

Conflict Resolution and Leadership Mindfulness into Action (MIA) for Cultural Humility and Awareness (MIA-CHA): Toward Ending Microaggressions and Fostering Harmony



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INTRODUCTION

To date, Mindfulness into Action has been implemented in three countries within higher education institutions. Additionally, in 2009, Dr. Mariana Vergara did a MIA informal intervention with the indigenous Kichwa community in the Amazon rainforest. Research suggests (Chapter 61) that participants of MIA experienced transformations within themselves, whereby they became more aware of their psychological and emotional processes and behaviors, including their self-limiting assumptions about themselves and self-sabotaging actions, and experienced reductions in feelings of dissonance (frustration and disequilibrium among cognitions).

These types of self-transformations are needed into today's world where many countries, communities, and organizations are plagued by diversity issues. It is important to create educational initiatives that effectively address and remedy the deep-rooted misconceptions (microaggressions) that we have about ourselves and one another, and foster self-awareness and more inclusivity. In this way, we will move towards becoming more liberated from the fixed and restrictive ego-based ideas that overlay our minds and hearts, and begin to realize our true natures and potentials (chapter 46). This progressive self-change will not only bring us into greater alignment with ourselves, but also into greater harmony with the people we interact with in our lives. This is the new paradigm mode in leadership that includes cultural humility and awareness (MIA-CHA) for ending microaggressions and fostering harmony.

Ending Microaggressions and Fostering Harmony

Mindfulness into Action (MIA) for Cultural Humility and Awareness (MIA-CHA) hold out the possibility of ending microaggressions in our interactions and fostering harmony. Consider the following points to clarify this assertion:

Microaggression has been defined as “the brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, 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 groups.” (Sue, 2010a, p. 5)

Consider the following elaboration on microaggressions, and all that they encompass:

Gender, sexual orientation, and disability microaggressions may have equally powerful and potentially detrimental effects on women, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals, and disability groups. Further, racial microaggressions are not limited to White–Black, White–Latino, or White–Person of Color interactions. Interethnic racial microaggressions occur between people of color as well. (Sue et al., 2007, p. 284)

Further, consider relevant history, as the term “microaggression” was originally introduced by Chester M. Pierce—the pioneering Harvard University Professor of Psychiatry and Education. It was in the 1970s that Dr. Pierce introduced the concept of microaggression to capture the indignities and insults commonly experienced by African Americans within society. Dr. Pierce explained the indignities and insults of microaggressions as chronic, daily racial discrimination and stress (Sue, 2010s; Sue et., al, 2007; Pierce, 1995).-

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