

Implicit bias and microaggressions: what are they and how can we address them?

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About Us/Me

- A consultancy focused on creating solutions and strategies for **promoting inclusive behavior** and **managing generational differences**
- Founder is a former/now current Chief Diversity Officer; the **Board chair for Olentangy Local Schools' district-wide diversity committee**
- Provided strategic advice on D&I issues across multiple countries

Recent/Current Ohio engagements



Introductions

- On one side: **NAME**
- On the other side:
 - top left corner: **favorite food**
 - top right corner: **favorite place to vacation**
 - bottom left corner: **person most admired**
 - bottom right corner: **one thing you want to gain from this session**
- Share with one person (you don't know)

Objectives

- Gain Understanding of Implicit Bias and Microaggressions
- Examine personal biases and how they can “leak out” in our behaviors and actions
- Create Action Items to minimize and mitigate the impact of implicit bias and microaggressions

What to expect



Dispel Assumptions

Diversity is often defined in limited terms. This is NOT that session.



Apply Learning

Thinking through the examples we discuss today, you will be able to apply those lessons to real-life scenarios.



Design Thinking

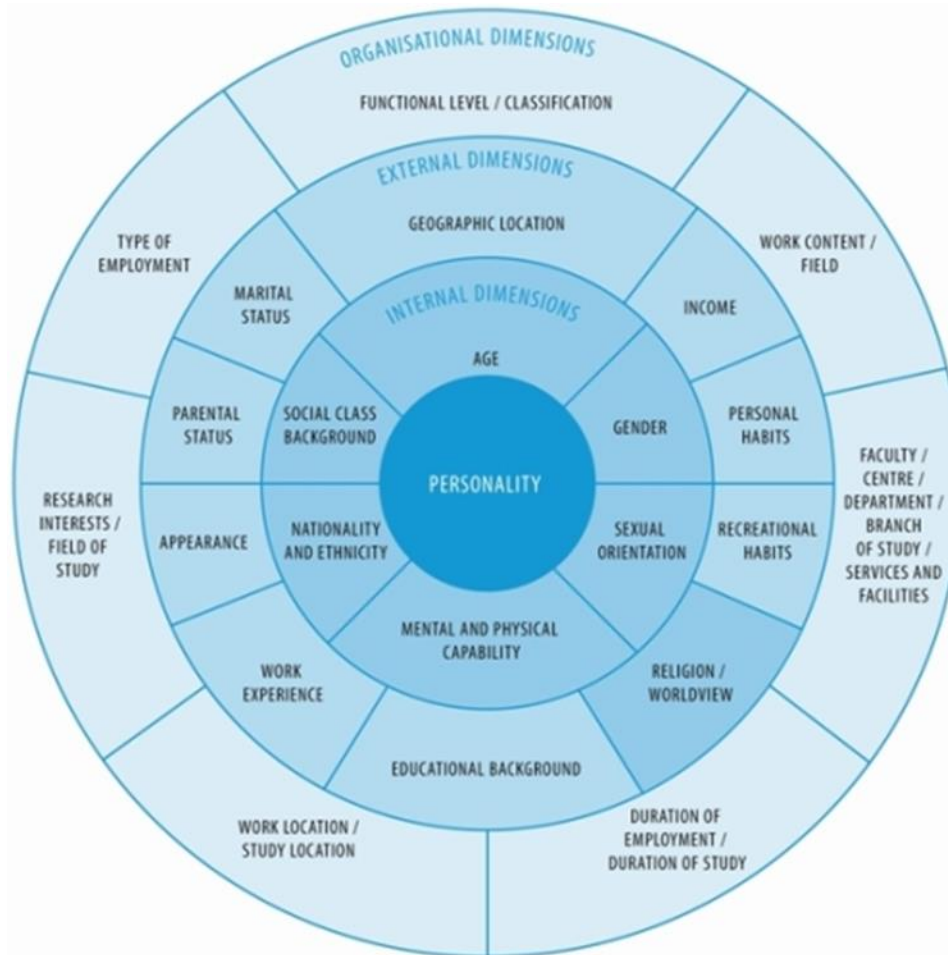
Collaborate in small teams to identify opportunities and propose solutions.

*Building a Broad
Awareness of
Diversity & Inclusion*

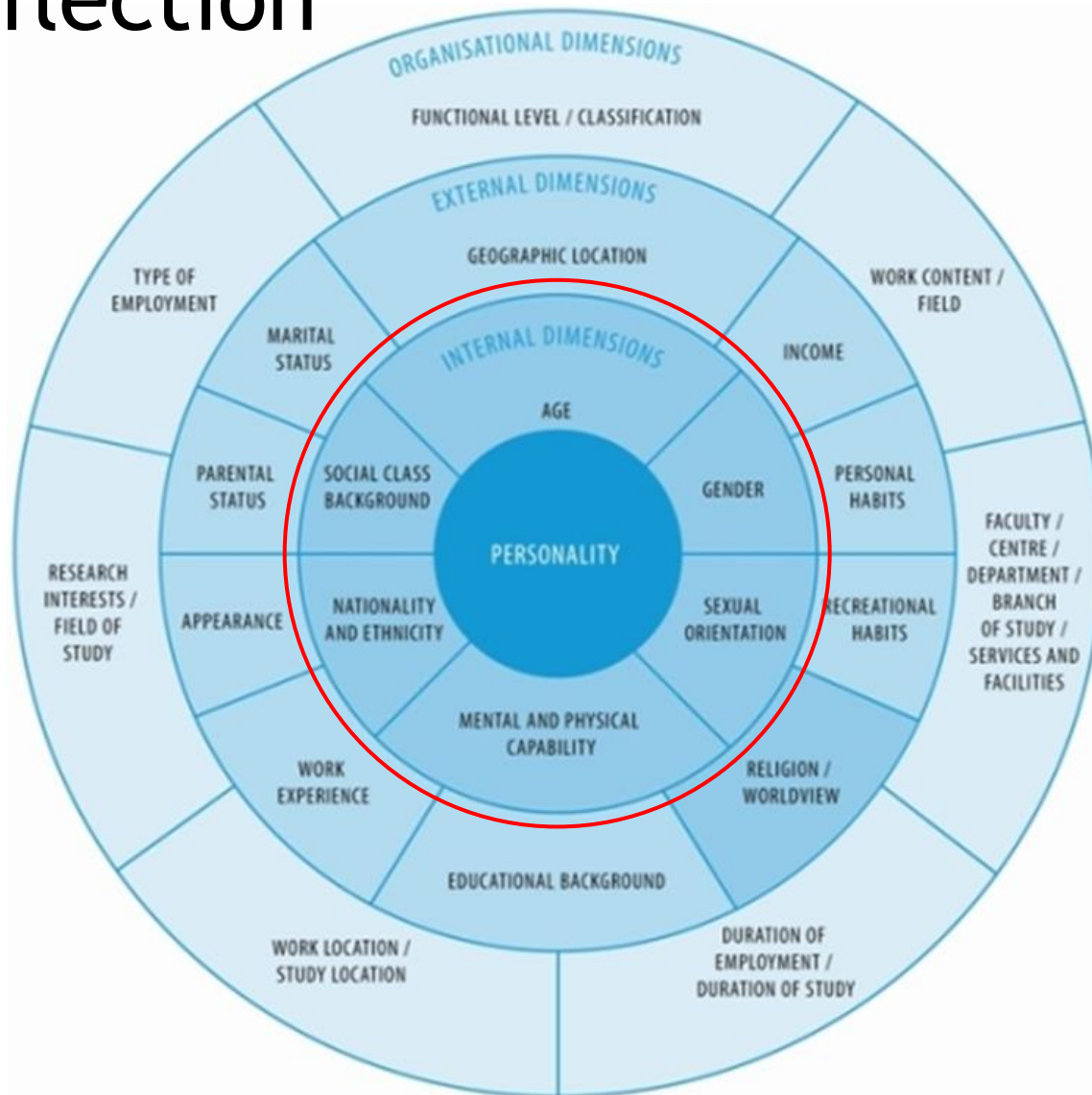


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Diversity Wheel: *How We Define Diversity*



Internal Dimensions: Personal Reflection



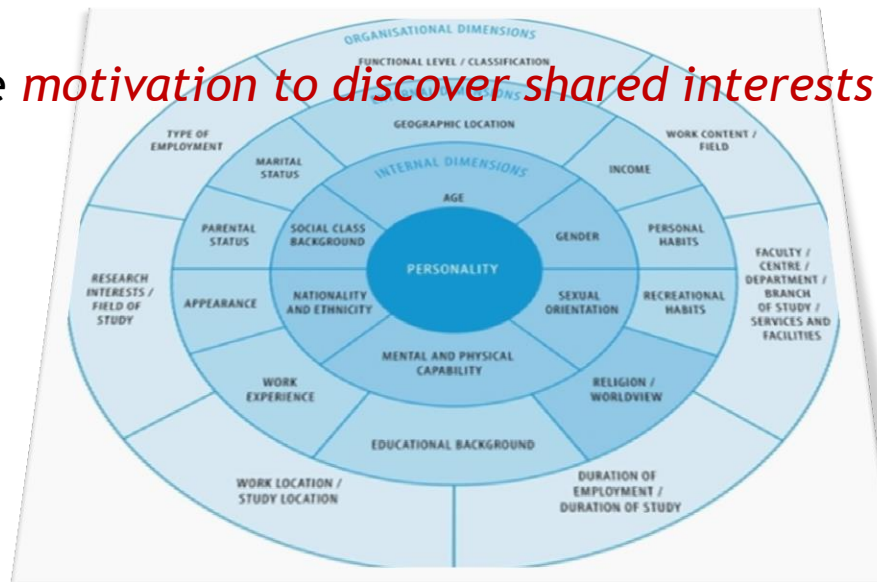
Please select 2 dimensions

Discuss:

1. Growing up, what messages did you receive and internalize?
2. How do these messages influence your decisions and interactions?

Diversity Wheel: *Interrupting Patterns*

1. Engaging the brain's ability to move beyond perceived threats to *build trust across differences*
2. Generating *compassion and empathy* towards others who are not like ourselves
3. Keeping the positive brain engaged to create open minded perceptions and the motivation to *build connections*
4. Increasing the *motivation to discover shared interests* and collaborate across differences



*What is Implicit
(Unconscious) Bias?*



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Implicit (Unconscious) Bias *Defined*

- It is a **blind spot** that requires a shift on how we think about other people that we perceive different.
- It is driven by the hard wiring pattern of making decisions about others based on what feels safe, familiar, likeable, valuable and competent to us without us realizing it.
- It is a **prejudice** we have or **an assumption** that we make about another person based on common cultural stereotypes, rather than on a thoughtful judgment.

unconsciously biased in favor of traits similar to our own, even such seemingly meaningless traits as our names. Scientists have even identified a discrete area of the brain, called the dorsal striatum, as the structure that mediates much of this bias.”

Leonard Mlodinow, Subliminal: How Your Unconscious Mind Rules Your Behavior

Implicit Bias: *Are You Aware?*

Small gestures can be perceived as evidence of bias

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

*What are
microaggressions?*



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Video:

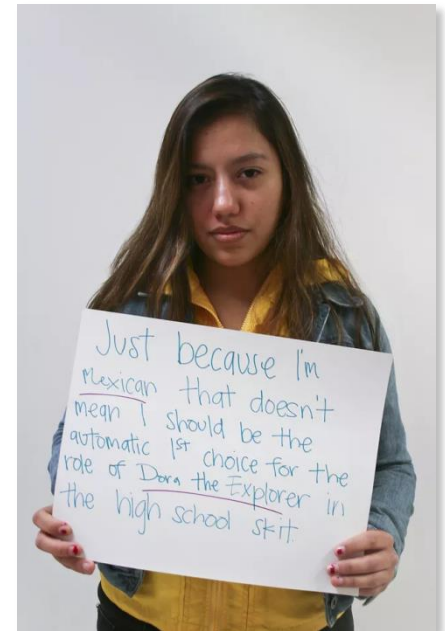
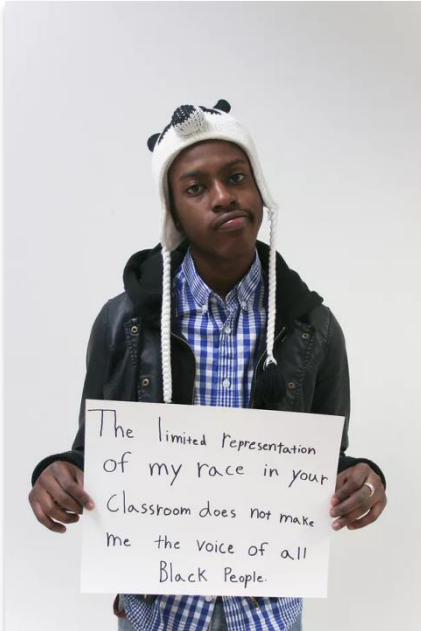
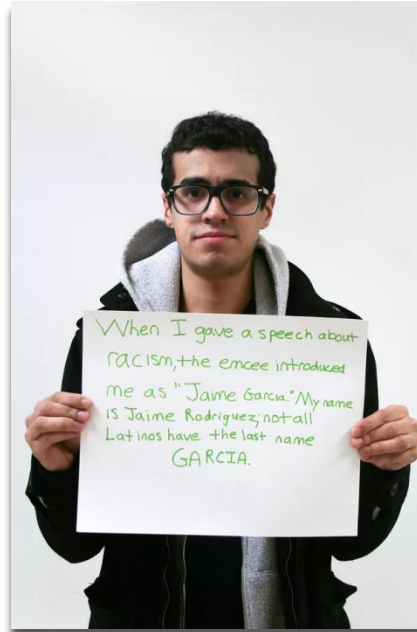
What is the definition of Microaggressions?



Microaggressions *Defined*

- Brief everyday interactions that signal a person's identity or social group is less valued or perceived negatively. They tend to be **subtle** rather than obvious insults or acts of violence.
 - Commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or **unintentional**, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights or insults (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder & Nadal, 2007).
 - Over time, these microaggressions can build up and have **long-term effect on students' mental health, motivation, commitment and achievement.**
 - Researchers have found that individuals faced with microaggressions "are likely to **exhibit negative mental health symptoms such as depression, anxiety, negative view of the world, and lack of behavioral control.**"
- The term was coined by Chester Pierce in 1978 after Civil Rights era to bring to attention the shift in racial relations and the less-recognized racist behaviors.
 - Derald Sue and colleagues refined in 2007

A
photographer at
Fordham
University asked
her peers to write
down the
microaggressions
they've
encountered.
Here is what they
had to say...



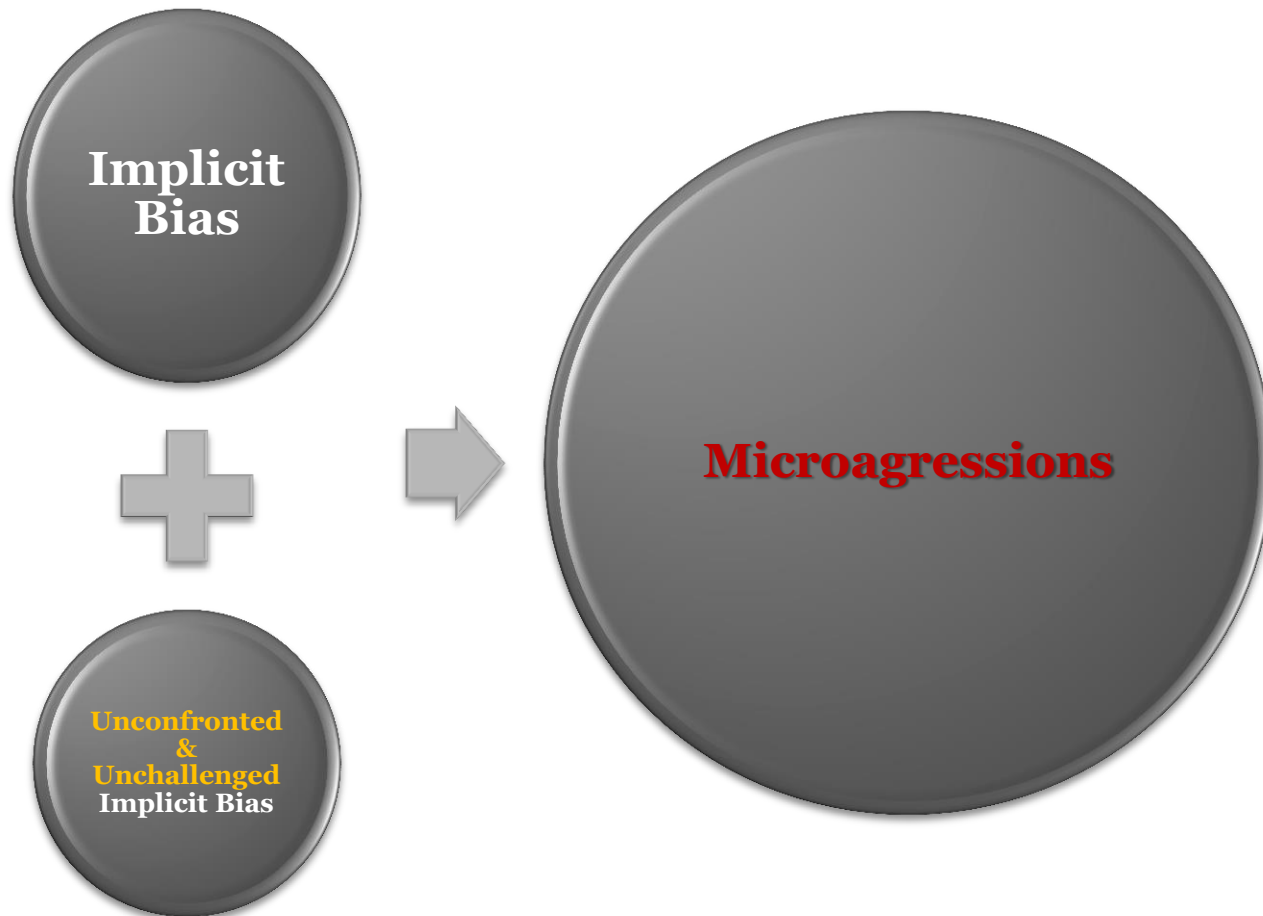
Microaggressions: The Impact

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<i>Alien in own land</i> When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born	"Where are you from?" "Where were you born?" "You speak good English." A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.	You are not American You are a foreigner
<i>Ascription of Intelligence</i> Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race.	"You are a credit to your race." "You are so articulate." Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.
<i>Color Blindness</i> Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race	"When I look at you, I don't see color." "America is a melting pot." "There is only one race, the human race."	Denying a person of color's racial / ethnic experiences. Assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.
<i>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</i> A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.	A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes. A store owner following a customer of color around the store. A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.	You are a criminal. You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.
<i>Denial of individual racism</i> A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases	"I'm not a racist. I have several Black friends." "As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."	I am immune to races because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you.

Discuss:

1. How have you seen microaggressions show up?
2. What impact have they had on:
 - students?
 - teachers?
 - administrators?
 - parents?

The Connection: Implicit Bias & Microaggressions



A Striving Parent: Reflections on implicit biases and microaggressions

*I confront my implicit biases...on a regular basis. Why am I more wary of a black solicitor at my door rather than a white solicitor? Why do I consider crossing the street when a group of black teenagers are approaching and I rarely have the same impulse when I encounter a group of white teenagers? Implicit biases such as these pop up frequently and every time I try to **take notice** and **challenge myself to question the validity in my knee-jerk reactions**. In essence, I have to fight against my subconscious, racist tendencies to keep my biases in check. I fight this fight so I don't pass along my biases unintentionally to my children. I fight this fight so I can be a better person and a better member of society. But I have to constantly fight this fight.*

When implicit biases like the examples I state above (solicitors, crossing the street) turn into actions, they are known as microaggressions.”

Preventing & Addressing Microaggression

- Understand the difference between *Intent* and *Impact*
- Don't be afraid to *talk* about it.
- *Be aware* of your assumptions
- Be aware of how *colorblindness* can make students feel

*Creating a Path to
more Inclusive
Environments*



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Q: What changes do you want to see?



Area

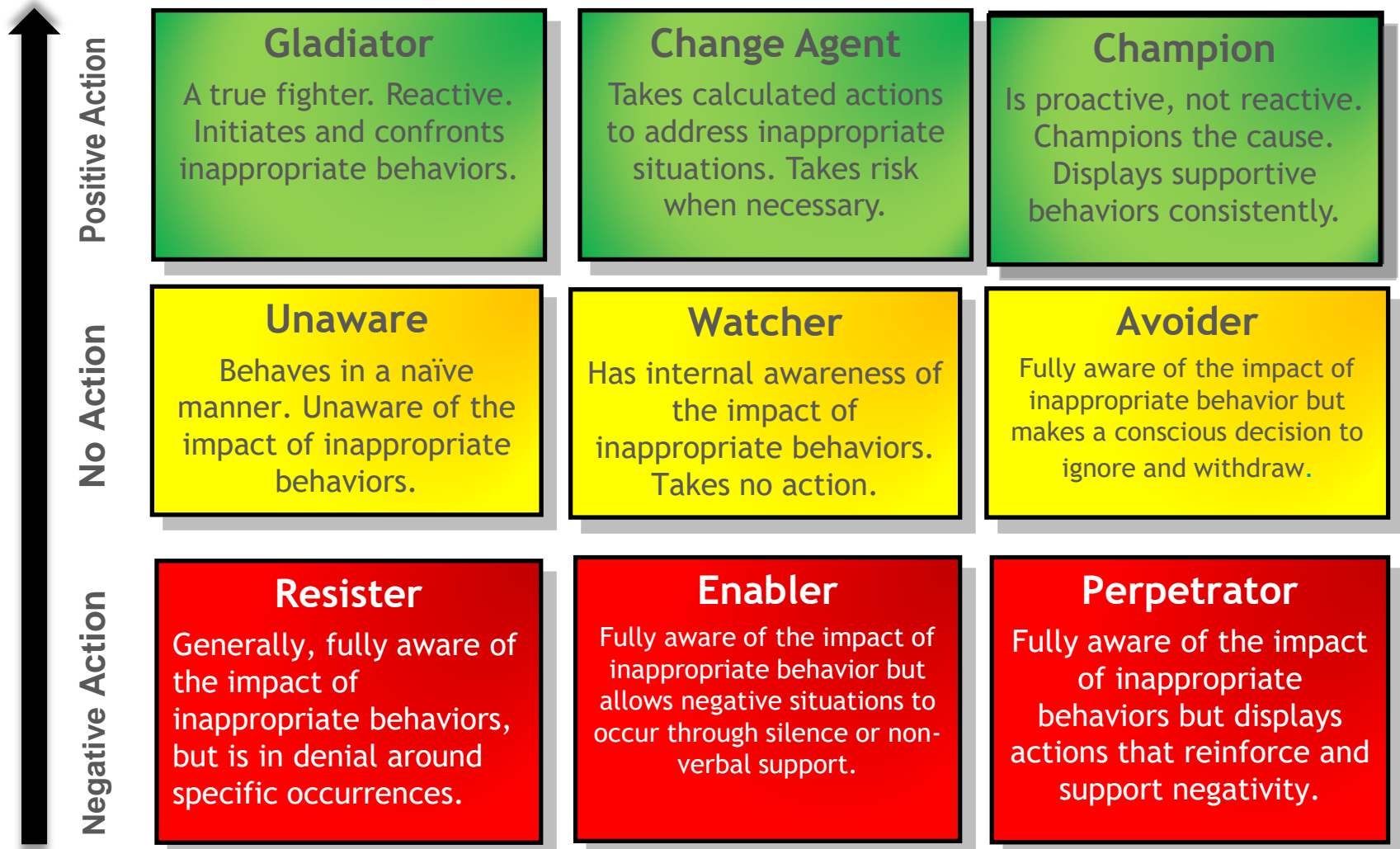
What's happening now?

Inclusive Behaviors You want to see

A few things to consider...

- Train teachers and administrators on Implicit Bias and Microaggressions
- Cultivating “cultural humility” and “cultural curiosity”
- Encourage Dialogue – starting with yourself

It's your choice...



Your Commitment

START

STOP

CONTINUE

Wrap-Up



Resources

- https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis?utm_term=.vv4PYAyxed#.iso6RLmBJ8
- <https://vptl.stanford.edu/faculty-instructors/diversity-inclusion/understanding-implicit-bias-and-microaggressions>
- <https://strivingparent.com/2015/09/16/wait-am-i-racist-reflections-on-implicit-biases-and-microaggressions/>
- <https://www.noodle.com/articles/microaggressions-in-the-classroom-the-teachers-role>
- <http://www.racialmicroaggressions.illinois.edu/files/2015/03/RMA-Classroom-Report.pdf>