IL-NET

Why Words Matter: Addressing Microaggressions to Create a Welcoming Environment

Presented by Stan Holbrook and Brooke Curtis

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>> Good afternoon. And welcome to today's webinar, why words matter, addressing micro he a aggressions to create a welcome environment. I'm Carol Eubanks with ILRU. Today's presentation is brought to you by the training and technical assistant project for sales and salts. Among independent research utilization, national council on independent living, association of programs for rural independent living and university centers for disabilities with support provided for information on unity living on the U.S. department of health and human services.

This webinar is being recorded and will be available on demand within a few days. You can go to ILUR.org where you will find all of the materials for the presentation. Including the PowerPoint, audio, transcript and any other supplemental materials that may be posted scent to this presentation. Today you'll have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar. If you move your cursor on the screen, you should be able to see a bar on the bottom of your screen and there in the middle one of the options is Q & A and you cane us that to type questions at any time and we will address them during our interactive discussions. It if you have a comment for us that is not a question, you are welcome to use the chat feature. Captioning will also be available by opening the CC tab on the main screen. Please know that with captioning you can change the size of it. If you were only seeing one line of captioning you can put your cursor over it and you should see an arrow and you can click that arrow to make the captioning larger and to display seven or eight lines of text once you do that. If you prefer, you can view the full screen captioning and chat at www.StreamText dot‑net/player?event= ILRU.

And just to clarify on the questions, we prefer today that you put all of the questions in to the Q & A that is located at the bottom of your screen rather than in the chat.

Okay. One final bit of housekeeping. At the end of the webinar, an evaluation form will open in your web browser. Please do fill that out. It's short and it is easy to complete. We use them to improve the work that we do in the future. We really would like to have your thoughts.

And now I would like to introduce our presenters for today, Stanley Holbrook and Brook Kurtis. Stanley is owner SA Holbrook and associates, a management consulting firm offering organizational development diversity and inclusion training, strategic planning and capacity building training. He was instrumental in developing the diversity initiative of the national council on independent living. He has served as the chair of the nickel diversity committee and member at large of the nickel board for 14 years.

Brook Curtis is a training and technical assistance specialist as ILRU. As a member of the IL net team, is responsible for assisting with ILUR research projects, managing data, technical writing, and aiding with training material and events. Prior to arriving at ILRU, Brook conducted retaining and training efforts for an education company and used for a Houston nonprofit where she played a notable roll in launching the non‑profits professional group and junior board. She has experience working with a variety of minority organizations and is passionate about discussing diversity from her experiences of growing up biracial in a multiracial household. Brook received her BA in biology from DePaul University and just grated with the biomedical informatics at the University of Texas health science center at Houston. Welcome, Stan, and Brook.

>> Thanks so much, Carol, we're really excited to be here. And if you could go to the next slide, please.

Awesome. So as Carol mentioned, we are going to be having an interactive discussion today about micro aggressions so we're really looking forward to hearing from you and for you to share your experiences. But today what you will learn is that micro aggressive behavior is a form of adversive racism, ableism and otherisms. You'll also learn about the real life effects of micro aggresses on those who are the target. And then we'll briefly discuss the classification of micro aggressions as micro insults, micro invalidations, and micro assaults. Around then we're going to spend a good amount of time of discussing how to handle micro aggressive behavior if you are the target.

Next slide, please.

So what are micro aggressions? Micro aggressions are subtle, vernal and nonverbal slights and installs based on gender, ethnic and other stereotypes. And what they do is communicate hostile, derogatory or negative you video points. And they can they can be intentional or nonintentional and we'll spend some time discussing that because it is really hard to tell in some instances what the intentions are of the person who might have been commit committed the micro aggression. And then now we do have to say that micro in the term micro aggression, it applies to the subtlety and not the impact. It also applies to the number of people since it is directed typically towards one person or to a small group.

Next slide, please. And I want of do want to say micro aggressions are also referred to as death by a thousand cuts because even though they are subtle, they do really have able impact and do influence and impact those who experience them and so we'll talk about that later. But they go beyond race and touches along all marginalized populations, including and race, gender, sexual preference, orientation, ethnicity, disability status, labor roles and social class, and age.

Next slide, please.

And so I really like this quote, and it says racial gender and sexual orientation micro aggressions are active manifestation s and/or a reflex of our world views, of inclusion, exclusion, superiority, inferiority, normality, abnormality and desirability and undesirability. And so really what this does it shows implicit bias which are attitudes, stereotypes and assumptions that sometimes we're not even ape ware of, o e? And so now micro aggressions can also promote internalized racism. And internalized racism is the acceptance by those stigmatized of negative messages by their own abilities, about their own abilities. So an example would be if people tell me I'm pretty for a black girl. Then I start thinking black isn't beautiful enough. Or if I'm attending a university and I'm often told that maybe I don't belong there or I often feel like I don't belong there, then I'll really start believing that I don't belong there.

Next slide and I'm going to pass it to Stan.

>> Good afternoon, everyone. This is a great quote if you can move to the next slide, please. There needs to be a realization that good intentions are simply not enough. There's a lot of good intended people and there's a lot of good intentions of things that are said but unfortunately the way that they are taken, because of some of the things that Brook has already talked about, the internalized racism that the internal feeling about themselves, some comments are intentional or unintentional, cut deep to the soul. And they really, in many ways, help people react in negative ways and they cause physical as well as mental damage to the person that's being micro aggressed. So we have to get beyond good intentions and so that's what this slide is about.

If we can move to the next slide. I would like to go over some terminology before we move into this session. Self‑identity and self‑confidence is a collections of beliefs about one's self, including personalities, skills, abilities, occupation, hobbies, and physical characteristics. And what's important about this, are sometimes people have been told so many negative things, that they actually begin to believe that. And so their belief system changes and they become someone who they really are not or they become the person, the stereotype that they have been pointed out to be. When we look at racism, we want to look at it as a system of power, a system of structuring opportunity. And assigning value based upon social interpretation on how someone looks, and we call that race, but what it really does is unfairly disadvantages some people in the community while unfairly giving advantage to other individuals in the community. And that's key and that is foundational to what we're going to be talking about.

And then labels. That represent a way of differentiating and identifying people that is considered by many as a form of prejudice and discrimination. Oh, he's a gang member. Oh, he's in the wheelchair. He ‑‑ he won't be able to do the job. Those kind of labels. That hurt us and they're really not indicative of who we are. If we could go to the next slide, please. I'm going to speak about intersectionality. It's a interconnect ed nature of social categorizations as race, class, gender, disability, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. I know years ago from an African‑American perspective, when we looked at health disparities, we said a woman with a disability had a double jeopardy. Well, that's been changed to intersectionality. You know, she's black, she's a woman she has those things going. Intersectionality is a nape of all of those categorizations. And it occurs as a result of individual multiple groups and may influence or intensify the frequency of a micro aggression.

Next slide, please.

I want to remind everybody while we're moving forward, any questions, please use the Q & A and we'll be sure to respond. I want to talk a little bit about my experience. I labeled it affirmative action and affirmative action was put in place to kind of make it fair for, fair when it comes to opportunity for employment, to even the score, to even the table I call it affirmative action because as a black man, when I was in places not traditionally where black folks were not traditionally seen, maybe the university I went to, or on a board of directors, where I was the only black face. And the thing is while affirmative action was good, being a part of a committee or something just in itself is not good enough, if you're not included it was a part of something, I didn't feel included at all, in fact, I felt excluded. And I had a experience when I ran for the board for the nickel board, a bunch of folks running and we were all speaking. And amp my speech, somebody ran up to me and said, hey, that was a great speech but you'll never get on the board. Though said maybe next year, when there's a diversity committee, you can get on.

Deep down inside, I said, why wouldn't I get on the board? And then why would it have to be the diversity committee that I could get on? And while that person may not have meant any harm, to me, it cut through my soul and it upset me even though I didn't let them know it. Which we'll talk about later. Because that was a mistake that I had. But those things, that experience, among others, is where people said oh, you're smart. That was real smart what you said. You know, when I'm in a meeting and I happen to have a comment oh, that was really smart what you said, I took that as oh, I'm not supposed to have any brains. And so those are things that maybe they were unintentional or maybe they were intentional but it's the effective of the micro aggression on the person that's being micro aggressed. That we need to tend to. And so I'm going to turn it over to Brook and let Brook speak of her experience.

Thanks, Stan, for sharing your experience. And so to open up with my experience, I have included a picture of my mom and my sister. We had just finished running the Houston half marathon this year and my sister is also my running partner. But as you can see, we grew up in a very multicultural home. My sister is half white and half Asian. And I am half white and half black. However, I identify as black. And so growing up we often received many questions from people about who is adopted in our family. And, you know, kind of despite individuals not really understanding, we saw it as an opportunity as an opportunity and a blessing just the way we grew up. We grew up very open. We were taught to explore different cultures. And just really continue to learn about other people who were different than us. And really so also I think growing up in Houston, Houston is very diverse. And so I also got to go to very diverse high school. Now when it came down to go to college, I decided you know, what I want to get out of Texas. And somehow I ended up in rural Indiana. But the college that I went to, it was a great school. I really enjoyed it. And at that time, I really started to experience micro aggressions. And I don't think it wasn't because I wasn't experiencing micro aggressions before that but I think at that point in my life I was becoming a young adult, I was becoming more aware of who I was, how I identified and how I wanted people to see me. So in attending a predominantly white institution, I was often a minority in the classroom, I was a science major and you know, with sciences, you have to do a lot of labs and I felt like oftentimes I had to vouch for myself when finding a lab partner. There were instances where I can remember one encounter where someone asked a classmate whether I did work or not when it comes to participating in the lab. Which, to me, was hurtful because we're both at the same school, we both put in the work to get there. So it was just very, very hurtful. And you know, even fast forward to current encounters with micro aggressions, I even had a very close family friend who we've known for years, she mentioned to me, she was like, well, Brook, you know, I don't see you as black. And I don't think she meant any harm when she said that, but, to me, it really hurt me. Because this is someone that I've known for years, this is someone that, you know, we grew up just knowing her and her family. And it instantly when, she said I started having all of these different thoughts, what does she consider ‑‑ what does she see when she sees black people? Does she not see me as being black enough? And it was just really very hurtful. And I know Stan and I, we're going to talk a little bit more about the actual impact of micro aggressions. But what we want to do is if I could have the next slide, please. So what we wanted to do is turn it over to you all. So we really want for you to start telling us about your experiences so we thought if you could use the Q & A and just say ‑‑ and just think of a word or a phrase that you've been called that you didn't like or that offended you and tell us how it made you feel. And Stan and I are watching the Q&A right now. Oh, it looks like we have some coming in, in the chat as well.

So there's a comment from Michael, he says you're just too sensitive. And so that was a comment that was made to him and didn't like it. And I'm assuming Michael, that this happened when, you know, you tried to address someone for a prior comment that they made that was probably derogatory or that was offend you.

>> There's a comment coming in that says "you talk white. You talk white." And I'm assuming that's an African‑American person or someone of color saying that you talk white, you don't talk like your ethnicity. And I can see how that's a micro aggression to you. And the and Bertha has continued to say that it made her feel like she wasn't black or she was too proper. And that happens sometimes if ‑‑ if you may ‑‑ may be educated and you're a professional and you speak that way, the best you are, and while you're doing the best to you, people are still micro aggressing o against you, you know, and it hurts, so we understand. Paulette put something in that said, they called her princess. We've got a lot of comments. We have to get to Q&A too. Brook, let's do it this way. You do chat and I'll grab Q & A.

>> Okay. Perfect. Dana says a person here was told that she was faking being disabled because she did not have a cane. She's likely blind. So how does a blind person look?

That's a good point about people have their assumptions and their stereotypes how they feel individuals should look and individuals should act.

>> Oh, my, I'm going to take this one, two of them. Amy said hey, she was just called lazy. Lazy. I'm just lazy. And then another person said aren't you sweet, you have a job and yet you have a disability. What's that supposed to mean? It could have been un intentionally. It could have been ignorant. How does that feel as they're trying to advance themselves, as have you this, and have you a disability like ‑‑ like you couldn't do this.

>> We had another one come in the chat, why do you talk like that? If there's more commentary. But, you know, just ‑‑ just assuming that, you know, an individual should talk a certain way. And, again, everyone talks differently and it's really important for individuals to understand that and then it looks like we have a question too.

>> We got a million questions.

>> Oh, man.

>> Okay. One person said oh, they were told, oh, you're so OCD but they said they actually do have OCD. And then they were also called too sensitive all of the time. Another person was called yank or an American. When they lived in New Zealand and it was made in a disparaging way, you know, it made them feel very bad.

>> Right. I have another one from Paulette. I don't think you're Deaf, you're too pretty. And then also Paulette shares another one, are you his nurse? So referring to her husband who is Deaf.

>> Wow, some of these things. Inspiration al. And that's one a lot of folks, I know, when I was running the center, they didn't want to hear that. They're doing what they have to do, but this person says, I'm not here to be inspirational and they took offense to that. An another one, fact, no one will ever like you. It made them feel like they were less than and not worthy.

>> Wow.

>> So we're seeing by these examples and we'll do a few more if we have time.

>> Yeah. Along the lines, Stan, of that, I just had you are just big‑boned.

>> Oh. So these things cut to the bone. And they're hurtful. And this kind of thing has to stop and while it's a systemic problem and we'll talk about it, individually we each need try to catch ourselves because we could all be guilty of micro aggressive behavior and we need to work on it individually, and make sure we're not herding the person intentionally or unintentionally.

One person said they called him a fag. Another person said they were called uncle Tom and told him he spoke white. And I have one and there's questions after questions ‑‑ there's more and more comments. Underprivileged.

>> Mm‑hmm.

>> As a gay white man with mental health problems, I felt angry when I was called crazy or dangerous. And sometimes people say these things not thinking, not thinking at all, on the effect that the micro aggression has on the person.

>> Oh, Stan, there's a ‑‑ there's another one. It says no one ever perceives me as Latina because of the way I work, so they feel safe to make derogatory or racist comments about hiss Hispanic people.

>> Wow.

>> Wow.

>> I ‑‑ oh, I'm half Hispanic and half white and I've been called half breed or taco bender.

>> Wow. What kind of name is that?

>> That what is that, yeah. I've heard the half breed name before too, I've been called that.

>> You have a master's degree. Oh, good for you.

>> Okay ‑‑

>> You know.

>> Okay. I think we have a question too.

>> Okay. Go ahead. Go with it.

>> Carol, we'll take the question. Okay. Maybe we'll ‑‑

>> Oh, was that the person that wanted to speak live?

>> Right.

>> There's a person that wanted to speak live, ask a question live. You're on. Unmute yourself.

>> Okay. The attendee has been her mic on muted. Oh.

>> Should we move on or?

>> Okay. Carol, it is telling me you're unmuted if you would like to ask the question.

Okay. We'll move on then and we can come back.

>> Okay. I think ‑‑ I think we have a lot of questions in the queue. We'll do a few more and then we'll move on. And there's another time for interaction, discuss, and we'll come back to these questions when we get, I'll just do a couple.

>> Okay.

>> More. I have a comment that says you have no idea what's going on with your white privilege and all, and the person was really saddened. This gentleman was told because he was a auto tech earlier in life, he doesn't fit in as a rehab counselor. Okay. Another person, I was hanging out with some friends and one friend said it's okay because you're not Hispanic, not black, referring that it's okay for him to hang out with them because the person is Afro Latino, not African‑American. I'm going to do one more and then we can move on. You don't speak the language, so how can you understand our culture? It is rough when people think you're one race but you are another. So the other folks, we'll try to get to you as we move forward. We'll have another time to get to them. You can continue to put things in the Q & A and chat as we move forward. Next slide, please. I want to go over some classifications of micro aggressive behavior. And there's three classifications.

The first one is micro assaults. That's a conscious and intentional actions of slurs or using racial epithets, displaying swastikas or deliberately be serving a white person before a person of color in a restaurant. They tend to hurt the victim through name‑calling or through display of things that are discriminatory or that actually you know are hurtful, like hanging a noose on the door of African‑American. That's the micro assault. Next page. Micro insults, I'll wait until they catch up. All right. Verbal and nonverbal communications that suddenly convey rudeness and sensitivity that he did mean a person's racial heritage or identity. An example is when an employee who asks a colleague of color how'd you get that job? Implying she may have landed it through, when I talked about affirmative action or a quota. Another thing is oh, you are a credit to your race or the one that I hear a lot, and a lot of people were told, you are so articulate. Those are micro assaults. Next page we want to talk about micro invalidations. That's communications that suddenly exclude or negate or nullify thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color. For instance, white people often ask Asian‑Americans where they were born, conveying the message they were perpetual foreigners in their own land.

>> We can move to the next.

>> I ‑‑ go ahead.

>> I was ‑‑ I'm going to hand it to you. We have some examples of micro aggressions and Brook will take a few. And go from there.

>> Yeah. And so thank you, everyone, for continuing to chat and use the Q & A feature to share your personal experiences with micro aggressions. Please continue to do that. And so we're just going to go over a few examples and so for the first one and Stan just used this, but you are so articulate. And so really what this conveys is that it is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. And so one thing about micro aggressions that sometimes they can often appear as a compliment or a joke but they do contain a hidden insult. So really just keep that in mind. Another example would be when I look at you, I don't see color. So it denies a person of color's racial and ethnic experiences.

And then another example is my best friend is black. So this statement conveys a message that, well, I'm immune to insulting or offending anyone because I have a friend of color.

Next slide, please.

And so some more examples. So one for sexual orientation, the micro aggression says, so who is the man in the relationship? So this is a question that was asked to a gay couple and what it implies is that a relationship must involve a man and a woman.

And so we'll continue to, as you continue to chat in and share your experiences in the Q&A we will share them as well.

So next slide, please.

Oh. Yep. And so in addition to kind of sharing some of the micro aggresses that we're on the previous slides, a lot of organizations are starting to do campaigns to just bring some awareness of micro aggressions. And so DLAD is a LGBT organization and they had a campaign focussed on micro aggressions experienced by individuals who identify as transgender and are gender nonconforming. So here on the board it says you will never be a real woman. And so what this conveys is that although the individual identifies as a woman and is a woman that she will not be accepted by others as one. Next slide, please.

And so Harvard actually had a really great campaign that just wanted to bring awareness to micro aggressions and it's called itooamharvard and it's a testimony of micro aggressions experienced by black students. So here it says I don't see color, and the response is, does that mean you don't see me? And so really this demonstrates the ability to recognize, accept, and celebrate difference when is you're saying that you don't see color.

Stan, do you want to add in or ‑‑

>> Do I want to jump in?

>> Yeah.

(Laughter)

>> Yeah, I do want to jump in. What I want to say, let me bring my chat and Q & A down because I've been trying to monitor. What I do want to say that micro aggression has such a powerful impact on the person. And their identity that it is something that you know, right now, it's are will big and the buzz is really big because you know, people are starting to want to stand up for the rights and they have been doing that but they really want to be treated as equal, and while micro aggressive behavior can be in many ways unintentional the effect is brings on negative consequences. As we will talk about later. So these pictures here are just an expression of how folks are feeling with when they're micro aggressed against. And so that is my comment about this.

And I'm seeing in the Q & A that there are a lot of folks that are receiving these comments that it is hurting them. And I got a question in the Q & A, a very good question that asks, how do you determine whether a comment was a true comment ‑‑ a compliment or a micro aggression? And my initial answer is always intention. What was it intended for? But how ‑‑ I think another way you determine it is in the context of the comment was really relayed to you. If you're told that you're very smart, you're very smart, and it's left at, that that might be a compliment. If you're told you're very smart, you know, to be someone like you, I don't know how that's a compliment. So it is something that I think the other thing is that how you receive it., how you receive it. And we'll talk about when you receive something like that, what your reaction should be.

>> Yeah, and there's another point by Bertha, she mentioned too how it makes you feel.

>> Yeah.

>> You know, when you feel like there's like a comment could be malicious, then you start kind of having all of these different thoughts and you start to question individual's intentions, you kind of go through all of these various questions in your head and if that, I think if that starts to happen then maybe you're experiencing a micro aggression versus a true compliment.

>> Yeah. Thank you, Brook. That's excellent. I don't have any more comments on this slide, Brook.

>> Okay. Next slide, please. And so we have one more example from another campaign. Individual shares, this girl sits next to me, moves to sit closer to someone she's talking to. And this white guy whispers loudly that she most of because I smell like rice. Again, very hurtful. He, the individual who told her that she smells like rice is making an assumption. I think that it's interesting that the guy would say that to her because how does he know the intention of the woman who moved away? So it's just, it's a hurtful comment. And it's certainly a micro aggression.

>> Mm‑hmm. Next slide, please. And so we've shared our experiences with micro aggressions, thank you all again for continuing to share your experiences and so now we want to have a interactive discussion. And so we want to, you know, we want to give you some additional examples of micro aggressions and then using the Q & A, tell us what the messages convey. So one says no, you're white. So I think that this is oftentimes said to individuals who might be biracial, multicultural or even we had someone chat in and say that that as a Latina that she has experienced comments, no you're white. So what does this message convey? Okay. And while ‑‑ while we continue to think about that one, some of the other messages. So "you people." Another statement, another micro aggressive statement, but you're not gay, gay. And then another one is what she's trying to say is so, I think that one, in thin substance, is when someone comes in and is trying to kind of rephrase and reword what someone else is saying. So definitely use the chat or the Q & A and tell us what these messages convey.

>> I have a couple ‑‑

>> You can pick. You don't have to do all of them.

(Laughter)

>> I have a couple comments. One young lady said I was raised, the chat just moved on me. Let me find it. I was raised in an area that had many German people living there. She is German. And the people always decided that she must be Mennonite. She was always called that, Mennonite. They regularly made fun of her on how she looked. She never realized that white people were privileged until she moved away. From that area. One person asked answers specifically about the white comment. They said no, you're white conveys that the person does not have the powers to share their identity. To change this, I would ask how do you identify. And there's another comment, you're the better half of the two. And I'm going to move into the questions.

>> Yeah. There's one that says, to the comment, no you're right, why does ‑‑ why is power and the are saying you can pass to be another race.

>> Mm‑hmm.

>> There's an interesting comment in the Q & A that doesn't answer these messages but I think it should be said. It says a micro aggression contributes to the marginalization of the community.

>> Mm‑hmm. And that came from our audience. Your piss dis is a built can't be that bad. You look fine. The comment about no, you're not gay, gay, implying a negative view of gay people but that person is an exception.

>> Marissa says perhaps in some of those contexts you're saying you're not one of us, or you're not like us.

>> We have another comment that says ignorance to multiculturalism. This comment conveys a person saying it does not have the ability to look deeper and understand, the first look does not tell the culture of a person.

Another comment, no you're not white confers a set of stereotypes connected to people of color.

Implies, stereotypes, implies a set of stereotypes connected to people of color.

>> And Alex, when he chatted in response to no, you're white, he did say that he would change the statement to ask, well, how do you identify? And I think that is wonderful. A lot of the times people just want you to ask. You know, how they identify. And I think people are willing to tell the tell but them, share their experience, share more about their identity if you just ask, as opposed to assuming.

>> I have no more questions in the Q & A, no more comments.

>> Yes. Same here.

>> Okay. So we'll move on to the next slide. I want to thank you guys for your participation. I'm going to tell you the truth. We kind of were wondering how this is going to work because we know doing this live it's very easy to get participation in a live setting but you have been wonderful when it comes to giving comments and questions and I just wanted to thank you and I'm sure Brook wants to thank you too.

>> Yes. Thanks.

>> Because we didn't know how well that was going to work.

So we're going to talk about the impact of micro aggressions. There's some internal dilemmas that are faced by all of us that receive these micro aggressions. What did they mean when they said that? Should I say something? And then you said, am I thinking ‑‑ am I really interpreting this the right way? And how should I respond? And a big question is, if your friends, how should I respond where we keep our friendship. I don't want to mess this up relationship.

But if I don't respond, does that mean I accept that statement? Will I regret not saying something? So internally, when you hear these things, probably a nanoseconds you're going through these thoughts. And you have to make a decision on what you're going to do there. And I think we're going to talk about that later so I'm going to move to the next slide. So we have these internal dilemmas, and there are also psychological consequences, when we just kind of let it go and keep experiencing this, if I could have the next slide, please. So you can get anxiety. You can be depressed, especially if every day you're coming in to work or where you're ‑‑ wherever you're going and you're receiving some kind of comment. That belittles you or demeans you and you don't know what to do with it. You feel some helplessness, and eventually there's diminished confidence. I mean there are psychological reports of how people internalize things and the more you internalize things, the more you actually believe those things about yourselves. And so it is very important that we really look at hitting the micro aggressions, you know, from the beginning, from when we hear it, not only are there psychological consequences, next slide, there are also health consequences. And there have been studies of minorities experienced elevated levels of trauma and depression, especially in the workplace where they feel though don't feel they belonged, or they're excluded, excluded from mentoring and training, whoever it is, you're excluded because you're not part of the majority. Depressive symptoms are the link be to be the racial micro aggressions and thoughts of society in the study of graduate students and we have the references here at the end of the PowerPoint if you want to look some of this up. And not only are those things very important but from a center's perspective, micro aggressive behavior creates a lack of trust in service providers and caregivers. And that hits the home of the centers. As we move on to the next slide.

>> Yeah. And Stan brings up a great point that micro aggressions, they do definitely create a lack of trust in service providers and caregivers and I'm sure many of us have been in a situation particularly when visiting physicians, doctors, where we've experienced some of those micro aggressions. I know from my personal experience kind of going to the doctor sometimes, it can be a little bit stressful for this reason. I've had instances where the doctor, you know, will call me girl as opposed to, you know, because I'm a woman, I'm not a girl. Or they'll dismiss my concerns. And to me, that's very hurtful, because, you know, because you as an individual, you know yourself, you know your body. And you know what you need as well. And I really think the lack of trust with service providers, especially in the medical setting, I think a lot of this really stems from historical injustices, so you look back to the syphilis case, as an example, and there's a variety of others. So I just, you know, there are those biases, those micro aggressions do occur and I think in when you're working with individuals in the center, you definitely want to be sure that you're avoiding these micro aggressions and really building the trust between the sent, he center staff and the consumers.

>> Thank you, Brook. So how do we address this problem from a large macro look, look macroly, systemically? And it involves monitoring inequities of opportunities as well as disparities in outcomes and we know for sure that people with disabilities period have bad ‑‑ have dis proportion at health disparities, especially as secondary conditions. But when you add color on there, on top, it gets progressively worse. So whoa need to look at those systems and how do we change the outcome. It involves examinations of structures, policies, practices, norms and values. This country was founded supposedly on equity. But we have a structure of pourer there and privilege there that transcends race, disability, gender, and these things need to be revisited. What I think needs to happen is real conversation about these disparities versus skirting the issue. And we really need to, as I'm leaning to, look at the structures in place. There are societal structures in place that honestly perpetuate micro aggressive behavior because they're built upon racism and it's almost natural because it's a system that's been going and growing for the longest and it's a system of power where there is the advantage to a set of folks and the rest of the system's disadvantages others. So we need to look a broad view on how we change those things and move. But from a perspective of, and some of this is really necessary, some of these things I've mentioned already, from an organizational level, if we can go to the next slide, see, all of this begins with the leadership of your center. And it becoming a welcoming organizational culture. Welcoming for all. The think about the independent living movement of which always is in the back of my mind is it really was spurred on by five social movements, itself civil rights movements of consumerism, self‑help movement, demedicalization and he did institutionalization. With civil rights act, being foundation and that act was eliminate discrimination, on determined by race, ethnicity, and in 1990, the ATA bit off of that foundation the rehab act and extends that same antidiscrimination to people with disabilities. So if we are ‑‑ if our foundation is one of antidiscrimination. If our foundation is one of equity, equal opportunity as we say when we're in the street, then we must be accountable to make sure that our center is operating in that way and we each have a personal responsibility in making sure that happens. And while I know there's not all ED s on the phone, personally we can look within ourselves and make sure that we're doing the best to not micro aggress a person and if we are, to correct it. As someone said in the chat, how we do that in a individual level and a organization level is make sure we now how people want to be communicated with. We need to when it comes to our buildings, employ micro aggressions. Buildings named after white heterosexual upper class males. There's a need for naturalized training. And we need to continue and be start or start to have real conversations not only about micro aggressions but how we can make ourselves welcoming for anyone that has a disability of that is of a diverse nature and not only welcoming but make it that we have effective service for them. I'm going to give this to Brook. I think I did her slide.

>> No, no, you didn't. Really great points, Stan. And I just wanted to add another point about creating that welcoming organizational culture. So hopefully have you a diverse staff that resembles the diversity of your service area and so you also want to create a welcoming environment not only for consumers but also for your staff. If your environment is not welcoming, why would they stay? So you're looking at staff retention. You really want you really want to be welling coming to all individuals.

So and now I'm going to talk about how should individuals address micro aggressions. So when you're the target. So when a micro aggression, you're experiencing a micro aggression from someone, you really I know this is hard, you want to attack the comment and not the person. I saw someone in the chat mention that they ‑‑ they just ‑‑ they asked the individual the intention when a micro aggression has occurred to them. They said hey, you know, what did you kind of mean by that? And so then that way it kind of opens up the conversation and you're not just assuming the intention. And it could be a way today indicate and inform that individual.

Certainly, as Stan and I have said, I feel like numerous times, you really want to speak up. I look at those instances where I experienced a micro aggression and I didn't speak up for myself and I really regret it looking back just because I feel like, you know, it left me just asking some sow many questions and I was left handling that internal dilemma of that what does that person mean, what does that person think of me. So as we said, the worst response is no response, okay? And then people who witness a micro aggression could be effected by it even when a target isn't effected. So there's some individuals who, you know, a comment might be made and it might not really impact them but there could be bystanders or there could be people who hear it and it really, it effects them as well. So in those instances if you are a bystander and you were effected by the comment, I do think that you should speak up as well.

>> I would like to jump in before you go to the next slide.

>> Sure.

>> Tony is on. Tony wants to ask a question. Tony, if you could speak.

>> Tony, you're unmuted.

Okay. Tony, if you want to ask your question during the next slide, just feel free to. But next slide, please.

And so now how should individuals address micro aggressions when you're the micro aggressor? So I really think it's important to know that addressing the micro aggression is not only the responsibility of the target and marginalized group. You really want to be open‑minded to hearing why the comment affected them and why it impacted them. So don't dismiss the experience of the micro aggression as a isolated incident. Sometimes these micro aggression when is you are the one committing them, again, it can indicate that you might have an implicit bias that ‑‑ you that might need to kind of work on or kind of better understand. And then, of course, you want to apologize and reflect, reflect on why it happened and how you can prevent it from occurring again.

And Stan, do you have anything that you ‑‑

>> Well, I ‑‑ we got some ‑‑

>> We have some comments coming in.

>> Comments I want to put in right here before the interactive discussion. We have one comment that says you never gave well for a blind person. And once again action I've heard people say that and I've had to say something to them about that.

There's a good question. What would you say to those who make comments about how micro aggressions are just a joke? Well, number one, if you didn't take it as a joke, its not a joke. It's not a joke. And I think that's ‑‑ that's an easy way to cover up a bias. By saying I was just joking. So I don't believe that it was just a joke, and that's not the way to joke. Another question is do you address micro aggressions differently if you're not the target?

I don't know if you address it differently. You address it because it's offensive and that is something that, you know, even though the person didn't say anything, it was offensive to you because it said something to you about what you were conveying to that person. So I think you address it almost in the same manner. If you're going to address it, obviously you felt a way where it needed to be addressed. So those are the only comments I ‑‑ that I had. So if you wanted to move forward.

>> Well, and I have some comments in the Q ‑‑ or in the chat. It says, Anna says I love to ask people what they mean when they use micro aggressions. Because sometimes they realize what they have said and then we have a conversation about what it meant. And, for example, a statement when she hears individuals use those people, she says, I just look at them and go no, who?

>> Right.

>> That's a great way to handle that. And then I think those were all the comments that I have. So next slide, please.

Okay. So now we really want to continue to allow everyone to share their experiences and then continue o to ask questions. So again, you can use, we've ‑‑ you can use the Q&A and I'm also check the chat as well. There's a comment. So it says I think we personally need to recognize that we all can commit a micro aggression at any point in the day. And have a micro aggression made towards us. I challenge myself to be aware, to be, as aware as possible, on both ends of the spectrum so I can be part of the solution. I'm not perfect and make mistakes. That's a great point.

>> That's good.

>> That's good. Okay. So another question here says how do you stop yourself from being an angry person when you experience this when you experience this thing daily? Wow. Daily. So yeah. That makes it a little bit ‑‑ a little bit harder a little bit tougher because it is a ongoing thing. And I think, I guess, my first question is have you addressed it, and if you've addressed it and it still conditions to occur, I mean, there are certain steps that you can take. I think it also depends on who is the person who is committing the micro aggression. So if it's your friend, I think that's ail little different conversation versus if it is your coworker or supervisor so if it is a coworker or supervisor, there are certain steps that you can take and there are kind of some human resource related steps as far as documenting the instances.

>> I'd like to jump in. I would approach my boss or supervisor and just let them know that that comment, those comments kind of bother me. I would document it, though, you know, with an e‑mail after. But because if I go straight to HR, then the boss will say, hey, no one ever told me. So I would have a conversation. I would document it with the e‑mail as such and send it to HR. But I would be very professional on how I approach my supervisor or boss, let them know candidly how I feel without screaming or cutting up and then sending the e‑mail that's confirming that. And keeping that e‑mail and sending it to HR if you think it's a problem that will persist. But you cannot let it, especially if you're receiving these things daily, you have to take a ‑‑ take a step because it's not going to stop until you take a step.

>> And it's really, it's really impacting you. Again, as we mentioned, there are those psychological implications, those internal dilemmas, and it will continue to impact you.

>> I have some more comments in the chat. Wow. Let me pull it up. This is Marissa. I have some clients make ‑‑ have clients make micro aggressions over the phone because they don't know my identity. Example, those people who are on social security we will fair, I never wanted to be on that but now I need to. Any suggestions on to how to handle that? Number one, you probably could clarify those people and. And the other thing is, while people look at so social security or we will fair as negative, there's a stereotype that ‑‑ that you're lazy and you're just getting money for free or whatever it is, those things are there because life changes, the life changes, and it can happen to me, you and anybody elsewhere we're at a point and we'd be happy that, you know, there is something to fall back on. So if I were you, you know, I would just kind of let them know gently that a lot of people are on ‑‑ in those situations. Because they've tried and they couldn't help it. It's not a negative as a lot of people take it. So I, that's the way I would approach it, especially since it is bothering you, you know, you have to say something. And another one, we live with a leader who could be quite blatant with micro aggressions and this is unfortunate as this gives some folks license to do the same to follow suit. Everything has to start at the top, and to me, you need to approach that leader in the right way. Like someone asked earlier. You need to let them know that those comments are hurtful, regardless of the intention, and you don't feel comfortable with those comments. And document that. And then, you know, I don't know I don't know how due it but there's steps, I don't ‑‑ there's ways if it isn't addressed that it can be addressed organizationally. But it starts with you saying something and being very professional about it and going right to the leader. Because if people are just doing what they see him do, maybe if he changes or he becomes a catalyst to change, maybe they will change, but I think you put micro aggression on blast at that organization and then we work to and it's a long process, it's not going happen in a day, but I think it starts with you making the first step.

>> Yeah. And we have a participant who wants to use the mic. Lorraine, have you the mic when you're ready. Okay. Are you on mute? Okay. So ‑‑ oh, I heard something. Okay. So we'll come ‑‑ we'll come back to you, Lorraine, when you're ready. Let's see. So we have another question in the ‑‑ in Q & A it. Says I am a CLED and providing this training for our staff, we offer this topic to our consumers as a public consumer forum but no one came. This is a great topic that seems to resonate for us. So leadership, staff, and academics. But how do we bring this topic to the consumers? The consumers I speak with are not interested in this topic because they state they are more concerned with meeting concrete needs such as food, water, shelter, employment, etc. Stan, what do you think?

>> Number one, I think people will get ‑‑ I think keep working with the staff leadership and those folks there because as you guys transform the organization, as you guys begin to really take ahold of a micro aggression thing, there will come a time, number one, your folks will ‑‑ your folks will live this. And the consumers will get it. They're ready for the essentials. I've always been one, especially to work with, I got what's working and what's working right now is firm up my staff, that leadership, let's engrain this in our values, in our priorities, and our policies and let's continue to operate this way and you know what, continue to offer this course. One thing I would say is usually every group of consumers or so, there's influencers. If you can get the year of an influencer or two and even if they come and sit in on the training, the formal training that you're doing, the good training you're doing, you're bound to bring other people in. It will be a ‑‑ it will be a process. But I think that I want to commend you for doing this. You're the first one I know that's doing this. And we appreciate that. I appreciate your comment and I hope we helped you.

>> Yeah, Stan. I really like your point about finding an influencer. I think that that's so true because really change when you're looking at change within a an organization, it's really more about those interpersonal communication channels. So if you can identify that influencer, it will really, they'll start telling everyone and start kind of passing the message for you.

I also think too the term micro aggression, some people are aware of it and for some it's kind of a newer it. So I think if you're looking to get consumers involved with this, I would say maybe kind of use the tight that will might be a little different. Because micro aggressions, again, some individuals aren't aware of what that term means.

>> Great answer. Great answer.

>> So we have another question here. It says how do we celebrate difference, diversity, while not losing focus that we are all one? For example, I believe we have more in common than we do indifferent. This may be a loaded question because I believe we have more in common than differences. I think it is this common ground we can synergize to celebrate and honor differences. I ‑‑ well I think that you celebrate diversity, celebrating diversity is a way that you get to learn and know culture of others and ethnicities and learn. A lot of things we say is out of fear and out of ignorance and not knowing. I think that if you guys are celebrating difference, I know centers that would celebrate the different months, national Hispanic month, national African‑American month, they will celebrate it and have continuing activities or activities once a week that month to celebrate that just so they, everybody of all different cultures can learn a little bit about the other one. I do think you continue to show the thread of how we all have more in common, especially from a center's perspective when it comes to helping people live independently and gaining the quality of life they choose. And I think there are threads that tie us and bound us together and I do think threads can be stronger than the differences.

>> And as Stan mentioned, I think celebrating diversity just shows that as an organization, you're in tune, you're open, and I think that that's really important. Recent article that I came across was there was a high school that actually decided it had scheduled its promise but it decided to move it because it interfered with Ramadan. And, to me, I think that that just shows that the school district and that school in particular is just, it's just intune and they're not ‑‑ they're not dismissing students, they're not saying, you know, well, you know, if you can't make it this day for prom, sorry. It shows that they're welcoming.

>> I have two comments I would like to bring up.

>> Okay.

>> One was to actually to one of the comments you had, when it came to the word micro aggression, Brook.

>> Okay.

>> And a young lady said I think many people don't know what that word means. And if you can frame the training for skills of work and community relations, that's one way to put it.

>> Perfect.

>> She had another idea where you can add micro aggression training in to other trainings that people are attending. So one, how to act with medical professionals. There's a level of micro aggression that probably goes on there that can be addressed in that training. And finally, you can celebrate diversity without using tokenism examples and displace. You know and the example is drinking margaritas and wearing sombreros versus inviting a Latino organization to share the heritage and food tradition. And to speak to that comment, let's not ‑‑ let our intentions be real and let's not skirt the ‑‑ let's not just skim over the service of the subject, let's bring in an organization that can give us some depth in history you know, that will enrich us all, versus us saying, okay, we're drinking margaritas today, we're happy Mexican day. There's no more quiz in the queue.

>> Any other questions?

>> I have questions.

>> Okay.

(Laughter)

>> And you guys have been so good I'm going to ask you one more question. Just give us some words or phrases that create a welcoming environment at your SIL or from your experience would create a welcoming environment? What word or phrase would create a welcoming environment at your SIL? And while you're thinking about that, okay. Here's one. Love is love. Disability rights are human rights. Pro pronounce do you use.

>> Those are great.

>> Inclusion for all. Thank you, Renee. She says, thank you, this was very informative.

>> Thanks, Renee.

>> We got another ‑‑ wow. They keep coming.

>> Yeah, I have one. You are fine just the way you are.

>> There you go.

>> Can addressing micro aggression be a micro aggressive? If the other party believes I'm being prejudiced when I let him know I be observed their behavior as harmful or micro aggressive if they feel harm? I think if we ‑‑ if we address it the wrong way, it may become micro aggressive or, in some way, be aggressive to the person. I don't ‑‑ I think if we address these things in a proper way, hey, I don't know if you know but, you know, that was offensive and why it was offensive, you know, I don't think that's micro aggressive.

>> Yeah. I don't think so either. And I think really just if you explain kind of where you're coming from and, like, you know, just explain that you ‑‑ you don't want ‑‑ you don't want to argue or you don't want to do anything but you just really want to explain how the comment made you feel, I think that that might maybe help in that situation.

>> Okay. I have, wow, it looks like a bunch of more questions and we have a few minutes. We only have two minutes so I'm going to fly through this. Some more comments on share your disability does not define you.

>> I have you are more than your disability.

>> There's some more questions to us. That we'll try to answer real quick. Always giving the staff the opportunity and making it easy for staff to comment on inclusion. How to improve inclusion and request accommodations and I think that's making it welcoming. Another comment, you can always pull someone aside later, you don't have to correct them in front of the whole team. Jimmy, earlier you said something that sounded very insensitive, and I do agree with that.

>> That's a great point.

>> Because you do it in front of everybody else, it's almost like take it like well, you're doing this in front of everybody else and that might create a situation. Another person, I am a gay man with a disability, I'm not easily offended. I look at comments as throw they're not malicious but opportunities to educate and that's a great way to look at it.

>> And we have another great comment, good intention is needed but not sufficient to overcome this issue.

>> Absolutely. I think that echoes that quote we said earlier.

>> Yep.

>> Okay. I don't know why we are on time. If we get cut off. I'm curious about your thoughts in regards to the phrase people of color. Doesn't it categorize all people of color in to one label? Yeah, it sounds like it does to me. It sounds like it does, that anybody with any color is one label. And those are my thoughts, even though within people of color there's different ethnicities, races, cultures, sometimes they use it and they categorize everybody and maybe they don't need everybody. And then someone says, what color are you referring to? That's a good question.

>> Another comment, honesty, transparency and communication, just get it all out tonight table and discuss it openly, instead of behind someone's back and skirting around the issue. You said it, I felt it.

>> Okay. I want to ‑‑ I'm sorry, we can't get to the rest of these comments. You guys are really great but we need to wrap it up here. And hopefully we'll have another chance to continue the conversation. We're so thankful for your participation. And we hope you that take this matter personally. And look in yourself and see what you can do to change how you communicate to everybody.

>> Yes.

>> And explain that you're not micro aggressing against them.

>> Exactly. And please continue these conversations and just thank you so much again for your participation. This was great. And now, Carol, we're going to pass it over to you.

>> Okay. Well, directly following the webinar, you will see an evaluation survey to complete on your screen. We do really want your feedback in order to improve our programs and we just thank everyone for joining us today. The presenters and all the participants, thank you so much. And bye, everybody.

>> Bye, y'all.