



*Read, review, and reflect upon the events listed below:*

- *What relational needs might be desired by the various individuals in each scenario?*
- *How might awareness of communication style (invitational, presentational, or confrontational) help meet relational needs?*
- *Do you see examples of seeking to understand, sharing openly and honestly, caring and receiving care gone amiss?*
- *Is scenario 4 an example of genuine seeking to understand or “rude curiosity” (i.e. Pete’s primary intention is to satisfy his own curiosity about racial differences)? Or, is Pete’s action a microaggression, a subtle signal to Gloria that she is different and not “one of us?” Merriam-Webster defines microaggression as “a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as an ethnic minority).*

1. *Joan’s dear friend gives her one last hug before getting into the moving van to drive four states away to her destination. Weeks subsequently pass and the two women grieve the loss of their close friendship. As far as their families and friends are concerned, however, life continues as usual.*
2. *Brett, a single father of three, attends the Christmas eve service, viewing it as a special time with his children. As he walks out of church, a fellow church member approaches the family and shoves money into Brett’s pocket while saying, “I’m sure you can use this. I think someone in your position should have help at Christmas.” Brett shrinks and quickly escorts his children to the car.*
3. *Bill is passionate about equipping employees toward excellence. He often works long hours and is known by many as a thoughtful and effective person in his position. One day, while sharing a management principle publicly, he points out an error made by one of the other team members. Bill encourages his coworkers to beware of such practices. The team member “in error” hears about the criticism from another employee.*
4. *Gloria, a new employee to the company, and Pete, a long-time employee, exchange conversation during a break at work about their families. Abruptly, Pete asks Gloria, “Is it hard for you to work here being black?” The sudden shift in the conversation alerts Gloria to the lens through which Bill views her. Gloria isn’t sure how to respond. Or, should she not respond to the question?*