

GUIDE TO
**RECOGNIZING
MICROAGGRESSIONS
IN CLIMBING**

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Queer Crush Climbing 2021

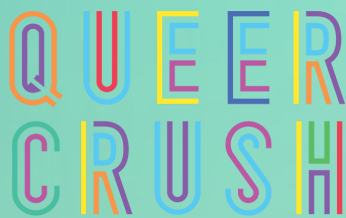


TABLE OF
**COMMON MICROAGGRESSIONS
 AND ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIORS**

Themes	Microaggression	Message	Example of Alternative
Racism	'Where are you from?' (e.g. when a white person asks a POC in the United States).	'You look different and don't belong here.'	'Where do you usually like to climb?'
Classism	Not following standard safety protocol, taking shortcuts (e.g. not checking each other's knots).	'My personal desire for recreation takes precedence over basic needs of other people to feel safe. I'm willing to jeopardize other peoples' sense of safety. If I get hurt, I know I can be taken care of, like having good health insurance.'	Respect and honor the inherent physical and psychological considerations and risks of BIPOC who climb outdoors. Educate and follow safety rules that are specific to the climbing area and take precautions to take care of your safety so others can feel safe around you.
Classism	'I can't believe you are climbing outdoors and don't own any of your own quickdraws'.	'You're poor'.	Share gear. Consider a communal gear box where people pass on donated items (within safety limits).
Ableism	'Come on, it's just a 5.10!' 'Just go up!' 'Stop thinking, start climbing!'	'Hurry up. I'm impatient. You don't deserve time to pause and center yourself and your body.' 'Your worth as a climber is based on the grade that you are climbing.'	Allow folx to take their time and space, explore their own embodiment, instead of assuming that person wants to grade-climb or send.
Ableism	'Here's how you should be doing this.' (i.e. Beta-spraying).	'I assume you don't know what you're doing or that there is one right way, which is mine.' 'It is okay for me to disrupt your own climbing experience.'	Give Beta only if requested or ask permission before giving Beta. Meanwhile, offer to spot or support silence. Breathe and be patient while others do their thing.

Themes	Microaggression	Message	Example of an Alternative
Ableism	Assuming someone has less outdoor experience, isn't 'outdoorsy' or strong.	'I'm okay with letting my lack of experience with diversity outdoors act as a barrier to others thriving and feeling comfortable outdoors.'	Take time to research affinity groups that serve diverse climbers. Learn about what they're doing, and consider supporting their initiatives by volunteering or donating.
Ableism, Classism Skill Gaslighting	Laughing or teasing someone for how long it takes someone to do safety checks and preparation. Making fun of style/mistakes and framing them as incompetencies.	'I don't care about your comfortability in the setting, I don't take your safety needs seriously.' 'You are not competent enough to be in this space.'	Peaceful silence. Internally acknowledge that people have different needs, skill levels, and traumas that affect their climbing. Recognize it is a privilege to access outdoors and it requires a variety of resources.
Heteronormativity, Misgendering	Assuming people's genders.	'You're the second <u>girl</u> I've seen at this crag today'.	'You're the second <u>person</u> I've seen at this crag today'.
Transphobia	Laughing at others' gender identity and requests to use correct pronouns.	'I care more about how I am used to talking than about you feeling accepted.'	'I use pronouns _____. What are your pronouns?' Use correct pronouns.
Sexism, Ableism	'You're a pretty good climber...for a girl! Even I struggled to climb that route.'	'I assume I am a better climber than you because of your gender presentation and I am consistently measuring worth based on the grade of climbing.'	'Good job, great use of x and y skills.' Observe and honor how people climb differently and relate to the rock in unique ways.
Sexism	Assuming a womxn is primarily the follower in a womxn/man climbing dynamic, assuming a womxn is new or climbing only to support the partner.	'You aren't as strong mentally/physically.' 'You are only able to do this because of a man.'	Get curious and listen to womxn's narratives. Ask about what the climber is personally working on in climbing.

Themes	Microaggression	Message	Example of an Alternative
Racism	<p>'Black people just don't like the outdoors'.</p> <p>Avoiding eye contact with POC climbers while acknowledging white climbers.</p>	<p>'Black, Indigenous, and People of Color don't have the same right to be here. I'm complacent with the impact of the colonialism and genocide on BIPOC and this space belongs more to me than them.'</p>	<p>Ask yourself: 'Do you climb with any POC? Have you ever taken a Black, Indigenous, Person of Color to Climb? Does your local gym, park, crag, or climbing org have BIPOC staff and leaders?'</p>
Bias	<p>'Yeah but you don't get to use the word "send" when you Pinkpoint because it's not a real send.'</p> <p>Bringing up irrelevant issues when viewing media of minority climbers, such as underplaying the importance of a climber's sends by bringing up things like pinkpointing.</p>	<p>'I'm not going to acknowledge that a number of these constructs are the result of a lack of diversity in climbing and reinforcing them contributes to that. Instead I think it's better to put down someone else.'</p>	<p>Recognize how a minority climber has overcome the barriers they face, some which you may not understand or experience. Recognize and share their victories with others in conversations and discussions. Advocate for their visibility in professional settings such as connecting them to paid opportunities to speak in panels, job opportunities, and sponsorships.</p>
Sexualization	<p>Unwelcome, or assumed to be welcome comments about another person's body, sexuality or behavior.</p>	<p>'I have power over you and I will exert it. I am entitled to objectifying and sexualizing you.'</p>	<p>Comment on the person's interests instead. If you are unsure about how welcome a comment is, you can ask for consent before bridging a sensitive topic.</p>

REMINDERS FOR ADDRESSING MICRO AND MACRO AGGRESSIONS

There are many ways to respond. Here are some ways we suggest.

How?

- Compassionate communication: context dependent responses.
- Call in vs. Call out approach - which is more appropriate for the situation?
- Example: "Hey that's not okay!" or "We don't discriminate here!"

Factors to consider:

- YOUR emotional energy
- Remembering the goal is growth
- Your safety

How to call-in effectively:

- Replace "you" statements with "I" statements.
- **Process:** When you _____, I feel _____ (in my body or emotion).
- Focus on how you are feeling in the situation rather than why the person is wrong. This creates an opportunity for the relationship to grow through effective communication.
- **85% rule:** not perfect, learn from experiences, 85% is good enough.
- Worst-case scenario, refer to the resources below for climbing community support for yourself :)

Do's:

- Address people as people, don't label their gender automatically. Starting with your pronouns is a plus!
- Deliberately make a space welcoming by reaching out.
- Listen to persons or ask them whether or not they want beta, follow their physical safety preferences, etc.
- Give persons the time they need; you never know what one may be going through.
- Verbalize what you and the other climber have in common to create intimacy, trust and understanding.

Remember:

- Evaluate your emotional energy.
- Disapprove: 'That's enough.' 'I don't agree with what you said.'

Use compassionate (non-violent) communication:

- Speak for yourself.
- State the fact of what happened objectively. 'When you said...'
- Describe how you feel subjectively. 'I feel...'
- Describe the impact on you.

MY INTERSECTIONS

	What are my intersections?
Gender	
Race and ethnicities	
Socio-economic status	
Age	
Abilities	
Religions	
Romantic and sexual orientation(s)	
Geographic locations	
Other(s)	

By identifying our intersections, we may begin to think about what related resources we may want to identify in the table below or search for/ask about.

WORKSHEET

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

What are my protective factors?

Who am I able to talk with (climbing partners/climbing community members) about my feelings?

How do I feel supported by friends/peers/other climbers while climbing?

When do I feel that I have others to stand by me during difficult times in training/at the gym/crag. If so, who?

Which climbing community events do I enjoy and am comfortable participating in?

Which climbing spaces do I feel a sense of belonging in?

Which of my intersections do I see others sharing in spaces I climb in? Which would I like to see more of in climbing?

Who do I ask questions about climbing? Do I have at least two mentors, friends or groups I am connected with?

How do I feel safe and protected in climbing spaces/gyms/crags/events?

Am I driven by involvement in mentorship/work with youth or other climbers?

CONNECT TO RESOURCES

Affinity Groups	<u>@AsianBoulderingCrew</u> <u>Black Climber's Collective</u> <u>The Brown Ascenders</u> <u>Brown Girls Climb App</u> <u>Climb the Gap</u> <u>Latino Outdoors</u> <u>Seattle Queer Climbers</u> <u>Spectrum Climbing Group</u> <u>Outdoor Afro</u> <u>Outdoor Asian</u> <u>Queer Crush Climbing</u> <u>Womxn Who Climb</u>
Events	<u>Flash Foxy</u> <u>Color the Crag</u> <u>Womxn Up Climbing Festival</u> <u>Women's Climbing Festival</u>
Gyms	<u>Bridges gym</u> <u>Mesa Rim gym</u> (both have good accessibility for chair users) <u>Coral Cliffs</u>
Consultants	<u>Taylorred Fit Solutions</u>
Youth Groups	<u>AMGA Grievance Policy</u> <u>Girls Climb On</u> <u>Sierra Club Inspiring Connection Outdoors</u>
Other	<u>AMGA Grievance Policy</u>

Articles:

[Challenge the Narrative](#) - The Trek

[Positive Childhood Experiences](#) - Aces Connection