### TABLE 6.2
Examples of Racial Microaggressions in Therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microaggression</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorblindness</td>
<td>Denying racial-cultural differences</td>
<td>“I don’t see you as Black; I just see you as a regular person.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overidentification</td>
<td>Denying or minimizing individual racial bias because of assumed similarity</td>
<td>“As a gay person, I know just what it’s like to be discriminated against because of race.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of personal or individual racism</td>
<td>Professing presumed freedom from or immunization to racism</td>
<td>“I’m not racist because some of my best friends are Black.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimization of racial-cultural issues</td>
<td>Minimizing or dismissing the importance of racial-cultural issues to a person of color</td>
<td>“I’m not sure we need to focus on race or culture to understand your depression.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning unique or special status on the basis of race or ethnicity</td>
<td>Assuming that a positive behavior or characteristic is atypically present in a person on the basis of race or ethnicity</td>
<td>“You’re not like other Blacks; you’re a credit to your race” and “You’re a very articulate African American.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotypic assumptions about members of a racial or ethnic group</td>
<td>Assuming that a behavior, norm, or characteristic exists on the basis of a person’s race or ethnicity</td>
<td>“I know that Black people are very religious” and “Did you grow up in the inner city?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accused hypersensitivity regarding racial or cultural issues</td>
<td>Assuming that a person of color is hypersensitive during a discussion of racial or cultural issues</td>
<td>“Don’t be too sensitive about the racial stuff. I didn’t mean anything bad or offensive.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meritocracy myth</td>
<td>Ignoring the responsibility of individual perpetrators and sociopolitical systems for perpetuating racism</td>
<td>“If Black people just worked harder, they could be successful like other people.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally insensitive treatment considerations or recommendations</td>
<td>Displaying cultural insensitivity in the context of understanding or treating clients’ concerns</td>
<td>“You should disengage or separate from your family of origin if they are causing you problems.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of less than optimal behaviors on the basis of racial-cultural group membership</td>
<td>Accepting or normalizing potentially dysfunctional behaviors on the basis of a person’s racial or cultural group</td>
<td>“It might be OK for some people to cope by drinking alcohol because their cultural norms sanction this behavior.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealization</td>
<td>Overestimating the desirable qualities and underestimating the limitations of a person on the basis of racial or ethnic group membership</td>
<td>“I'm sure you can cope with this problem as a strong Black woman” and “Black people are so cool.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysfunctional helping or patronization</td>
<td>Offering help that is unneeded or inappropriate on the basis of racial or ethnic group membership</td>
<td>“I don’t usually do this, but I can waive your fees if you can’t afford to pay for counseling.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Culture Sketch

Age and generational influences: When you were born, what were the social expectations for a person of your identity? Do you identify with a particular generation (e.g. baby boomers, Gen X or Y, second-generation immigrant, etc.)? How have your values and worldview been shaped by the social movements or influences on your generation (e.g. the Great Depression, World War II, the Vietnam War, the women’s movement, Stonewall, Americans with Disabilities Act, the civil rights movement, social media, an economic downturn, political events in another country)?

Developmental or other Disability: Do you identify as someone living with a visible disability or a nonvisible disability (e.g. chronic pain, psychiatric, or learning disability)? If no, has your personal or professional life been affected by others with disabilities (e.g. friend, family member, partner, or coworker with a disability)? How have your abilities or disability affected your life and opportunities?

Religion and spirituality: Were you brought up in a religious or spiritual tradition? Do you identify with a religion or have spiritual practice now? How were your values and goals shaped by your religious or nonreligious upbringing?

Ethnic and racial identity: What do you consider your ethnic or racial identity? If you were adopted, what are the identities of your biological and adoptive parents? How do other people identify you? Are these the same? Are there ethnic or racial differences within your family?

Socioeconomic status: What social class did you grow up in, and what do you consider your socioeconomic status now? When you were in high school, what were the educational and work opportunities available to you?
Questions to Consider While Preparing for the Cultural Genogram Presentation

Please consider these questions for each group constituting your culture of origin, as well as considering the implications of the answers in relation to your overall cultural identity.

1. What were the migration patterns of the group?
2. If other than Native American, under what conditions did our family (or their descendants) enter the United States (immigrant, political refugee, slave, etc.)?
3. What were/are the group’s experiences with oppression? What were/are the markers of oppression?
4. What issues divide members within the same group? What are the sources of intragroup conflict?
5. Describe the relationship between the group’s identity and your national ancestry (if the group is defined in terms of nationality, please skip this question).
6. What significance does race, skin color, and hair play within the group?
7. What is/are the dominant religion(s) of the group? What role does religion and spirituality play in the everyday lives of members of the group?
8. What role does regionality and geography play in the group?
9. How are gender roles defined within the group? How is sexual orientation regarded?
10. a) What prejudices or stereotypes does this group have about itself?
    b) What prejudices and stereotypes do other groups have about this group?
    c) What prejudices or stereotypes does this group have about other groups?
11. What role (if any) do names play in the group? Are there rules, mores, or rituals governing the assignment of names?
12. How is social class defined in the group?
13. What occupational roles are valued or devalued by the group?
14. What is the relationship between age and the values of the group?
15. How is family defined in the group?
16. How does this group view outsiders in general and mental health professionals specifically?
17. How have the organizing principles of this group shaped your family and its members? What effect have they had on you?
18. What are the ways in which pride/shame issues of each group are manifested in your family system?
19. What impact will these pride/shame issues have on your work with clients from both similar and dissimilar cultural backgrounds?
20. If more than one group comprises your culture of origin, how were the differences negotiated in your family? What were the intergenerational consequences? How has this impacted you personally and as a therapist?
Final Synthesis Questions for Cultural Genogram Project

1. What were/are your family’s experiences with oppression, if any?
2. What significance does race, skin color, and hair play in your family?
3. How are gender roles defined in your family?
4. How is sexual orientation regarded?
5. a) What prejudices or stereotypes does your family have about your own racial group?
   b) What prejudices and stereotypes do others have about your racial group?
   c) What prejudices or stereotypes does your family have about other racial groups?
6. What are the pride/shame issues of your family, and what impact will these have on your work with clients who are culturally similar and dissimilar?
7. How do you think the values you got from your family-of-origin will influence your ability to work with clients whose values and beliefs are discernibly different from yours?
8. What aspects of your culture of origin do you have the most comfort “owning,” the most difficulty “owning”?
9. What groups will you have the easiest time working with, the most difficult?
10. What did you learn about yourself and your cultural identity? How might this influence your tendencies as a therapist?


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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Was open-minded.</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Was open to seeing things from the client's perspective.</td>
<td>5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Made assumptions about the client.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Was considerate.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Was open to seeing things from the client's perspective.</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Agree.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Was genuinely interested in learning more.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Strongly disagree.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Assumed she already knows a lot.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Agree.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Was open to explore.</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Strongly agree.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the client's cultural background.

**Cultural Humility Scale**

**EXHIBIT 1:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Mildly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Cultural Opportunities Scale**

**Exhibit 1.2**
Movies for diversity discussions
A Day Without A Mexican
A Patch of Blue
A Time to Kill
Akeelah and the Bee
Amistad
Babe
Beauty and the Beast
Bend it like Beckham
Billy Elliot
Birth of a Nation
Boys Don’t Cry
Boyz ‘N the Hood
Brokeback Mountain
Crash
Dances With Wolves
David and Lisa
Do the Right Thing
Fried Green Tomatoes
Gandhi
Ghosts of Mississippi
Glory
Hiroshima Maiden
In the Heat of the Night
Malcolm X
Mississippi Burning
Monsoon Wedding
Munich
My Left Foot
Osana
Patch Adams
Philadelphia
Pocahontas
Radio
Rain Man
Real Women have Curves
Remember the Titans
Roots
Save the Last Dance
Schilder’s List
Shrek
Snow White
Sophie’s Choice
Spanglish
The Color Purple
The Gods Must Be Crazy
The Hiding Place
The Joy Luck Club
Thumbelina
To Kill a Mockingbird
Transamerica
West Side Story
Wizard of Oz
Young Frankenstein
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: To score this measure, first reverse code items 2, 3, 4, 6, and 9. Then add up the total.

1. Comfortable
2. Awkward
3. Tense
4. Nervous
5. Confident
6. Uneasy
7. Relaxed
8. Calm
9. Edgy
10. Genuine

Overall, how comfortable did you feel watching the video?

Cultural Comfort Scale

EXHIBIT 1.3
YOUR SOCIAL MAP

Make a list of the five people with whom you have the closest relationships. Whether friends or family members, these are the people you trust the most and with whom you can be yourself. If you don't have five, list as many as you can, and if you have more than five, limit yourself to five.

My 5 Confidantes: A D D R E S S I N

1. __________
2. __________
3. __________
4. __________
5. __________

Now beginning with Column A, put a check next to the name of the each person who is like you with regard to age/generational cohort For example, if you are middle-aged and your first confidante is also middle-aged, put a check next to that person’s name under Column A. If your second confidante is in his or her 60s (i.e., a different generation than you), do not put a check next to his or her name under Column A. If a confidante is similar to you with regard to disability, put a check next to that person’s name under DD. If the person is similar to you in religion upbringing or current religion, put a check next to the person’s name under R. If the person is similar to you in ethnicity or race, put a check next to that person’s name under E. Continue with this pattern for the rest of the ADDRESSING influences, for every individual.

Privilege Watch

As you go through your day, try watching for the privileges you experience related to your particular identity. This easier if you are able to observe how someone who does not hold the same privileges is treated.

- if you are a middle-aged adult, notice how people speak to older adults and teenagers.
- if you are a man, watch for differences in the way men interact with young women and how they treat older women.
- If you are heterosexual, think about the implications for your life of being denied the right to marry (e.g. insurance, and Social Security benefits, housing options, child custody, visiting your partner in the hospital). Think about how it would feel to experience hostile reactions when you are with your partner (e.g. on vacation requesting a room with one bed, attending a community event in a conservative small town, holding hands with or kissing your partner in public).
- If you have Christian roots, look for the ways in which Christianity is reinforced by the dominant culture (official holidays; in legal proceedings; inscriptions on buildings, monuments, coins; historical and current media perspectives on war and religion conflicts).
- If you are middle class, watch for privileges in your expectations that people will wait on you when you enter a nice restaurant, store, or theater).
- If you do not live with disability, pay attention to the attitudinal, environmental, and logistical obstacles that would prevent access to individuals with disabilities.

As you begin to see the ways in which privilege benefits you, look for ways in which it may limit your understanding or separate you from those who do not have the same privileges. Stay open to the possibility that you may learn something new about someone else or about yourself.

Practicing Respectful Resolution

Think of a value you hold strongly. Now think of someone who frustrates you and who you think does not hold this value. Remember the RESPECT strategies:

- **Recognize a shared or similar value.**

- **Expression of the same value may differ, so think about this.**

- **Step back from assumptions about value priorities and what is right.**

- **Power—Consider differences of power and privilege.**

- **Empathize—Look for compassionate, no judgmental explanations.**

- **Culture—Consider its influences on behavior, views, and beliefs—yours and others’.**

- **Think differently—Use language to positively reframe others’ value priorities.**

Using one of these strategies, try to think about this person in a way that decreases your negative feelings and increases your openness to him or her. If you have the opportunity, use the strategy to help you resolve, minimize, or avoid conflict with this person. If the strategy doesn’t work, try another one.

References


