

## **Anti-Racism Toolkit**

August 2022

The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion  
Western University

### **Land Acknowledgment**

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay-wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

We respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research, and community service.

### **A Message from The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion created the e-learning module on Building Inclusivity through Anti-Racism following the President's Anti-Racism Working Group's (ARWG) recommendations in their final report published in May 2020. This Anti-Racism Toolkit is part of several resources that will be provided to the Western community to work towards our goal to combat all forms of discrimination.

### **What is Anti-Racism?**

Anti-Racism is "the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably." (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity).

Anti-Racism is "an active way of seeing and being in the world, in order to transform it. Because racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society (and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary "level" and "spheres"), Anti-Racism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society. In other words, it does not happen exclusively in the workplace, in the classroom, or in selected aspects of our lives." (Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre)

### **What Actions Can I Take to Become an Anti-Racist? TEAR Model**

The TEAR framework depicts four steps you can take to begin or continue the journey of becoming an anti-racist: Take actions to redistribute power, examine your privileges and biases, acknowledge possible perspectives, and reflect on power differences.

#### **1. Take actions to redistribute power:**

Some of the actions you can take to redistribute power are:

- Participate in professional groups or associations that work towards anti-racism or EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) goals.

- Support policies that advocate for championing EDI in institutions and organizations.
- Share positive thoughts about Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour with friends, family, and acquaintances.
- Celebrate the valuable contributions made by Indigenous Peoples in terms of their ways of knowing, cultural systems, arts, history, and expertise as the caretakers of the lands of Northern Turtle Island.
- Participate in the Western Census to help determine the representation of equity deserving groups on campus.
- Call people out when they make a racist joke or comment or when they engage in a microaggression.

## 2. Examine your privileges and biases:

Some of the questions that can guide this step of examining your privileges are:

- Can I count on my skin colour not to work against the appearance of my financial reliability?
- Can I do well professionally without being called a credit to my race?
- Can I go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared?
- Can I be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my skin colour will not work against me?
- Do I feel that people interpret my opinions as representing my entire race?
- Have I been mistreated or served less fairly because of my race or ethnicity?
- Have I ever been hesitant to speak to avoid being ridiculed because of my accent?
- Am I overgeneralizing?
- Do I behave differently in front of people from equity deserving groups?
- How much time do I spend with people who are not similar to me in terms of culture or ethnicity?
- Who do I usually favour? Source: Adapted from [Monitor Global Intelligence on Racism, European University Institute](#).

## 3. Acknowledge possible perspectives:

Some of the questions that can help you acknowledge the existence of perspectives that are different from the ones you hold are:

- What was I expecting in this situation? What is different from what I expected?
- Which values are involved in what is happening/happened? Could these values be different than mine?
- What are my assumptions? What is it that I don't know?
- What can I do to obtain more information?
- Where can I find more opportunities to learn about Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour?

## 4. Reflect on power differences:

Some of the questions that can help you reflect on power differences are:

- If a particular situation makes me uncomfortable, why is this? Is it because of power differences?
- Can I see a power struggle rooted in systemic racism?
- How are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour treated at work?
- Do Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour that I know struggle in some things related to power differences rooted in systemic racism?
- What happens when conversations about power arise at work or in the classroom?

The TEAR framework represents a continuous process with different entry points that requires practice. It is impossible to be an anti-racist in one day, and making mistakes is part of the learning process. Be courageous and keep learning.

### **How to Disarm a Microaggression when you Are the Target?**

Targets of microaggressions can respond to microaggressions at work by:

1. Setting up the situation and explaining the context.
2. Objectively describing the behaviour and getting clarification.
3. Explaining the impact.
4. Working as a team to find solutions if possible.

Targets and bystanders can also use microinterventions to address microaggressions, which are the everyday words or actions, intentional or unintentional, that communicate to targets of microaggressions that their experiences are valid, and that reassures them that they are not alone (Sue et al., 2019). Four microintervention strategies are making the “invisible” visible, disarming the microaggressions, educating the offender, and getting support.

1. To make the “invisible” visible:
  - Make explicit when bias or racism is being implied
  - Challenge the stereotype
  - Ask for clarification

Here are some examples:

- a. Make explicit when bias or racism is being implied:

When you are the target:

"You assume that I can't speak English well because I am a Black person from Africa."

When you are a bystander:

"You assume that she can't speak English well because she's a Black person from Africa."

- b. Challenge the Stereotype:

When you are the target:

"The fact that I am Black or a foreigner doesn't mean that I can't speak more than one language, including English."

When you are a bystander:

"The fact that she's Black or a foreigner doesn't mean that she can't speak more than one language, including English."

c. Ask for Clarification:

When you are the target:

"Why would I not be articulate?"

"Does it matter if I have an accent?"

When you are a bystander:

"Why would they not be articulate?"

"Does it matter if they have an accent?"

2. To disarm the microaggression:

- Express disagreement
- State values and set limits
- Describe what is happening
- Use an exclamation

Here are some examples:

a. Express Disagreement:

When you are the target:

"I disagree with what you just said. I didn't get hired because I'm Black."

When you are a bystander:

"I disagree with what you just said. Professor Musa didn't get hired because she's Black."

b. State values and set limits:

When you are the target:

"Stating that I was hired just because I'm Black is disrespectful and minimizes my academic work."

When you are a bystander:

"Stating that she was hired just because she's Black is disrespectful and minimizes Professor Musa's academic work."

c. Describe what is happening:

When you are the target:

"You just told me that I was hired and earn more than other professors because I am Black, which is disrespectful. But the fact is that many academic achievements are required to be employed in this university."

When you are a bystander:

"You just said that Prof. Musa was hired and earned more money than other professors because she's Black, which is disrespectful. But the fact is that many academic achievements are required to be employed in this university."

d. Use an exclamation:

When you are the target or a bystander:

"Excuse me?!"(any of the strategies above could follow this).

3. To educate the offender:

- Point out the commonality
- Appeal to the microaggressor's values and principles
- Differentiate between intent and impact
- Promote empathy

Here are some examples:

- Point out the commonality:  
That is a negative stereotype about Indigenous Peoples.
- Appeal to the microaggressor's values and principles:  
I know you care about inclusivity and commenting on that is not inclusive or respectful.
- Differentiate between intent and impact:  
I don't think you realize that this comment is harmful, and it could deeply hurt our new colleague.
- Promote empathy:  
That comment is not appropriate. How would you feel if someone assumed something not true about you because of your race?

4. To get Support:

- Alert leadership
- Report
- Therapy/Counseling
- Support group

Here are some examples:

- Alert Leadership:  
Ask to speak with the Manager or Director.
- Report at Western:  
Western has a Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and racism falls under this policy. All Western community members can report: Human rights-based harassment and discrimination, such as sexism, racism, transphobia, homophobia, islamophobia, xenophobia, antisemitism, and ableism. Concerns related to non-human rights-based harassment, such as personal harassment or workplace harassment, may also be reported.  
The Reporting Discrimination and Harassment Tool can be used by anyone: targets, bystanders, or a third party.  
To report:
  - Use the [Reporting Discrimination and Harassment Tool](#) provided by the Human Rights Office (HRO) or email the Human Rights Office at [humanrights@uwo.ca](mailto:humanrights@uwo.ca). You may make an anonymous report. However, this may limit the ability of HRO and Western to respond and take action.

- The Human Rights Office will be in touch with you to offer information and support. In most cases, HRO will provide you with a confidential consultation meeting. You should hear from HRO within 48 hours.
- HRO will explain the options available to you under the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy: Alternate resolution, Formal complaint and request for an investigation. The HRO can also help you explore other ideas or options for support (Source: [HRO Discrimination and Harassment](#))
- c. Therapy/Counselling:  
The following resources are available to you at Western.
  - For students: Mental Health Support Resources ([book an appointment](#) or reach for [crisis counselling](#))
  - For Indigenous students: [Community Supports](#)
  - For Faculty and Staff members: [Mental Health Resources for Faculty and Staff members](#).
- d. Support groups: Join a support group that often meets to speak about your experience(s). At Western:
  - For students: Join a support group that often meets to speak about your experience(s). At Western, Health and Wellness offers [group care and workshops](#) for students.
  - For Faculty and Staff: [Employee Well-being](#) can provide support in different areas.

### **Disclosures and Leaders**

When holding a position of leadership, if someone discloses that they have been the target of discrimination or that they have witnessed discrimination, these are the steps you can follow:

1. Thank the person for trusting in you and sharing this information by saying something such as: "Thank you for reaching out and trusting in me."
2. Provide the person with information about the resources available at Western to obtain help from [Western's Human Rights Office](#):
  - Human Rights Office location: Room 4190, Support Services Building. Tel: 519-661-3334
  - Human Rights Office email address: [humanrights@uwo.ca](mailto:humanrights@uwo.ca)
  - [Link to Reporting Discrimination and Harassment Tool](#) by the Human Rights Office.
3. Provide the person with information about the resources available at Western to obtain mental health support. Please see the previous section for more details.
4. Consult and work cooperatively with the Human Rights Office as needed.
5. Support training and awareness events related to the subject matter.

### **What can you do if you are Called Out?**

Sometimes silence reigns in a conversation where a racialized person gives feedback related to a Racist comment or joke. Silence is more than inaction. For some, silence is an act of violence, as

it can validate racism. Here are some steps that might be useful for people who receive feedback about a racial encounter:

1. Listen carefully to the feedback received. Do not interrupt and avoid body language that might make you feel or look defensive. Make eye contact.
  2. Ask questions such as "Do you think you could tell me why what I said was inappropriate?" if possible.
  3. Apologize and name impact: "Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. I am sorry for what I said/did. I understand that this comment was inappropriate and that I hurt you."
  4. Make Restitution: Share what you will do to change your behaviour -"I won't make any more jokes about...", "I won't generalize ..."
  5. Reflect:
    - What is at the root of my patterns? What is my work to shift those patterns?
    - How can I seek more feedback? Can I ask five trusted people: "I've gotten feedback that I \_\_\_\_\_. I'm curious. Did you witness that from me? Please be honest. If you experience me doing this, I'd be grateful if you'd tell me."
    - How can I dedicate time to learning about power, privilege, and oppression without placing the burden of that education on oppressed peoples?
    - How am I cultivating authentic relationships across differences grounded in honesty, consent, and accountability?
- (Source: [Ten Tips on Receiving Critical Feedback](#))

Some things to avoid when you receive feedback are:

- Avoid apologizing for how the person feels by saying, "I'm sorry that you felt that way", or "I'm sorry I made you feel that way."
- Avoid saying words such as "but" when offering an apology. For example, avoid saying, "I'm sorry you felt that way, but I didn't mean to hurt you."
- Think about the difference between intent and impact. Intent refers to what you thought you were doing. Impact refers to how the other person perceived that action.

## Glossary of Terms

**Anti-Racism:** "the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably." (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity). It is "an active way of seeing and being in the world, in order to transform it. Because racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society (and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary "levels" and "spheres"), Anti-Racism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society. In other words, it does not happen exclusively in the workplace, in the classroom, or in selected aspects of our lives. (Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre).

**Bias:** an inclination or prejudice in favour of or against something or someone. Bias inhibits impartial judgement, thought or analysis. Bias can occur without intention or awareness, even among people who value equality and fairness. ([UBC EDI Glossary](#))

**Bystander:** anyone who has become aware of or witnesses unjust behaviour or practices that are worthy of comment or action (Sue and Spanierman, 2020).

**Cultural racism:** "the individual and institutional expression of the superiority of one group's cultural heritage over another group's, and the power to impose those standards on other groups." (Sue and Spanierman, 2020).

**Decolonization:** a necessary and ongoing process of unlearning, uncovering, and transforming legacies of colonialism, as well as utilizing educational and knowledge systems available to relearn and rebuild the social, cultural, and linguistic foundations that were lost, or eroded through colonialism. Decolonization also requires making space, balancing, generating, and enabling diverse knowledge systems to thrive in the academy as well as in and through educational and knowledge transmission places for indigenous peoples, the formerly colonized or continuing colonized nations, peoples, and cultural knowledge systems. (Western's Indigenous Initiatives Memorandum, April 19, 2021, Christy Bressette, Nicole Kaniki, Bertha Garcia, Candace Brunette-Debassige, Western University)

**Discrimination:** "a distinction, intentional or not, based on a prohibited ground, which has the effect of imposing burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on an individual or group not imposed on others, or which withholds or limits access to opportunities, benefits, and advantages available to other members of society." (Non-Discrimination /Harassment Policy, Western University). Among the prohibited grounds are race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, and ethnic origin, which is racial discrimination.

Equity deserving groups: communities that face barriers to equal access and resources due to a power imbalance created by historical, social, and political conditions. These barriers are based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, nationality, disability, economic status, age, etc.

**Inclusion:** authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and **decision-making** in a way that shares power ([Racial Equity Tools](#)). Inclusion is about **validating** and **welcoming** people's characteristics so that they feel that they **belong** and that what they do, think, and say matters. Inclusion means that people are not only **accepted** but **valued**.

**Internalized racism:** lies within individuals. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies. For White people, this can be internalized privilege, entitlement, and superiority; for People of Colour, this can be internalized oppression. Examples: prejudice, xenophobia, conscious and unconscious bias about race, influenced by white supremacy. ([Race Forward](#))



**Interpersonal Racism:** occurs between individuals. Bias, bigotry, and discrimination based on race. Once we bring our private beliefs about race into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of prejudice and hate, microaggressions, bias and bigotry between individuals. ([Race Forward](#))

**Institutional racism:** occurs within institutions. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, whether intentional or not. Example: A school district that concentrates students of colour in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers. ([Race Forward](#))

**Microaggressions:** “the brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group.” (Sue, 2010). Individuals who belong to equity deserving groups often face microaggressions daily. Because microaggressions are common and because they occur in the context of systemic oppression, exposure to them can cause serious harm to people’s health and well-being.

**Race:** a term used to classify people into groups based principally on physical traits (phenotypes) such as skin colour. Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences that society has created (i.e. “socially constructed”), with significant consequences for people’s lives. Racial categories may vary over time and place and can overlap with ethnic, cultural or religious groupings. (Glossary, Ontario Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism, 2022)

**Racialization:** the process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics, etc. (The Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2015)

**Racism:** "any attitude, action, institutional structure, or social policy that subordinates persons or groups because of their racial group membership"(Sue and Spanierman, 2020). It is "prejudice plus power", which leads to disparities and inequities between groups of people, grounded in the belief of superiority of White people over non-White people. Racism occurs at three levels: individual, institutional, and cultural.

**Structural racism:** racial inequities across institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. Structural racism highlights how racism operates as a system of power with multiple interconnected, reinforcing, and self-perpetuating components which result in racial inequities across all indicators for success. Structural racism is the racial inequity that is deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture and our economic, political, and legal systems. Examples: The “racial wealth gap,” where White people have many times the wealth of Indigenous, Black,

and People of Colour, resulting from the history and current reality of institutional racism in multiple systems. ([Race Forward](#))

**White Privilege:** the inherent advantages possessed by a white person on the basis of their race in a society characterized by racial inequality and injustice. This concept does not imply that a white person has not worked for their accomplishments but rather, that they have not faced barriers encountered by others. (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2015)

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