

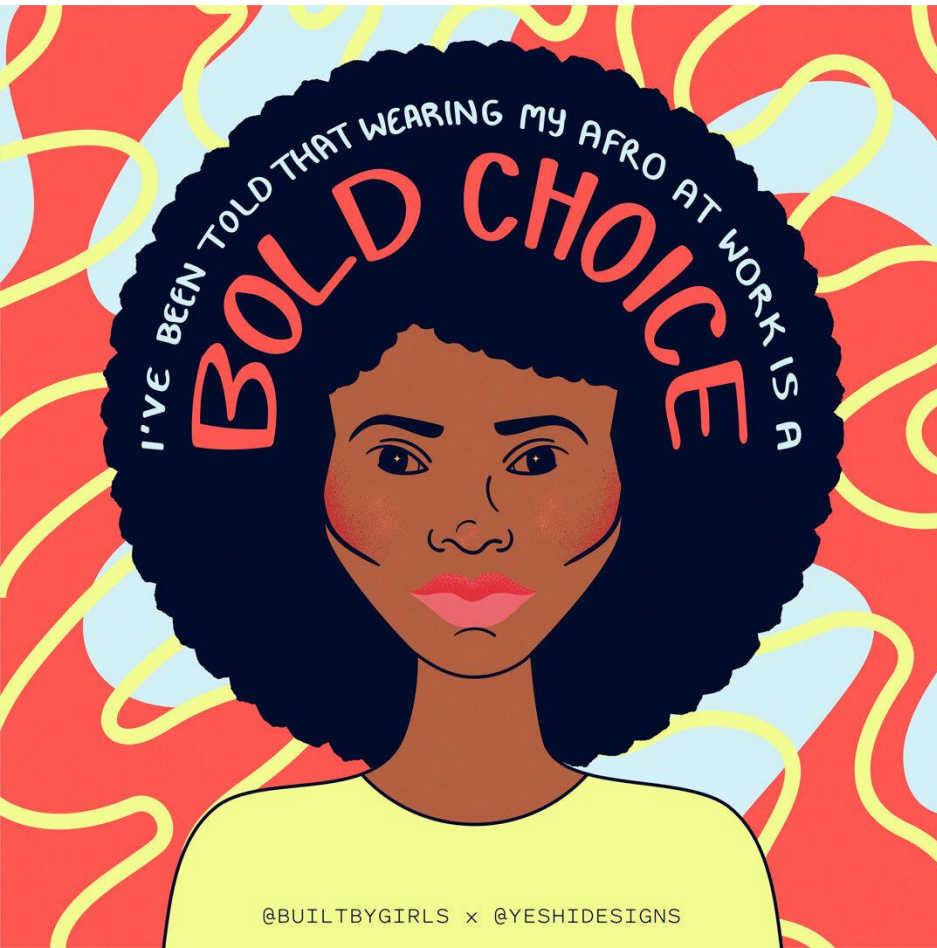


Microaggressions & Microassaults

DR JOAN MYERS OBE, QN

JOAN MYERS CONSULTANCY LIMITED

Racism by another name



We are not immune from having individual, institutional and societal biases associated with race, gender, disability and sexual orientation and the other protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. These bias are often inherited from our ancestors, institutions and society. The contemporary forms of racism etc is known as microaggressions or micro-assaults.

MICROAGGRESSION:

A TERM USED FOR BRIEF AND COMMONPLACE DAILY VERBAL, BEHAVIOURAL, OR ENVIRONMENTAL INDIGNITIES, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL, THAT COMMUNICATE HOSTILE, DEROGATORY, OR NEGATIVE PREJUDICIAL SLIGHTS AND INSULTS TOWARD ANY GROUP, PARTICULARLY CULTURALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS.



Yeah I still have malaria from the last time someone said something stupid but well-intentioned to me

Three Kinds of Microaggressions

- Microassault – verbal attack, name calling, avoidant behavior or purposeful discriminatory actions
- Microinsult – an unconscious insult demeaning a marginalized person's heritage or identity
- Microinvalidation – communications that exclude, negate, or nullify a marginalized person's thoughts, feelings or experiential reality

RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

Where are you from? Where are you really from? No, where are you really really from?

What are you?

You speak English so well.

You're not like other Muslim people.

RACIAL
MICROAGGRESSIONS

What do your people think about that?

You don't act like a normal Black person.

You're really pretty, for someone so dark.

Why do you sound so White?

Your name is too hard to pronounce, can I call you Mary?

Not pronouncing or spelling an individual's name correctly

People moving away from you or holding their breath when around you

Not giving eye contact when the individual is speaking

Making assumptions about skills/abilities/temperament of the individual based on stereotypes

Interrupting an individual when they are speaking

Ignoring what you have said/instructed and asking other people for clarity or confirmation

Ignoring individuals in meetings and in the workplace

Subjecting an individual to more criticism and harder judgement compared to their white counterparts

Continually arranging team social events based around alcohol, thereby making an individual feel unwelcome

Dismissing an individual's opinion or perspective

A lack of awareness of personal space and personal boundaries which can lead to uncomfortableness

What does a microaggression look like?

Making assumptions about seniority. The micro-aggressive assumption being that the most senior person in the room is white

1 GENDER

Whistling as a woman walks by. **Message:** You are a sex object. That is, women's appearance is for the enjoyment of men. (Source: Derald Wing Sue)

2 MICROASSAULT

"Explicit racial derogations" meant to hurt, such as calling somebody "colored" or "Oriental." (Source: Visions, Inc.)

3 MICRO-INVALIDATION

Negating the thoughts, feelings, or experiences of a person of color. Ex: "Don't be so sensitive." (Source: Visions, Inc.)

TYPES OF



5 IMITATING ACCENTS

Mimicking foreign accents reinforces stereotypes & often mocks groups for struggling with English.



6 ASCRIPTION OF INTELLIGENCE

Assigning smarts based on race or gender. "How'd YOU get into that school?" (Source: Gwen Miller)

BRAIN



BLAST

MICROAGGRESSIONS



EXAMPLES



7 MICROAGGRESSION STATEMENTS

- "You don't sound like a black person."
 - "So, like, what are you?"
 - "You're really cute for a brown-skinned girl."
 - "Why do you sound white?"
 - "You're smart for a girl."
- (Source: BuzzFeed)

DEFINITION

Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group. Hidden messages may "communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten & intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status & treatment." (Source: Derald Wing Sue)

4 AVOID SAYING...

- A) "Where are you from?"
Message: You're not American.
- B) "You're so articulate."
Message: Your group isn't usually as intelligent as Whites.
- C) "I'm not racist; I have several black friends."
Message: I'm immune to racism because I have friends of color.
- D) Saying to an Asian person: "Speak up more. You're so quiet."
Message: Assimilate to the dominant culture.
- E) "You people..." **Message:** You don't belong. You are lesser. (Source: Wing, et. al., 2007 via U. of Minnesota)

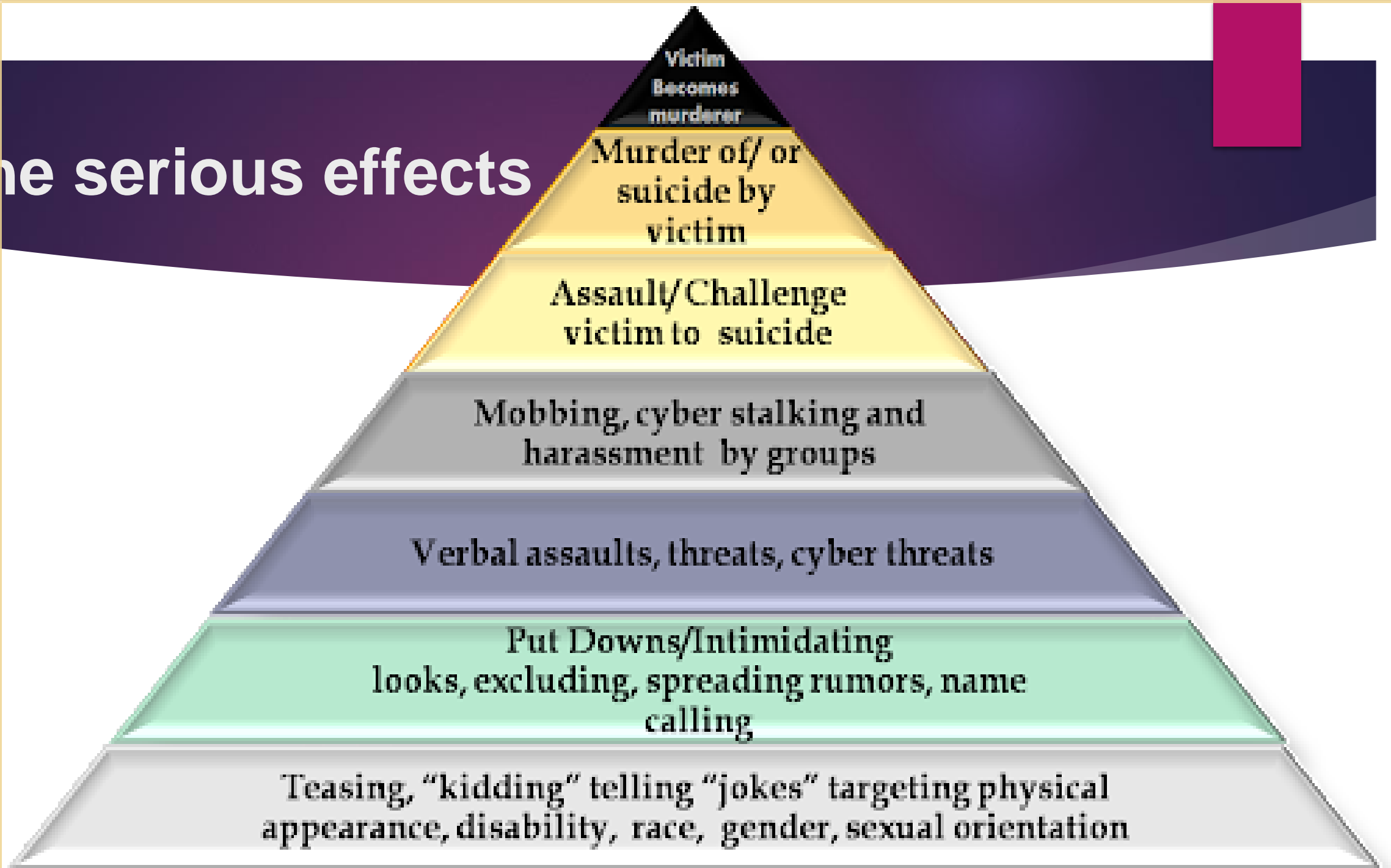


Microaggressions and Microassaults



- ▶ These forms of bias are often invisible, unintentional and subtle in nature; usually outside the level of consciousness.
- ▶ They create psychological dilemmas for both parties because it represents a clash of racial realities.
- ▶ Microaggressions create a hostile and invalidating climate and saps the victims energy and can result in depression, frustration, anger, rage, lost of self-esteem, anxiety and insomnia

The serious effects



RESPECT AND CIVILITY

in our Just and Learning Culture

We want to empower staff to challenge miscommunication, reduce hurt and always choose civility and a positive culture.

This tool describes some of the characteristics of positive and negative actions and can be used in discussions about behavioural change.



RESPECT AND CIVILITY

in our Just and Learning Culture

We want to empower staff to challenge miscommunication, reduce hurt and always choose civility and a positive culture.

This tool describes some of the characteristics of positive and negative actions and can be used in discussions about behavioural change.

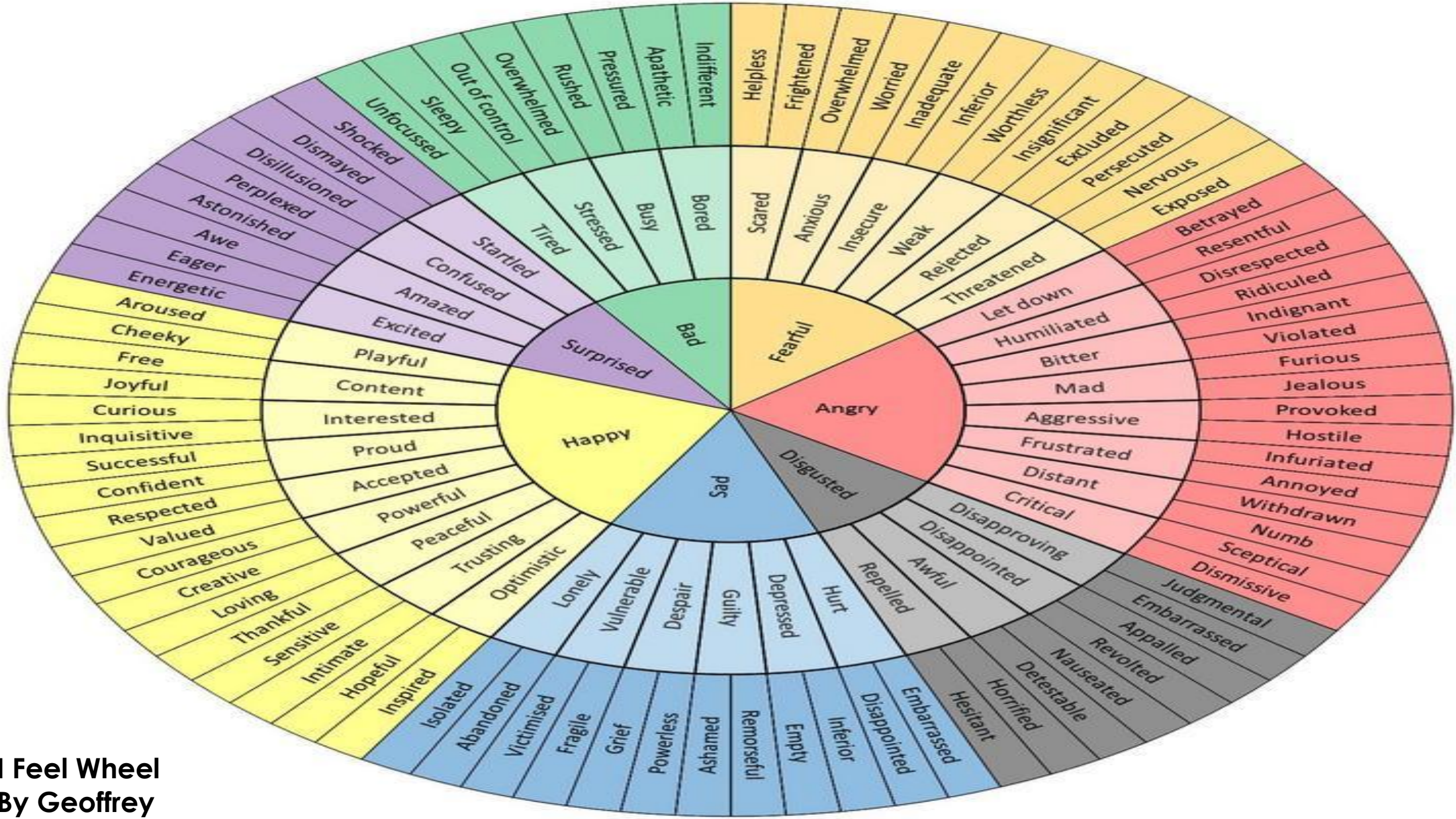


Did that just really happen?

- ▶ You have to determine whether the microaggression actually occurred. Self-denial or disbelief
- ▶ How you react can be a challenge – if you react in anger – labelled – “angry black woman.” labelled as oversensitive, paranoid or too emotional
- ▶ Do nothing – anger and resentment builds up and damages you
- ▶ Do nothing because you don’t know how to respond
- ▶ Rationalise that there is no point responding because things won’t change or it may get worse
- ▶ Rescue or protect the offender – “they can’t help it, that’s just the way they are.” or “she did not mean it that way.”

Should I respond to this microaggression?

- ▶ Ponder the potential risks or consequences of responding or not responding
- ▶ 1. If I respond, could my physical safety be in danger?
- ▶ 2. If I respond, will the person become defensive and will this lead to an argument?
- ▶ 3. If I respond, how will this affect my relationship with this person
- ▶ 4. If I don't respond, will I regret not saying something?
- ▶ 5. If I don't respond, does that convey that I accept the behaviour or statement?



I Feel Wheel
By Geoffrey

The Four Fs of Actively Reviewing









► The four F's of reviewing will help you to review an experience and plan for the future by moving through four levels:

1. **Facts:** An objective account of what happened
2. **Feelings:** The emotional reactions to the situation
3. **Findings:** The concrete learning that you can take away from the situation
4. **Future:** Structuring your learning such that you can use it in the future

WHAT DO I DO NOW?



How do you feel?

 Angry	 Scared	 Sad	 Happy
 Frustrated	 Anxious	 Disappointed	 Calm

Conscious Discipline logo and copyright information at the bottom.



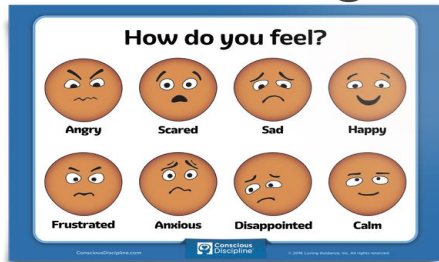
Open The Front Door Communication Framework -



What You need to do?

1) State in clear, unambiguous language what you **see** happening?

2) Express what you **think** or what you imagine others might be thinking



3) Express what you **feel** about the situation



4) State what you would like to have happen, your **desired outcome**

DESIRE

Telephone counselling service

The counselling service provides confidential, brief therapy for work-related issues and personal problems.

Our counsellors can help you with issues such as:

- **depression and low mood**
- **stress and anxiety**
- **raising confidence and self-esteem**
- **bullying and harassment**
- **relationship issues**
- **bereavement and loss**
- **effective coping strategies**
- **work-life balance and self-care.**

“I had experienced great distress without any professional support until I engaged in counselling. The counsellor was very good at helping me to see my situation differently, and to be kinder towards myself. It was a big step towards making positive changes.”





**THANK YOU
FOR
YOUR
ATTENTION!
ANY QUESTIONS?**

KeepCalmAndPosters.com

Email: joan@joanmyers.co.uk

website: www.joan@drjoanmyers.com

Twitter: @joan_myers