

List of Definitions

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages that target people based on their marginalized group membership.

Cultural competence is the ability to interact with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value differences, motivate you to assess your own skills, expand your knowledge and resources, and ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior.

Social justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.

Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

Social diversity focuses on understanding and appreciating difference, and to be able to demonstrate self-awareness and self-reflection.

Equality means everyone is given the same resources in an effort to promote fairness. Equality assumes, and can only work if, everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help.

Equity promotes fairness and justice by recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and acknowledging that we must make adjustments to imbalances arising from bias or systemic structures. Equity implies individuals and/or groups need different things in order to maintain fairness and access.

Inclusion refers to a sense of belonging where people of different backgrounds and identities report being valued, welcomed, and empowered. Inclusion involves a sense of coming as you are and being accepted as you are rather than feeling the need to assimilate.

Oppression is a pervasive system of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. This term encapsulates the fusion of institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that shape most aspects of life in society.

Privilege denotes exclusive advantages or benefits afforded to certain people based on

their group identity or status. These benefits are largely unearned and the identities are often invisible to the people utilizing them. Unexamined privilege often results in internalized supremacy and domination.

Intersectionality proposes that all aspects of one's identity, such as race, class, gender, etc. cannot simply be observed separately, but need to be examined as simultaneously interacting with each other and affecting one's privilege, oppression, and perception in society.

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