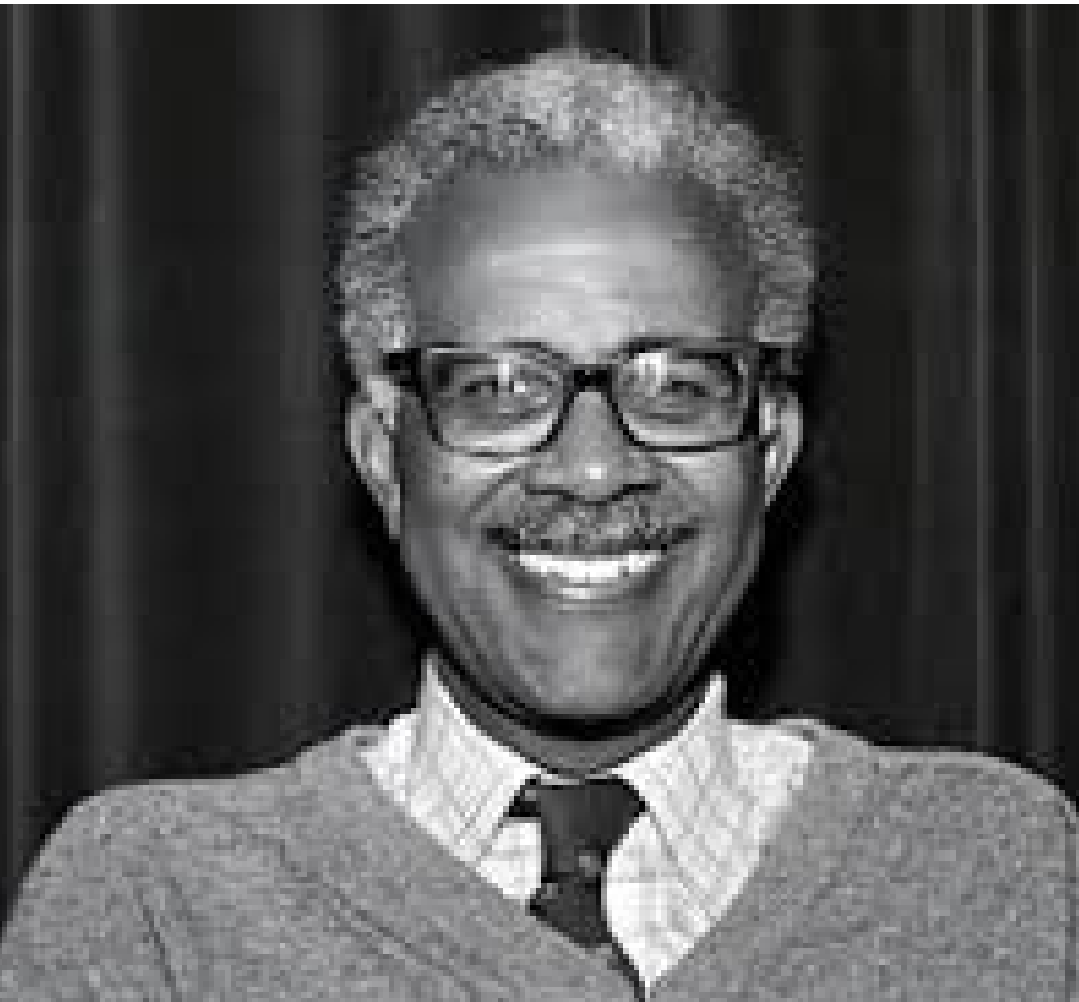


What is implicit bias?

Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the **attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner**. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection. The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations.

What are microaggressions?

What are microaggressions?



Dr. Chester M. Pierce

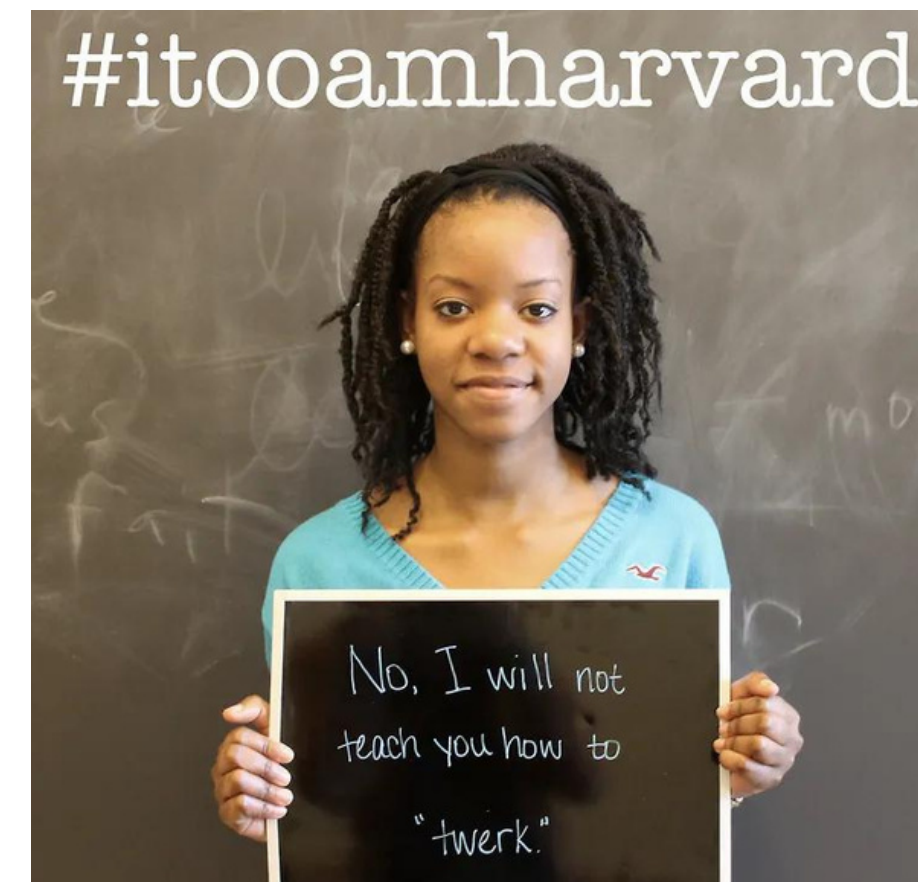
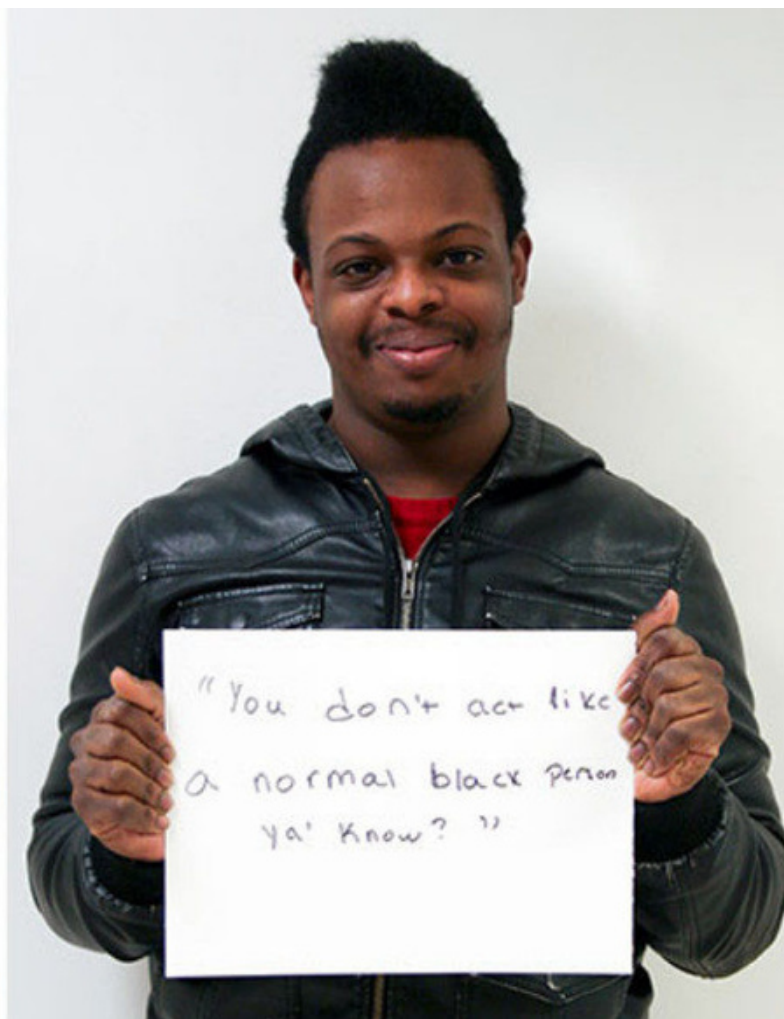
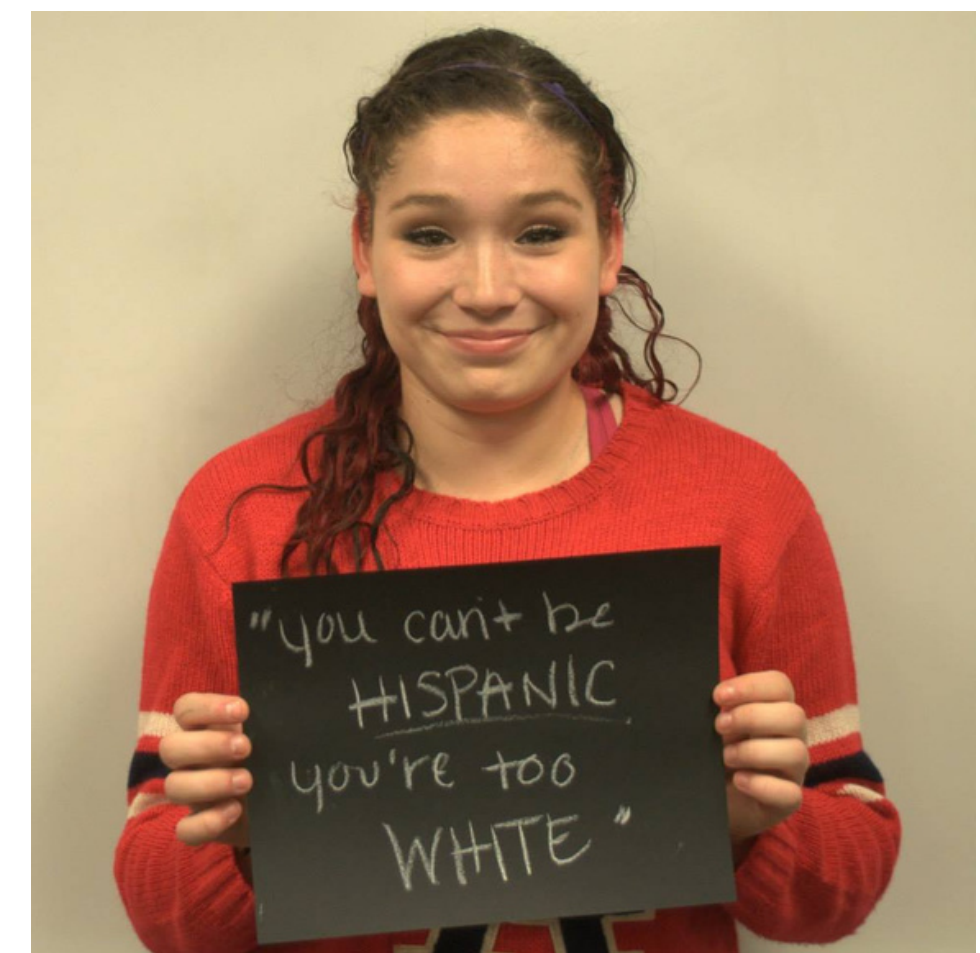
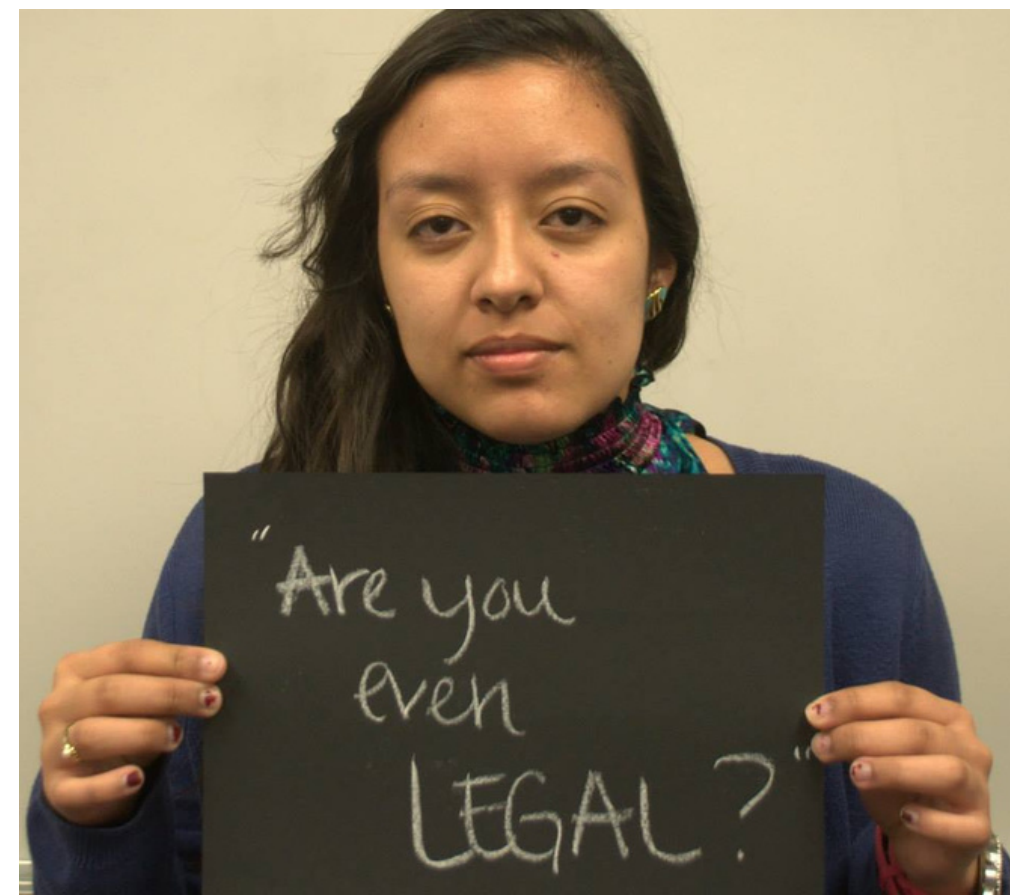
Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

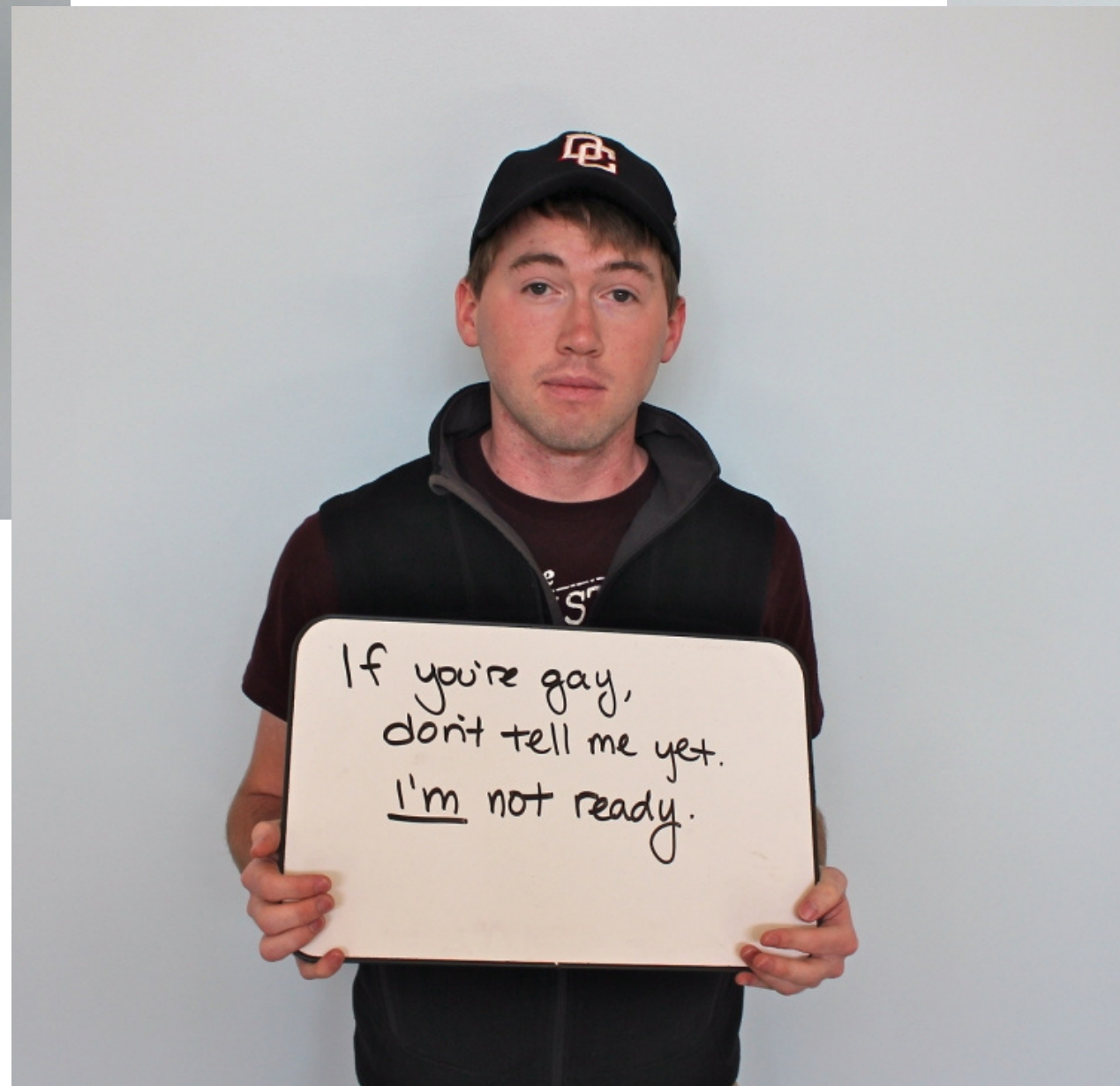
Dr. Derald Wing Sue



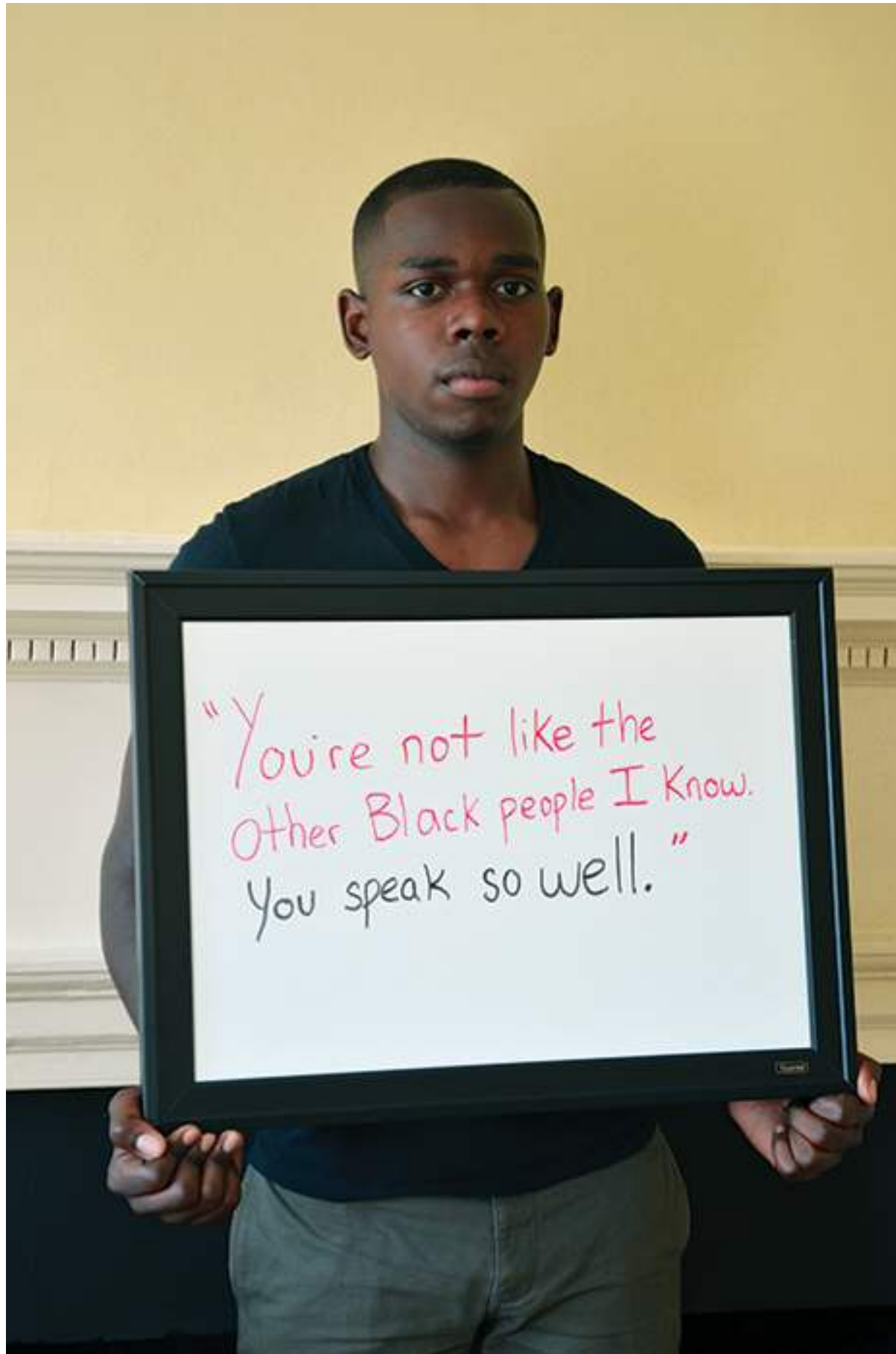
RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS













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KONICHIWA! NI HAO!

YOU SPEAK ENGLISH SO WELL!

NO, WHERE ARE YOU
REALLY FROM?

MY WIFE IS ASIAN SO...



HOW MICROAGGRESSIONS ARE LIKE MOSQUITO BITES



EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS



WHERE ARE YOU
FROM?

WHERE WERE
YOU BORN?

WHERE ARE YOU
REALLY FROM?



YOU
SPEAK
ENGLISH
VERY
WELL.



WHAT ARE
YOU?

YOU'RE SO
INTERESTING
LOOKING!



CONTINUING TO
MISPRONOUNCE
NAMES AFTER BEING
CORRECTED TIME
AND
TIME AGAIN. NOT
WILLING TO LISTEN
CLOSELY AND LEARN
THE PRONUNCIATION
OF A NAME.

- YOU ARE NOT A TRUE AMERICAN
- YOU ARE A PERPETUAL FOREIGNER IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY
- YOUR ETHNIC/RACIAL IDENTITY MAKES YOU EXOTIC



EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS



WHEN I
LOOK AT
YOU, I
DON'T SEE
COLOR.



THERE IS
ONLY ONE
RACE, THE
HUMAN
RACE.



I DON'T
BELIEVE
IN RACE.



DENYING
PEOPLE'S LIVED
EXPERIENCES BY
QUESTIONING
THE CREDIBILITY
AND VALIDITY OF
THEIR STORIES

- 
- ASSIMILATE TO THE DOMINANT CULTURE.
 - DENYING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A PERSON OF COLOR'S RACIAL/ETHNIC EXPERIENCE AND HISTORY.
 - DENYING THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RACIAL/CULTURAL BEING.

“
**When I claim to not
see race, what else
am I not seeing in my
students?**

- Makeda Brome
in Education Week Teacher

“
**To say 'I don't see
race' is to say 'I don't
see you.'**

- Ashley McCall
in Education Week Teacher

EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS



A PERSON
CLUTCHES
HIS/HER PURSE
OR
CHECKS WALLET
AS A BLACK OR
LATINO PERSON
APPROACHES.



A STORE
OWNER
FOLLOWING A
CUSTOMER
OF COLOR
AROUND
THE STORE.



SOMEONE
CROSSES TO
THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE
STREET TO
AVOID A
PERSON OF
COLOR.



AN EMPLOYEE
APPROACHES
ANOTHER
EMPLOYEE OF
COLOR WITH
SUSPICION AND
ASKS IF SHE IS
LOST, EVEN
THOUGH HER BADGE
IS DISPLAYED

- 
- YOU ARE A CRIMINAL.
 - YOU ARE GOING TO STEAL, YOU DO NOT BELONG.
 - YOU ARE DANGEROUS.

**Microaggressions can also
be environmental...**



Impact of Microaggressions

- Individuals feel like they do not belong
- Individuals feel like they have to hide parts of themselves
- Negative impact on trust
- Negative impact on academic and job performance and retention



Exploring Racialized Factors to Understand Why Black Mathematics Teachers Consider Leaving the Profession, Education Researcher, 2021

- Of 325 Black math teachers surveyed, 97 percent reported regularly experiencing racial microaggressions in their school community.
- The impact of racialized microaggressions was double than that of other factors that influenced decisions to leave the teaching profession such as salary or age.



Toya Frank, George Mason University

“Mr. Ford is having a really hard time with his class. I’m not saying that he’s not intelligent. I’m just wondering where he went to school.”

“Compliments” and “Jokes”: Unpacking Racial Microaggressions in the K-12 Classroom

Rita Kohli, Nallely Arteaga, and Elexia R. McGovern

“Wow! You speak English so well.”

– A comment made to a second generation Latino middle school student by his teacher.

“That’s so great that *you* got an A on that paper!”

– A comment made to a young Black woman in high school by her White classmate.

“Why are *you* stressing? You don’t need to study. Asians are naturally good at math.”

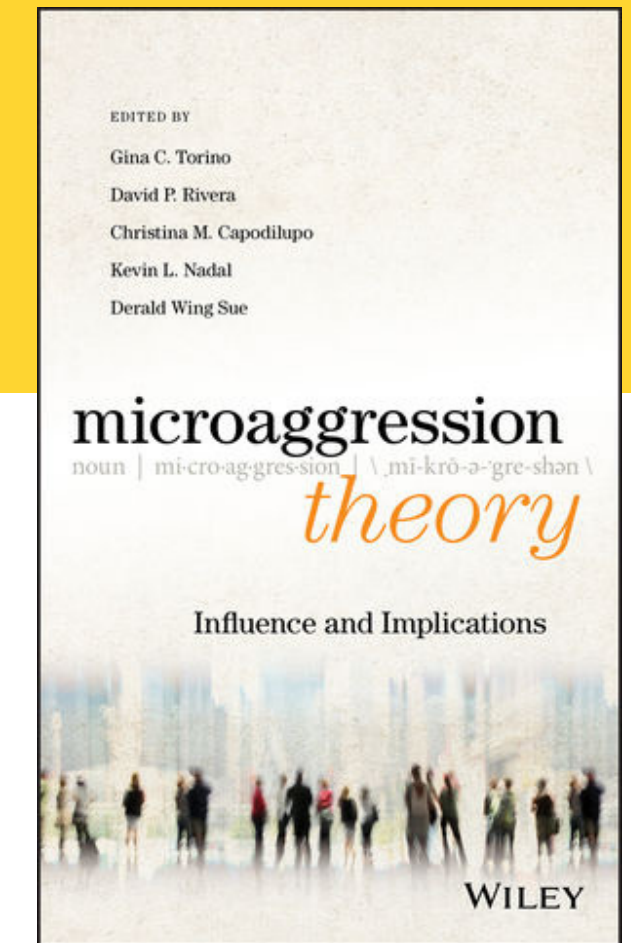
– A statement made laughingly to an Asian American student in math class by a White peer.

“Are you sure you are in the right class? Auto shop is down the hall.”

– A question posed by an AP English teacher to a Mexican American student on the first day of class, while laughing.

“I hope you don’t have a bomb in your backpack.”

– A comment made to a South Asian turban-wearing high schooler by a peer, while laughing.



Studies find that these types of comments have deep impact on students' sense of safety and wellbeing at school. Such comments also impact students' views of themselves and their skills, abilities, and capacity--well beyond their schooling years.

How to Interrupt Microaggressions

Ask clarifying questions to understand intent

- *“I want to make sure that I understand what you were saying. Were you saying that...?”*
- *“I’m glad to hear I misunderstood you, because, as you know, such comments can be...”*
- *“Can you tell me what you were hoping to communicate with that comment?”*
- *“Can you please help me understand what you meant by that?”*



How to Interrupt Microaggressions

Repeat what you heard in a matter of fact manner

- *Sometimes simply repeating the statement will allow others to hear that it may be offensive.*



How to Interrupt Microaggressions

Explore the impact on others

- *“What do you think people think when they hear that type of comment?”*
- *“What message do you think such a comment sends?”*
- *“What impact do you think that comment could have on ...”*



How to Interrupt Microaggressions

Share your own thoughts and feelings about impact

- *“When I hear your comment I think/feel...”*
- *“Many people might take that comment to mean...”*
- *“In my experience, that comment can perpetuate negative stereotypes and assumptions about... I would like to think that is not your intent.”*



How to Interrupt Microaggressions

Share expectations about future actions and consider how to repair the harm

- *"In this classroom, we use do not use language that puts down others."*
- *"I can see this conversation has left people feeling hurt. Let't take some time to talk about what's coming up."*
- *"What can we do to make this classroom safer for all when we are talking about these topics?"*





A student says "We are going to throw you back over the wall" to a student that appears to be Latinx.

Name it, Claim it, Stop it

- **Name it**

- *I heard you say that you think we should throw someone over a wall.*

- **Claim it**

- *That statement is xenophobic, and shows that you don't value people from other countries.*

- **Stop it**

- *In this space, we value all people. We have worked hard to show that all people are valuable no matter where they come from. Do not use that language in our classroom.*

Lauren Baucom, Math Teacher

REMEMBER

When you are the target of a microaggression...

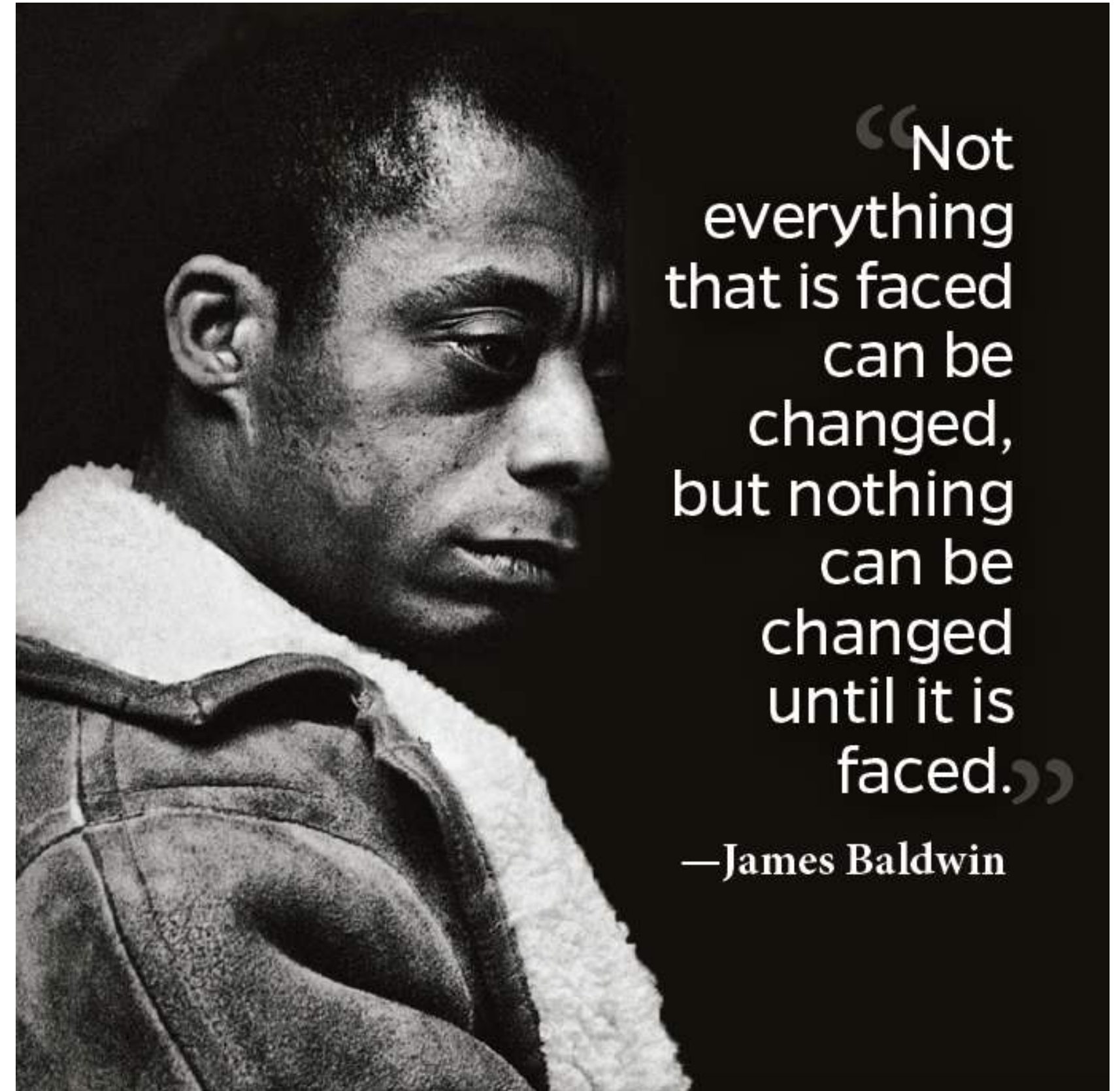
- Prioritize your physical, mental, and emotional health
- Step away or speak up as you feel best
- Tell someone
- Focus on healing

When you have privilege/power and you commit or witness a microaggression...

- Take accountability
- Center the feelings and experiences of the targeted
- Speak up
- Help repair the harm



**KEEP
CALM
AND
SPEAK
UP**



We'd love to chat!

HOW TO REACH US

EMAIL

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WEBSITE

www.molinaconsulting.org

