7 WAYS TO RESPOND TO DEMEANING COMMENTS

1. Assume good intentions.  
   “I’m sure you meant that as a compliment, but not everyone will understand it that way.”

2. Ask sincere, open-ended questions.  
   “What do you mean?”

3. Individualize.  
   “Are you thinking of someone in particular?”

4. Explain the impact.  
   “Saying things like that implies that people in that group are usually a problem. I don’t think that is what you mean.”

5. Broaden the description.  
   Show how the trait applies to many groups. “Yes, a lot of people behave that way when they feel threatened.”

6. Interrupt & change directions.  
   “Nice weather today, isn’t it?”  
   Or just, “Whoa, I’m not going there.”

7. Just say “Ouch!”