

COLLABORATIVE PracticeTips

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A monthly bulletin from the CP Cal Practice Excellence Committee

The Practice Excellence Committee is pleased to offer tips to help you increase your Collaborative cases and achieve *practice excellence*.

Please send us your comments and questions! Email us at info@cpcal.com

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Understanding the Impact of Microaggressions

Notes from presentation by Lindsey Davis, PhD on 10/10/22
Hosted by Virtual Divorce California

What are Microaggressions?

Microaggressions are subtle verbal, behavioral, or environmental communications of discriminatory attitudes toward marginalized or minority groups, persons and/or systems.

Harm is caused regardless of our "intentions":

Microaggressions are not typically intentional but are perceived as hurtful or insulting.

It is the RECIPIENT (the person feeling the impact) who determines that a microaggression has occurred, not the doer or the speaker.

Overarching themes of discriminatory language:

Identity-Based Microaggression research tells us that there are common threads across different forms of discrimination that perpetuate negative world views, including:

1. **Devaluation** is reflected in comments such as “your [food], [language] or [culture] is weird” or a negative implication toward a certain marginalized group i.e., “Immigrants take away from their communities” versus contribute to their communities.

2. **Invalidation** denies that discrimination still exists, when clearly it does. Denial is reflected in the following examples: “Your lived experience is not real”; “Discrimination is in the past”; “We had a black President, so racism is over”. Similarly, expressing “color blindness” is not an authentic or appropriate solution. Invalidating statements negate the different experiences and perspectives of people, especially when there is an imbalance of power and/or privilege.

3. **Exclusion** exists in several aspects of society and policies that send the message “your culture/identity is not welcome here”. For example, banning gay people from the military sends the message that gay people are perceived as not being capable of military service or are just not wanted. Another example includes holiday displays with Christmas or Chanukah themes, as if each is the only religion celebrated. The message sent is that some types of religious experiences are welcome, others are not, regardless of the multitude of different religions that exist in any community.

Types of Microaggressions:

1. **Verbal Microaggressions** can include imitating an accent or making a joke or negative comment about a marginalized person or group. A verbal microaggression can be encompassed in just one word, e.g., referring to an African American participant as “girl” or “boy”; or a male in a position of power referring to a woman as “sweetheart”.

2. **Behavioral Microaggressions** stem from body language and/or nonverbal behaviors, e.g., a woman moving away or clutching her purse when around a black man reflects the perception of criminality in black men. Who do you make referrals to and/or select for consultations? How might these choices be affected by internalized bias? Are we referring persons who look like, sound like and/ are more like us?

3. **Environmental Microaggressions** are conveyed through features of the setting itself or policies (which are also MACRO aggressions). Policies that

create environmental microaggressions can be in the form of a formal discriminatory policy or an informal policy. The media impacts its audience through TV and informs our beliefs about the world through implicit learning, i.e., we absorb the stereotypes presented by the who, how and what that the media provides, which is a form of Environmental Microaggression. General awareness is improving with the reduction of the portrayal of stereotypical television and movie characters. Recently more realistic characters within the gay, transgender and Native/Indigenous people's community are being more accurately reflected through our media.

Stay tuned for Part II: Understanding Reactions and Creating Responses to Microaggressions

From the PEC:

Marketing Tip

Collateral!

Let's face it, we're all sick of email advertising. Personally, I click through almost everything that comes through my email or social media that isn't a personal message. Sorry...that means that all of the time and money we are spending on online advertising (except for the stuff that shows up when people are actually looking for our services) is pretty much meaningless. Not completely meaningless, but...let's figure out other ways to help our referral sources to find our contact info when they have someone to refer to us.

These days, paper is actually unusual. A meaningful letter that comes...gasp...in the mail has impact. When we are in a position where people ask us for resources, many of us actually save paper that we can pass along. This is going to be more and more true now that referral sources are going back to actually seeing people in person again.

Need a neat brochure about Collaborative? Or something you can mail or hand out about Divorce Options? You do NOT have to reinvent the wheel. CP Cal has your back! Here are the steps to get a personalized brochure, painlessly. No set up fees, no having to create the graphics.

1. Go to CPCal.com and log in.
2. Click on Members
3. Use the Secret Password, which is CPCAL
4. The first button is Brochures and Branded Materials, click there and then acknowledge you'll use the materials wisely.

5. Now, you're on the Vistaprint site where you'll find everything from Teeshirts to...brochures!

6. Fill in the personalizing information, figure out how many you need, add your billing info and you're done. Brochures cost a little over \$1 each.

While you're in the Members area, take a look at the awesomeness Toolbox, BTW. From forms to marketing advice, lots to love there.



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