



**Introduction:** The Sensitivity to Others Continuum is a tool to help us stand up for others when we witness harm and a safeguard to our behaviors that harm others. Take the opportunity to explore your school policies on harm, bullying, harassment, and acts of hate.

**Microaggressions** are negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups. Often they are indirect and subtle and have no negative intent or hostility behind them, yet they still can be devastatingly harmful. They can be rooted in our implicit biases, which are the attitudes, stereotypes, and assumptions that we're not even aware of, that can creep into our minds and affect our actions. Common statements that are examples of microaggressions include: "For a girl, you \_\_\_\_\_." "You speak great English." "You are pretty for (insert type of ethnicity)" "You don't act (insert ethnicity/sexual orientation)."

One way leaders can ensure school safety is to be aware of their peers' emotional, physical, and social needs. Regardless of intent, the impact of behaviors, choices, and decisions can cause harm to students. Three essential questions to consider are:

- **Who caused harm & who was harmed?** Understanding the power dynamics in the social situation.
- **How did harm happen?** Recognizing that language, behavior, and actions affect others.
- **What did the people do who observed the harm or knew it was happening?** Learning techniques and strategies to confront the inappropriate and repair relationships when harm has occurred

1. **REACHING OUT** You go out of your comfort zone to help others, stand up for what is right or be accountable for your harmful behavior

**Naming the harm:** "That is racist, homophobic, sexist, mean, not true, bias, hurtful, harmful, inappropriate, not fair, unkind, excluding, etc."

**Examining your own biases** and learning about issues of equity.

**Apologizing** for your actions that have caused harm and not getting defensive when confronted.

**Stepping in** to help even when you are scared.

**Listening**, showing empathy, and supporting those who have been harmed.

**Being trustworthy**, honest, and approachable.

**Educating and guiding** those who are causing harm in a graceful, humble, compassionate, non-threatening manner

2. **COMMUNICATING DISAPPROVAL** You show disapproval by using words or physically removing yourself from a situation. For example, "If you plan on teasing them in class today, I'm not going to sit by you. We don't say those things."
3. **SILENT DISAPPROVAL** You disagree with what is happening, but you feel powerless to do anything or lack the courage. For example, "I didn't do anything. I just watched."
4. **SURVIVAL** You cannot do anything to help because you are just trying to get through the day. You are not feeling emotionally, socially, or physically safe.
5. **APATHY** You are aware but are unconcerned, indifferent, or do not give it your attention.
6. **HARM**

## *In Lak Ech*

*You are my other me.  
If I do harm to you,  
I do harm to myself;  
If I love and respect you,  
I love and respect myself*

**Luis Valdez, Mayan  
Poem**

*The greatest sin of our  
time is not the few who  
have destroyed, but the  
vast majority who have  
sat idly by. Nothing in  
all the world is more  
dangerous than sincere  
ignorance and  
conscientious stupidity.*  
**Martin Luther King, Jr.**