



ALA

Mindfulness to Manage Workplace Stress and Microaggressions

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Continuing Professional
Development and
Workplace Learning

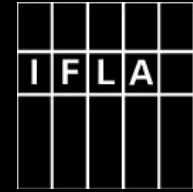


New Professionals



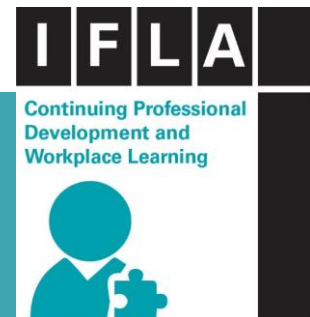
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Once upon a time in a land far away...



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- A serendipitous fabulation formed.
- We proposed a session on mindfulness, microaggressions, and workplace stress. That was before COVID-19.
- Mindfulness is more difficult to practice in our current situation, but it's also more necessary.



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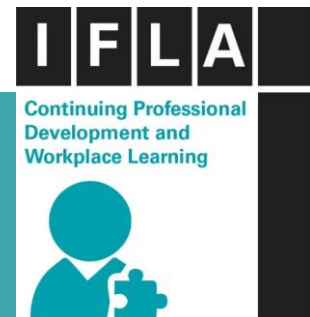


Our goals



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- To explore productive ways to deal with the shame, isolation, & anxiety that often accompany traumatic workplace experiences
- To raise awareness of the benefits associated with prioritizing wellness and particularly mental health



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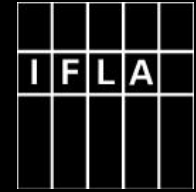
Workplace Stress



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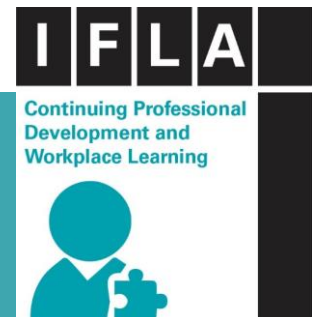


Workplace Stress Defined



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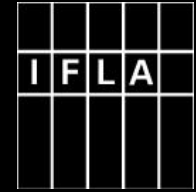
“The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker.” (CDC, 1999)



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Contributing Factors



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- The design of work tasks (conflicting job expectations)
- Work overload (excessive committee work related to “diversity”)
- Management styles (micromanagement or other ineffective forms of leadership or teamwork)
- Interpersonal relationships
- Role ambiguity
- Lack of positive feedback/ recognition
- Lack of fairness (a mismatch between the stated organizational guiding principles and actual practice)



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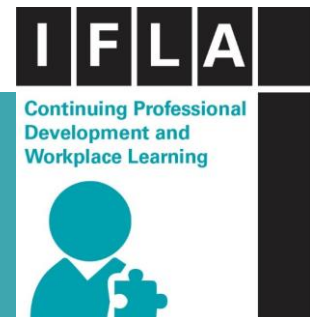


Incivility



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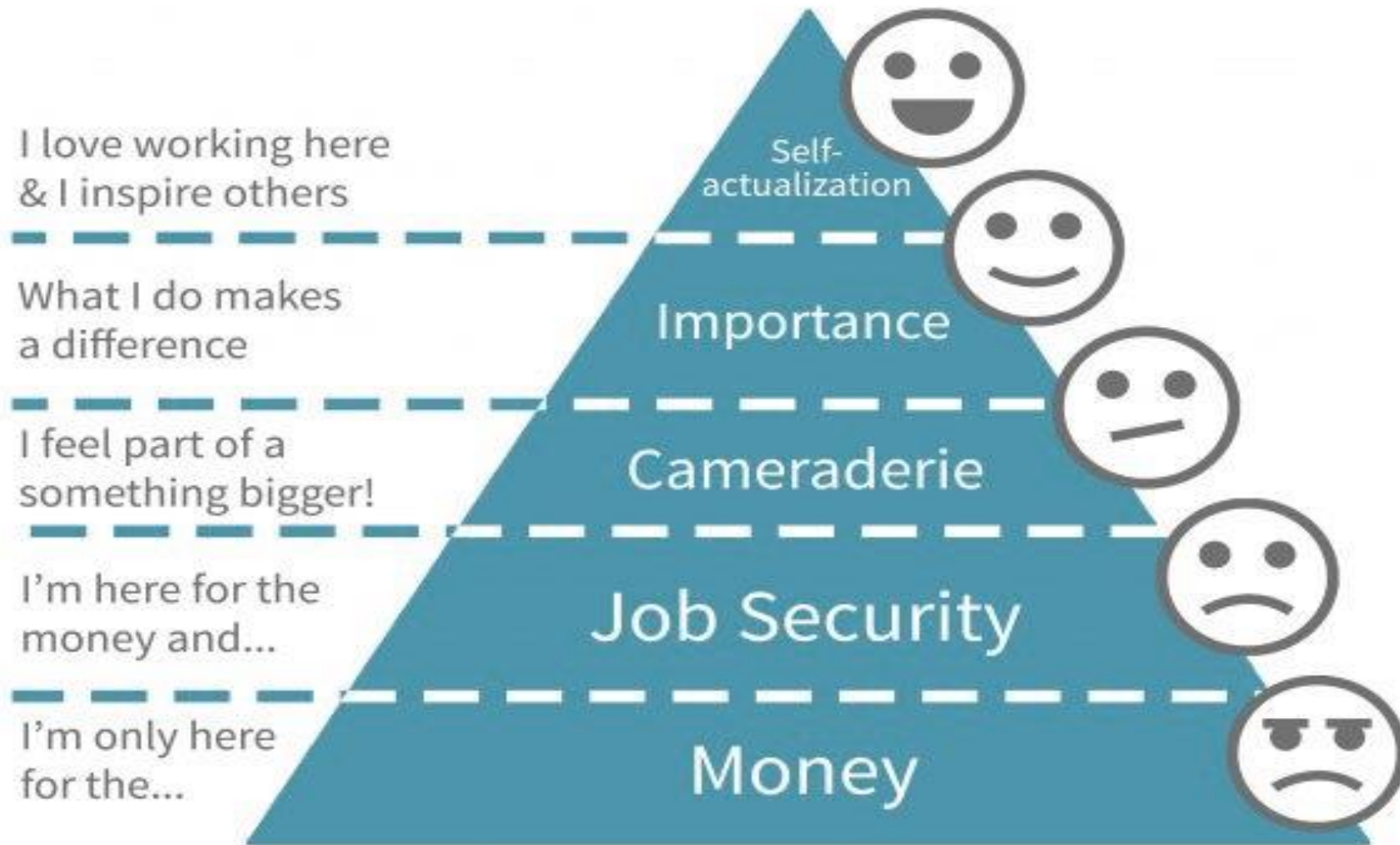
“Disrespectful behavior that undermines the dignity and self- esteem of employees and creates unnecessary suffering, indicating a lack of concern for the well-being of other and contrary to how individuals expect to be treated.” (Zauderer, 2002, p. 38)



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Hierarchy of Engagement





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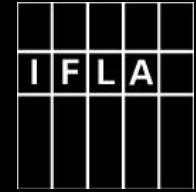
Microaggressions



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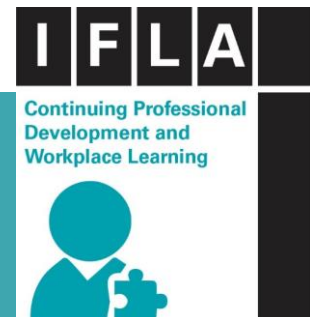
Definition



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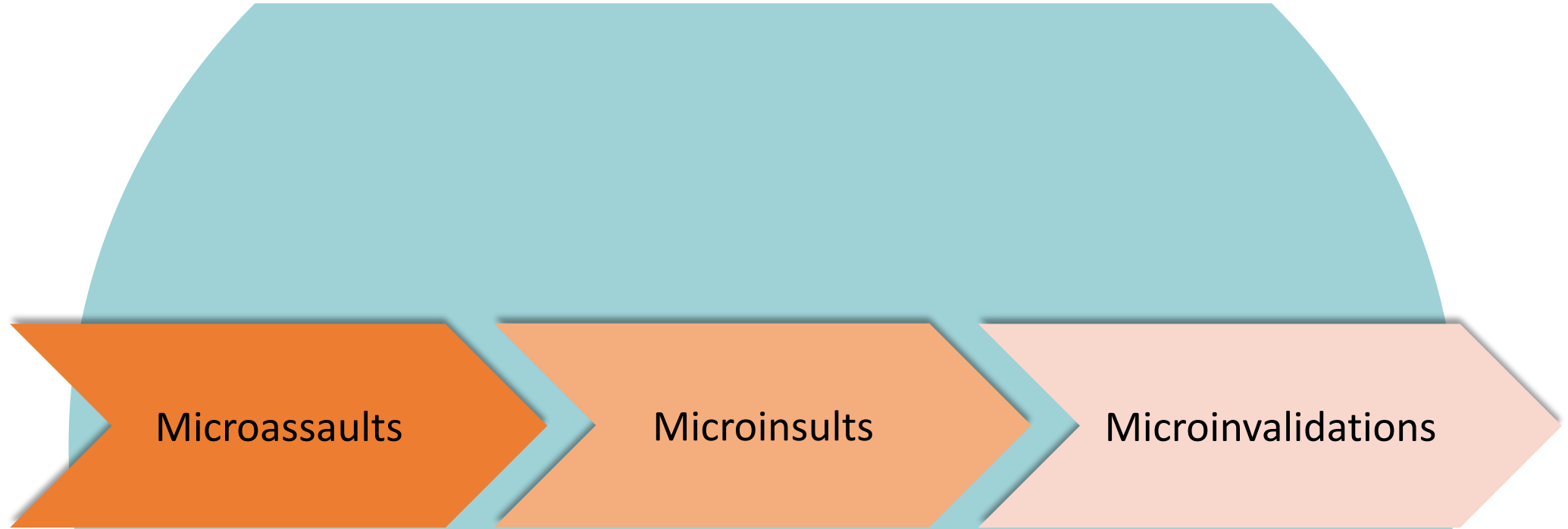
“Simply stated, microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership”

(Sue, 2010, p. xvi)



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Microaggressions exist along a continuum

(Sue et al., 2007)

Examples



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Asking an Asian person to help with a math or science problem.

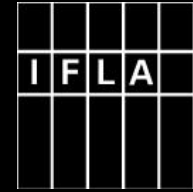
- All Asians are intelligent and good in math/sciences.

“There is only one race, the human race.”

- Denying the individual as a racial/cultural being

(Sue et al., 2007, p.276)

Effects



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Self-doubt



Frustration



Anger



Isolation



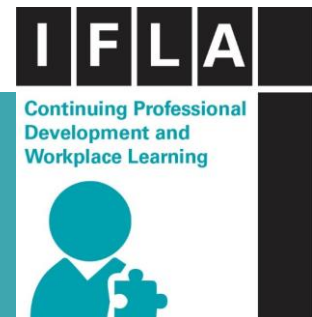
Exhaustion



Decreased
productivity



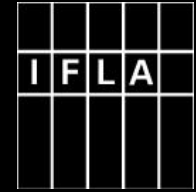
Increased
turnover



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Principles for Intervening



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- If you're the target...
 - Your first responsibility is to yourself. You don't owe anyone a response
 - Acknowledge and affirm what you're feeling. Take time to re-center.
 - What do you want to see happen? Evaluate strategies for achieving that goal or moving forward.
 - Reclaim your voice.

(Thurber & DiAngelo, 2018)



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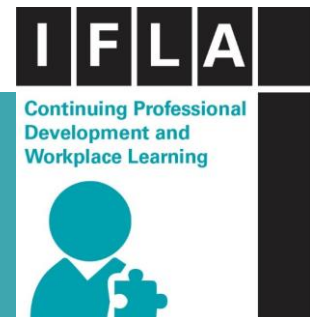
Principles for Intervening



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- If you're a witness...
 - Ask, "What's the cost of not responding?"
 - Identify your goal/purpose
 - Focus on calling *in* rather than calling *out* the offender
- If you're a perpetrator...
 - Face oppressive patterns
 - Be open and receptive to feedback
 - Accountability as a process
 - Seek restorative action

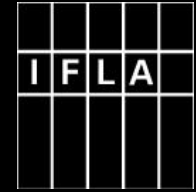
(Thurber & DiAngelo, 2018)



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Microinterventions

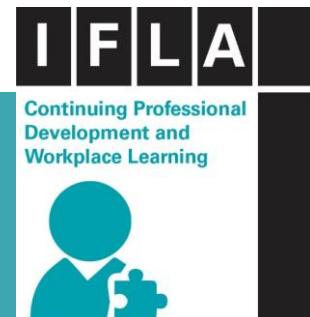


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“We define microinterventions as the everyday words or deeds, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicates to targets of microaggressions

- (a) validation of their experiential reality,
- (b) value as a person,
- (c) affirmation of their racial or group identity,
- (d) support and encouragement, and
- (e) reassurance that they are not alone”

(Sue et al., 2019, p. 134)



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Strategic Goals of Microinterventions



Make the invisible visible



Disarm the microaggression

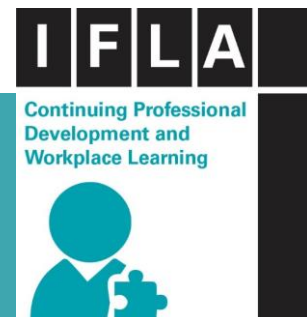


Educate the offender



Seek external intervention

(Sue et al., 2019)



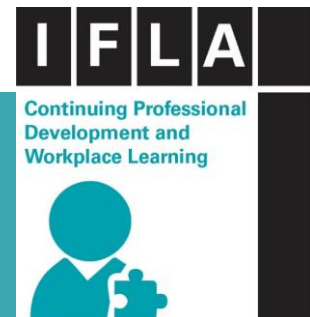
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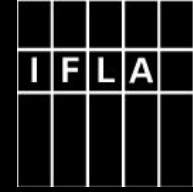
Mindfulness



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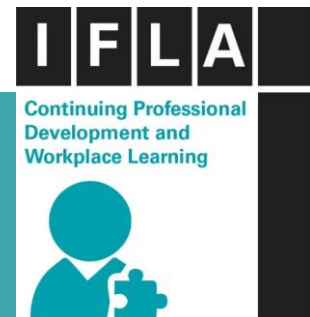


What is it?



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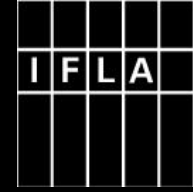
- a state of awareness and a practice
- involves attending to the present moment and cultivating an attitude of curiosity, openness and acceptance of one's experience
- involves presence and intentionality
- is a secular (non-religious) practice and is backed by compelling scientific evidence



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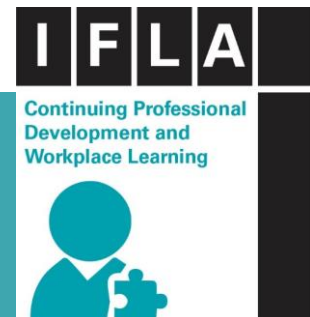


Examples of Mindful Practices



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- Intentional doing
 - On purpose for a purpose
 - Focusing, noticing, and giving/paying attention
 - (e.g. the act of listening and noticing types of nonverbal communication of body language, as well as the types of verbal communication; naming the incident/feeling; stating values and setting limits and boundaries)
- Meditation
 - Body scan, centering
 - Guided meditation
 - While washing hands
- Mindful inquiry
 - Description of healthy ways to communicate



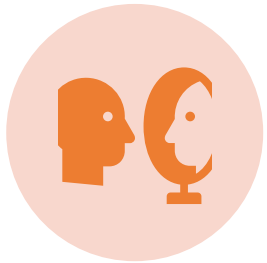
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9 Healthy Ways to Communicate



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Reflect back what is being said. Use their words not yours.



Begin where they are, not where you want them to be.



Be curious and open to what they are trying to say.

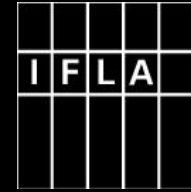


Notice what they are saying and what they are not.

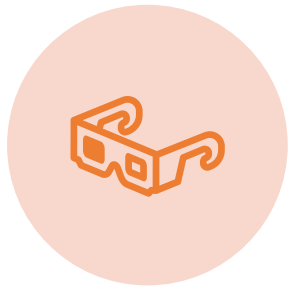


Emotionally relate to how they are feeling. Nurture the interaction.

9 Healthy Ways to Communicate (cont'd)



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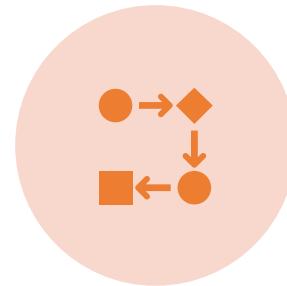
Notice how you are feeling. Be honest and authentic.



Own how you are feeling (even if it is uncomfortable).

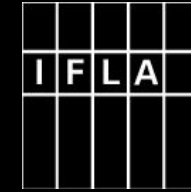


Try to understand how what's described affects who they are and how that experience could impact this interaction with you.



Stay with the process and the interaction. The focus is not on solutions.

Why does it matter?



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Benefits of mindfulness include....

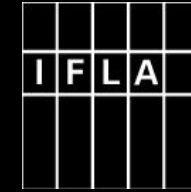
- Mental and Behavioral Health - decreases in stress levels, symptoms of anxiety and depression; increases in emotional well-being and self compassion; and lowers propensity for self harm
- Social behavior – healthier responses to difficult situations; reduction of implicit bias; and increases in compassionate responses to others
- Academic – improvements in cognitive performance, self-concept and engagement



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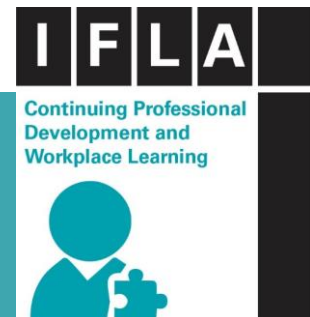
Why does it matter?



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Costs of not being mindful include....

- Decreased employee engagement
- Decreased innovation
- Increased turnover
- Increased feelings of isolation and burnout



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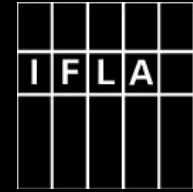
Practical Strategies & Tools



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Awareness & Knowledge



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Indicators

- Trouble sleeping, feeling anxious, family/relationship problems, headaches, sweats, stomach aches
- Diminished self-esteem, low morale
- Difficulty concentrating, low morale, engagement, diminished work performance.

Insight

- Questioning, Processing and Realizations...oh my!



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Knowledge & Coping



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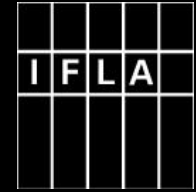
Take Action

- Learn the lexicon for what is happening
- Improve emotional intelligence (communication skills)
- Know human resource policies and practices
- Be legally informed
- Document and incident reports
- Engage in self-care



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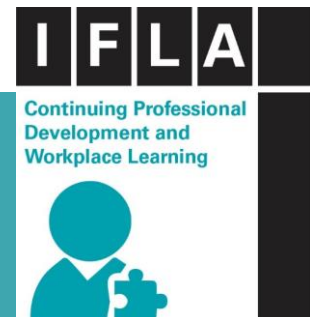


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Wellness & Lifelong Learning

LifeWork

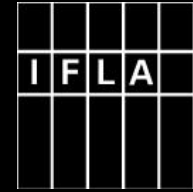
- Practice mindfulness
- Seek out counseling services
- Cultivate community



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Takeaways for the Profession



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Acknowledge

Acknowledge the existence of unproductive workplace behaviors and the harm they cause

Create

Create opportunities for strong connections (professional & personal) that can help mitigate the effects of microaggressions and workplace stressors

Provide

Provide enhanced support structures for library employees that are being subjected to microaggressions and other forms of workplace abuse

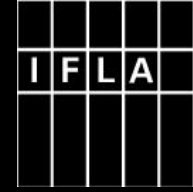
Address

Proactively address issues in the workplace

Practice

Practice social justice in the profession

Additional Tools



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StirFry Seminars and Consulting – Lee Mun Wah

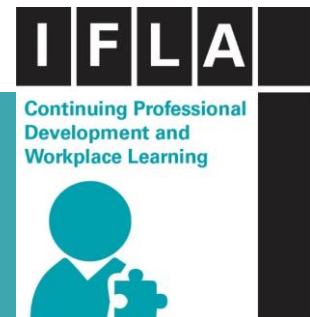
- <https://www.stirfryseminars.com/pdfs/newsletter.pdf>

Alabama Healthy Marriage Initiative – Dr. Francesca Adler-Bader

- <https://www.alabamamarriage.org/>

CARE Training – Child-Adult Relationship Enhancement Workshop – Dr. Elizabeth Brestan-Knight

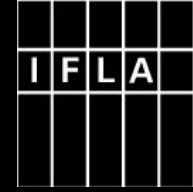
- <https://auburnlabpcit.wordpress.com/>



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Additional Tools (cont'd)



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Emotional Intelligence Toolkit

- <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/emotional-intelligence-toolkit.htm>

Culture Bump: 8 Steps to Common Ground (2019) Dr. Carol Archer and Dr. Stacey Nickson

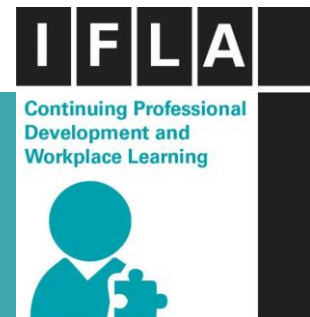
- <https://www.auburn.edu/outreach/ceoe/culturebumptraining.htm>

Managing Mental Health Matters –Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace

- https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/mmhm/pdf/full_communicating_0.pdf

The Gottman Institute - Drs. John and Julie Gottman

- <https://www.gottman.com/>



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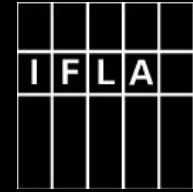
Questions?



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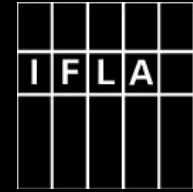
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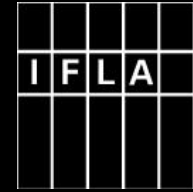
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References III



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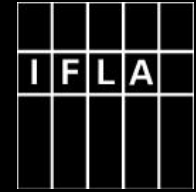
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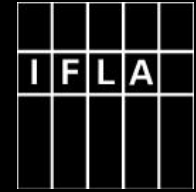
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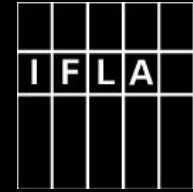
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References VI



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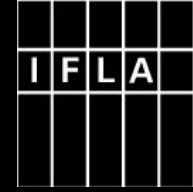
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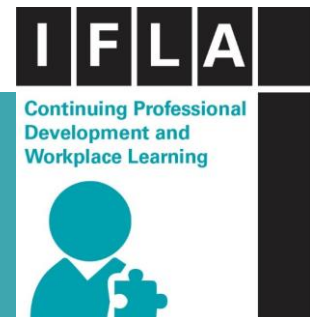
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Thank you!



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