

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion working group has been busy meeting with clergy, administration, education, membership, and leaders of brotherhood and sisterhood, as well as putting together presentations for the Board of Trustees. Each group is setting DEI goals. We are so appreciative of being part of a synagogue that is welcoming and inclusive, and proud that we have already done so much work as a community raising awareness about racism/ethnicity, homophobia and disabilities. Nevertheless, there are areas where we can continue to learn and grow as a community.

Below are some examples from the URJ website of microaggressions (statements, actions, or incidents regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group) that we can be aware of as we engage with people in our community. While I am sure there are some things on this list you would never consider saying, there are others that might slip out without thinking, even though we are all well intentioned.

#### Microaggressive Comments & Questions

So, how are you Jewish?

Where are you from? No, where are you really from?

you don't look like a lesbian.

You're not gay

Are you here with your husband/wife?

When are you going to start having babies?

I'm surprised you know so much about Judaism/Torah.

Who are you here with? (i.e. Why are you here?)

You're so pretty for someone [who uses a wheelchair/who uses braces/who is Trans who is Black]

I don't really see you as [recipient's race/gender/sexuality/disability/culture]

Do you work here? (or other ways of assuming that a JOC/working class person is custodial staff rather than a member or guest)

#### Microaggressive Experiences

Being repeatedly misgendered.

Being asked to speak on behalf of all Trans People/People who are LGBTQ/Jews of Color.

Walking into a space and feeling unsafe as the only Trans Person/GNC Person/Person of Color.

As we start having more in person Temple events, while it is wonderful to see old friends, we encourage you to sit with people you may not know, strike up conversations, and make new connections. A wonderful way to open the conversation is simply to say, "I don't think we have met. My name is.... and it is great to meet you. What's your name?" Who knows, you may have great conversations and find that you have a lot in common !

Sharon Genkin Tikkun Olam Chair

