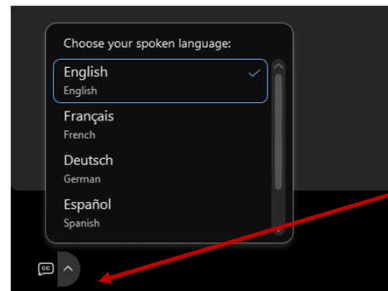
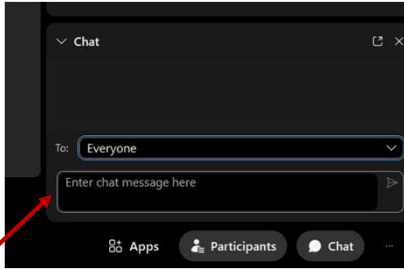


## Welcome!

- Lines have been muted.
- If you have questions or comments, use the chat feature and post to EVERYONE.



Closed Captioning is available! Select CC on the bottom left of your screen and select your preferred language.

1



1.5 CPEs have been approved for this webinar



**CPE Evaluation:** Please use the link at the end of the webinar



Handout of slides and CPE certificate will be provided via email

2

## Using Chats During ACEND Town Hall



ACEND encourages attendees to use the chat feature to ask questions and express their opinions respectfully



At any point, ACEND reserves the right to remove an attendee from the Town Hall for inappropriate or harassing comments

3



This webinar is being recorded



The slides and recording will be shared on the ACEND DEI webpage

4

## ACEND® Surveys of Supervised Practice/Experiential Learning Programs Students and Graduates (DIs, CPs)



### Students and Advancing Education

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- ACEND Board Dietetic Student Representative Application

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- Two Email Communications
  - Student Exit Survey
    - Readiness to practice
  - Graduate Survey
    - Preparation and competence to practice
    - Employment

5

### Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

the accrediting agency for the  
**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition  
and Dietetics

## Empowering Dietetics Students: Navigating Microaggressions & Advocacy in Academic Settings

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# Empowering Dietetics Students: Navigating Microaggressions & Advocacy in Academic Settings

Tamara S. Melton, MS, RDN  
Co-Founder and Executive Director  
Diversify Dietetics, Inc

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## DISCLOSURES

**Tamara S. Melton, MS, RDN LD**

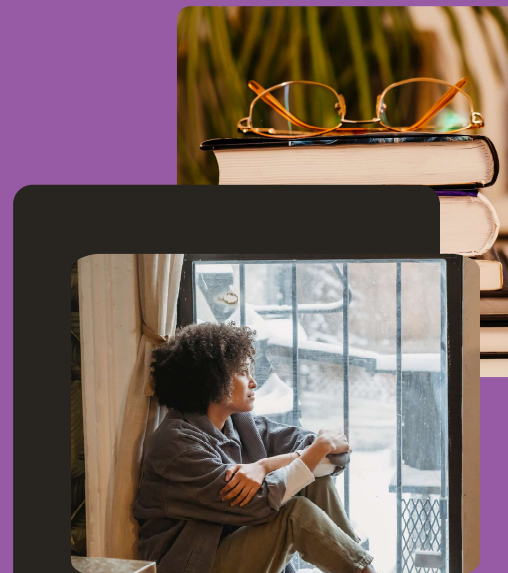
- Diversify Dietetics, Inc- Co-Founder and Executive Director
- TSM Nutrition Consultants, LLC- Owner



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# SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Define microaggressions and how they may present for students and interns in dietetics education programs
- Identify strategies to advocate for oneself as student or intern experiencing microaggression
- Describe how nutrition students and professionals who are witnesses of microaggressions can advocate for classmates



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## WHAT IS A MICROAGGRESSION?



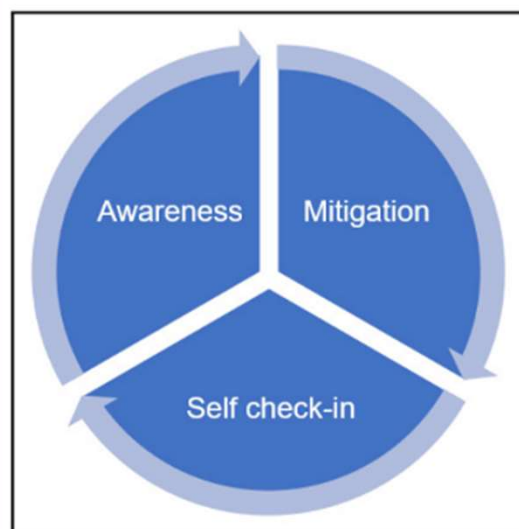
10

# MICROAGGRESSIONS DEFINED

“Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations, and insults to an individual or group because of their marginalized status in society”  
(Sue, 2014)

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**Figure 3. Process to mitigate implicit bias in clinical practice**



Dalton, 2018

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# PEOPLE WHO ARE MORE LIKEY TO EXPERIENCE MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Race
- Ethnicity/culture/nationality
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Mental disability or illness
- Physical disability
- Socio-economic class status
- Age Generation
- Hierarchal rank
- Any combination

Berk R.A, 2017a

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## MICROAGGRESSIONS AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO LEARN AND PERFORM ACADEMICALLY

- Research has shown that experiencing microaggressions has a negative and cumulative affect on your academic performance
- Microaggressions can have a more severe effect than macroaggressions (a.k.a. overt racism, sexism etc)
- Can also lead to anxiety, depression and in some case suicide

Salvatore, 2007



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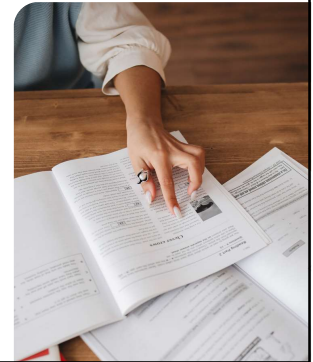
## Cognitive Costs of Exposure to Racial Prejudice

- White students did not discern microaggressions, but discern blatant racism
- Also had a harder time coping with blatant racism (didn't discern microaggressions, so no coping was needed)

## Black students...

- Black Students discern both, but the ambiguity of microaggressions had greater negative affect because Black people have coping mechanisms for blatant racism

Salvatore, 2007



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# SHOULD YOU RESPOND? WHAT TO CONSIDER

- The underrepresented group(s) you are a member of (position)
- Whether your perpetrator is in a position superior to you (this can include your classmates/other interns)
- The form of the microinsult or microinvalidation- verbal or nonverbal
- Venue of the microaggression- classroom, office, elevator, hallway
- How the institution might handle your response

Berk, 2017b

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## STRATEGY #1: SAY SOMETHING ON THE SPOT

- The perpetrator knows your feeling of discomfort, disrespect, or hurt
- Try questioning the behavior, placing the burden of the insult on the perpetrator
- You may not be able to do this without the risk of retaliation

Nadal, 2014



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# HOW TO ADDRESS A PERPETRATOR ON THE SPOT

- Avoid responding if you're angry
- If you are feeling calm, address the perpetrator
- Expect the perpetrator to become defensive
- Use "I" statements ("I feel hurt when you said XYZ.") Avoid attacking statements ("You're a racist!")
- Focus on the impact the actions had on you- the perpetrator may focus on their intent
- Ensure you have the safety and emotional bandwidth to educate- meaning you may have to explain why you felt that way.

Nadal, 2014

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# STRATEGY #2: SAY SOMETHING TO THE PERPETRATOR PRIVATELY AT A LATER TIME

- This may give you time to calm down, and think about what you want to say
- You can rehearse your response
- Remember to place the burden for the infraction on the perpetrator

Nadal, 2014



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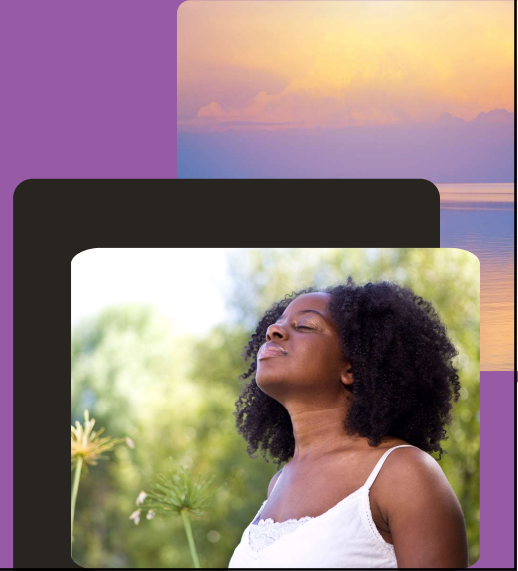
# STRATEGY #3: DISENGAGE FROM THE PERPETRATOR

Redirect the conversation (change the subject)

Allows to avoid an emotional response that might escalate the exchange

**Do not feel guilty**

Nadal, 2014



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## HOW CAN ALLIES SUPPORT VICTIMS OF MICROAGRESSIONS?



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# ENGAGE IN MICRORESISTANCE

- Allies who witness microaggressions of other students/interns can engage in proactive, nonreactive strategies of microresistance
- Micro-resistance- “incremental daily efforts to challenge... privileges” (white privilege, privileges based on gender, sexuality, class, etc)
- Help victims cope with microaggressions

**OTFD: Open The Front Door to Communication**



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# OTFD: OPEN THE FRONT DOOR TO COMMUNICATION...

- Observe: Concrete, factual, and observable (not evaluative)
  - State in clear, unambiguous language what you see happening
- Think: Thoughts based on observation (yours and/or theirs)
  - Express what you think or what you imagine others might be thinking
- Feel: Emotions “I feel (emotion)”
  - Express your feelings about the situation
- Desire: Specific request or inquiries about desired outcome
  - State what you would like to have happened

Berk, 2017b

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## OTFD EXAMPLE

“Let’s pause for a moment here. I noticed (OBSERVE) some raised eyebrows and other nonverbals that make me think people might be reacting strongly to something that was said. I think (THINK) we need to explore this because I feel uncomfortable (FEELING) moving forward with the discussion.

Following our ground rules, I am hoping someone can share (DESIRE) what they are thinking or feeling right now so we can have a productive conversation about this.”

Berk, 2017b

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## OTHER WAYS ALLIES CAN SUPPORT

“Passive racist, sexist, heteronormative behavior, for example, is equivalent to standing still on the walkway. No overt effort is being made (e.g., no specific racist acts), but the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same privileged destination as those who are actively walking” (i.e., those being overtly racist). So acting as an ally is a way to walk in the opposite direction of the moving walkway, a way to interrupt the cycle of ‘isms’ so that social justice can be achieved.”

Tatum, 2021

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# OTHER WAYS ALLIES CAN SUPPORT

Become more informed and empathetic by:

- Talking with and developing authentic relationships with your classmates
- Raising your awareness of macro and micro-aggressions
- Being on the lookout for your colleagues and offer resistance and/or affirmation if appropriate

Ganote, 2016

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# OTHER WAYS ALLIES CAN SUPPORT

Step in and speak up, depending on your style and the situation, by

- Supporting your classmates efforts at micro-resistance and self-efficacy (Irey, 2013),
- Giving micro-affirmations (i.e., “tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening”
- Working behind-the-scenes on behalf of your colleagues (Irey, 2013)
- Performing OTFD

Ganote, 2016

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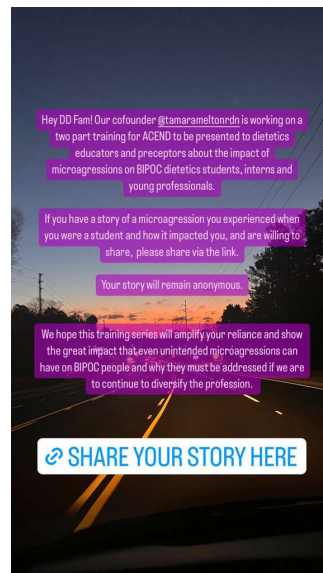




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## A CALL FOR STORIES...

- Examine the microaggression
- Review actions the victim can take
- Review actions allies can take



Diversify Dietetics, 2024

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## EXAMPLE #1

“[My program] director called me into an office and said in [my] speeches that I sounded too “urban”.She even went as far to say “I’m not sure if it where you come from”. I kindly informed her that as a Military Brat I constantly moved and been around multiple cultures and I knew how to present myself. After that it turned me sour to the whole profession. I left the program and never became a RD. I felt I wouldn’t “fit in”- K.A.

Diversify Dietetics, 2024

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## VICTIM’S RESPONSE

- Before responding, consider:
  - Positionality of power
  - Venue of microaggression

**Don’t feel guilty if you do not respond in the moment, or ever.**

*Ask: What did you mean by that?*

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# OBSERVER ALLY RESPONSE

## OFTD Statement

“I noticed (OBSERVE) that K.A. looked frustrated after your comment about them being ‘too urban’. I think (THINK) they may have been offended by the use of those words because I myself felt uncomfortable (FEELING) by the use of that phrase to describe them.

Can you please share what you meant by that comment?” (DESIRE)

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## EXAMPLE #2 (PART I)

“During a conversation with an RD, I expressed the difficulty of wearing an N95 with a hijab. I recounted the kindness of a previous RD who allowed me time in her office or the restroom to put it on. To my surprise, the RD I was speaking to dismissed my concern, stating, “Oh, don’t worry; you don’t have to wear it.” Astonished, I inquired about the N95 requirement for Covid units, to which she clarified, “No, I mean the hijab.” I was taken aback by her audacity. Despite my shock, I responded, “Yeah, I’ll figure out the N95.” This encounter left me feeling offended, yet I chose to give her the benefit of the doubt, hoping she might not have realized the impact of her words.”

-Anonymous

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## EXAMPLE #2 (PART II)

“Following this, she made another comment, presenting scrub caps and suggesting I should buy them because “they are so much more fashionable.” It was implied that I should remove my hijab and wear a scrub cap instead, which, in my opinion, was definitely not fashionable at all.”

-Anonymous

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## VICTIM’S RESPONSE

Before responding, consider:

- Positionality of power
- Venue of microaggression
- Do you have the safety and emotional bandwidth to educate?
- Focus on “I felt” statements and the impact of the words

**Don’t feel guilty if you do not respond in the moment, or ever.**

*Possible response: “When you said that the scrub cap was so much more fashionable than my hijab, I was offended, because my hijab is not a fashion choice, it’s an important part of my culture and faith.”*

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# OBSERVER ALLY RESPONSE

## OFTD Statement

- **Micro-affirmation** to your colleague “I’m sorry the preceptor said that. From what I know of the Muslim faith, wearing a hijab is an extremely important element of being a Muslim woman. How are you feeling after what she said to you?”
- This helps your colleague to know their feelings are not invisible, and their diversity is an asset not an inconvenience in that setting.

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## EXAMPLE #3 (PART I)

“I once went on an interview for a Bengali bilingual nutrition education position. Bengali is an ancient language that does not have many modern words. There are no pronouns even, a human being is simply a human being. Since India was colonized by English, there are many English words that are used in Bengali. The white women who interviewed me for the Bengali speaking nutrition education did not speak or understand Bengali. She was not even bilingual at the least...”

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## EXAMPLE #3 (PART II)

“During my interview she asked me to speak Bengali nutrition phrases and critiqued my Bangla, saying, “That does not sound right, I hear some English words.” This is the racism we face in our field, that our judgement and knowledge will always be overlooked and less than the judgement of our White counterparts. This incident led me to still have imposter syndrome and to this day and at times makes me want to leave the field. I have become very selective of the White colleagues and organizations I want to work with because, to be frank, it’s not easy to work with many White individuals in our field.” ~ P.R.

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## VICTIM’S RESPONSE

Before responding, consider:

- Positionality of power
- Venue of microaggression
- 

**Don’t feel guilty if you do not respond in the moment, or ever.**

*Possible response: Disengage a.k.a. protect yourself and your peace*

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# OBSERVER ALLY RESPONSE

## OFTD Statement

- Do not push the victim if they decide to disengage.
- Advocate for the victim behind the scenes- educate coworkers on culturally humble practice, including in interviews and similar situations

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# IF NEEDED, UTILIZE THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- Use the grievance process within the dietetics program/college/university
- Within ACEND
  - 2022 standards address biases that can lead to microaggressions and discrimination (Standards 5.2.D and 5.3.C)

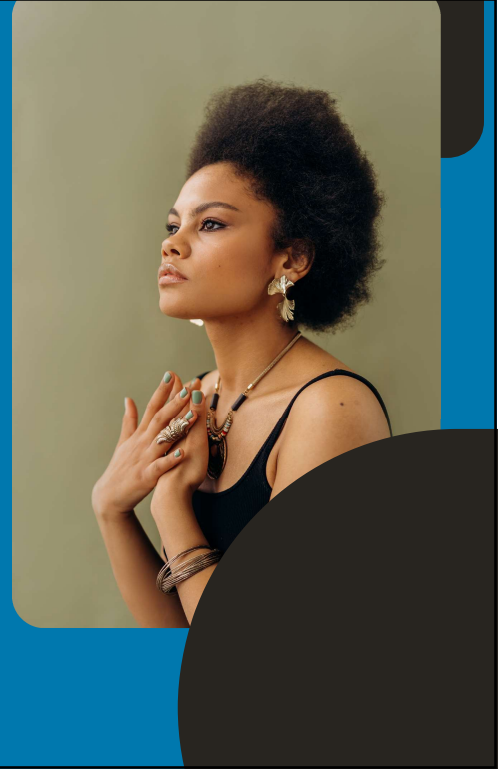
<https://www.eatrightpro.org/ACEND>



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# RADICAL HEALING

- Develop pride in your community
- Share your story- family, friends, mentors
- Take action in a way that allows you to reclaim your power
- Reflect on the resilience of your ancestors
- Practice self-care by staying healthy- physically, mentally, spiritually
- Online counterspaces: (e.g., Facebook groups, Clubhouse rooms, WhatsApp groups) that center the experiences of BIPOC communities



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**THANK YOU!**  
**QUESTIONS?**



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- Please complete the presentation evaluation:  
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- CPE certificate and handouts will be emailed to attendees within 1-2 days.



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