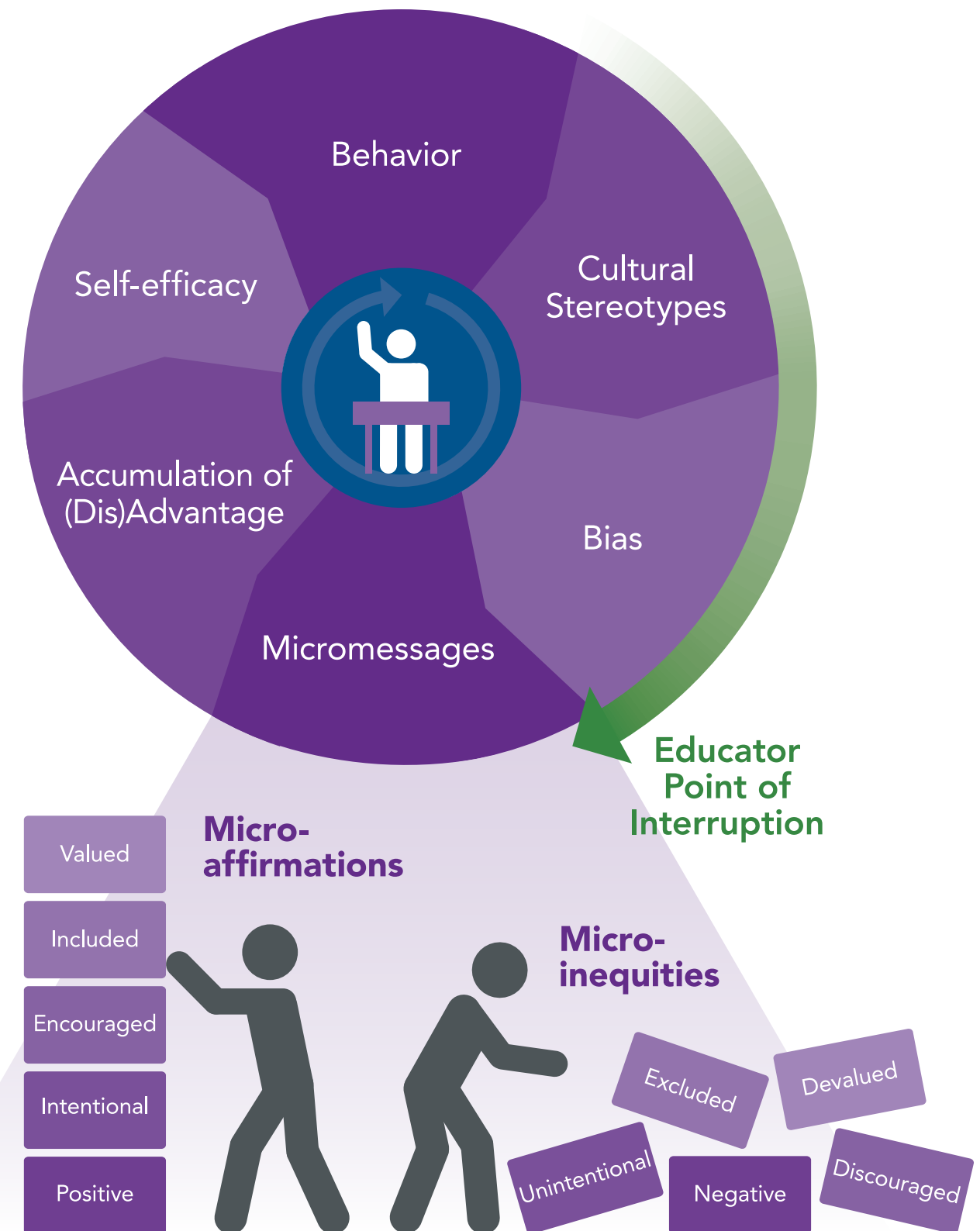


Framework for Cultural Change



SOURCE: NAPE's Educational Model, The Culture Wheel. Originally published in: Morrell, C., & Parker, C. (2013). Adjusting micromessages to improve equity in STEM. *Diversity & Democracy*, 16(2).

Micromessages: *The Point of Interruption*



Cultural Stereotypes

Cultural stereotypes exist about people and careers.

Stereotypes are beliefs we hold within our culture that lead to assumptions about characteristics, behaviors, and social norms. "The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story." (Chimamanda Adichie) These single stories limit the opportunities and potential for students and their future careers.



How can I recognize and challenge cultural stereotypes?



Implicit Bias

Because of stereotypes, we have implicit biases.

Everyone possesses implicit biases, and these biases may not align with declared beliefs and values. They are like an invisible under-current, because the human brain draws on stereotypes to organize and make sense of a complex world. Implicit biases directly affect how individuals interact with one another.

Take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to discover your biases relative to gender, career, gender-science, race, and disability. Visit www.napequity.org/iat for instructions.



Micromessages

Micromessages are the manifestation of implicit biases.

We send and receive small subtle unconscious messages when we interact with others. These messages can transmit either positive "micro-affirmations" or negative "micro-inequities" that communicate value to an individual. Micromessages are relayed not only through words but also through nonverbal communication, contextual cues in the classroom and school, and written feedback.



How are biases manifested in my interactions with students? See Cues & Messages Activity.



Accumulation of Advantage or Disadvantage

Positive and negative micromessages accumulate.

Impact is greater than intent. Each of us can identify an interaction with an educator or other significant adult in which we felt either highly valued or excluded and devalued. Although we cannot control all of the messages that students receive, we can intentionally send as many positive micro-affirmations as possible to tip the scale to an accumulated advantage.



Self-Efficacy

The effect of micromessages is high or low self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is the belief one holds in her or his ability to perform a specific task, such as to produce an outcome, reach a level of performance, or achieve a goal. Self-efficacy is strongly correlated with student persistence and achievement, and affects the goals that an individual sets. Self-efficacy develops and changes over time, and educators can intentionally provide opportunities to bolster student self-efficacy.



How can I inspire students to have the courage to excel? See Self-Efficacy infographic with Super Strategies.



Behavior

Behavior is the result of self-efficacy.

When students have low self-efficacy, cultural stereotypes can be inadvertently reinforced and perpetuated, particularly when it comes to nontraditional careers. On the other hand, when students have high self-efficacy, they can challenge the status quo. Over time, this can lead to a shift in cultural norms and stereotypes.



How will you help to challenge the status quo?



The Point of Interruption

You have the power to increase access and success for students by interrupting the cycle of negative micromessages, bolstering student self-efficacy, and challenging cultural stereotypes.