Tara’s struggle in building relationships

Tara is an African postgraduate student studying in the UK/ Canada. This is the first time she had to separate from her family and friends. Tara struggles to find a community or friends that she can get along with and she feels lonely in her studies. She feels insecure about a lot of things, including her race and African background. People are not able to understand her accent, and as a result, she feels her peers do not like to engage with her. In one of her most recent group-activity projects, Tara’s peer blatantly showed distrust in Tara’s abilities by telling her, “*You probably shouldn’t take part in the oral presentation*”. These incidents are negatively affecting Tara, and she begins wondering: “Do I have a problem?” “Should my peers treat me as inferior?” “Are my peers deliberately not engaging with me?” “How can I deal with this challenge of not fitting into my new environment and building relationships? ”

**Case Issues:**

* Building relationships/supportive community
* Race and background differences
* Microaggressions

 **Possible Guiding Questions**

* How would you assist Tara in dealing with the microaggressions and racism that her colleagues are demonstrating?
* What advice can you give Tara regarding racism and microaggressions, bearing in mind how sensitive the topic may be for both of you?
* What support can you offer Tara to help her learn how to build new relationships in new environments?