

# PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

## 3-2-1 DISCUSSION GUIDE

Jen C. Brandt LISW-S, Ph.D. (she/her/hers)



### 3 TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

Review these messages together.

#### Psychologically safe environments are rare.

This is primarily because we have been programmed to see mistakes as negative and problematic rather than opportunities for growth and learning (Lean Learning Center, 2022).\*

#### Contributing to team psychological safety requires self-awareness.

We tend to judge ourselves by our intent—giving ourselves the benefit of the doubt that we meant well regardless of the impact of our behaviors. We tend to judge others on their impact—often assuming the worst about their motivations, character, or abilities.

#### Reframe mistakes.

Every time you make a mistake, you learn something new. And when you learn something new, you can teach others.

### 2 QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

#### Question for **team discussion**

Share your thoughts with your team.

**What are some important aspects of a work environment that allow team members to feel psychologically safe, included, and want to engage?**

#### Question for **self-reflection**

No need to share your answer or thoughts with anyone.

**Think about a time that you made a mistake. Can you reframe the experience to see value in the opportunity to learn and grow?**

### 1 ACTION TO TAKE AS A TEAM AND ONE TO TAKE AS A JOURNEYIST

**Make a commitment together as a team** to implement at least one of the suggestions below. This will be your team behavior change.

- Agree to confidentially measure psychological safety in your workplace. Periodically conduct anonymous surveys to measure team perceptions on sharing ideas, making mistakes, and feeling included (see sample survey on the next page).
- Establish conditions to engage in healthy conflict. If there is disagreement in a meeting, always commit to one action step before the meeting ends to address the conflicts shared in the room.
- Establish a foundational rule in your workplace that mistakes are not to be shamed or hidden but are opportunities for sharing, growth, and learning for everyone.

**Make a commitment as an individual** to follow through on at least one of these suggestions (this can be private).

- Implement the PLATINUM RULE in your life. **Treat people how THEY would like to be treated.**
- Keep your blame game in check. When things don't go as expected, it's easy to look for someone else to blame. We tend to ask "why". *Why did you do that? Why did this happen?* Replace your blame with nonjudgmental curiosity by asking "what" questions instead of "why" questions. *What did we learn from this outcome that we didn't know before?*
- Act **AS IF** it is your responsibility to create and maintain safety for the entire team. Act where action can be taken.

**We hope that after the meeting, you will be inspired to explore psychological safety in greater depth, either as a team or individually. We invite everyone to check out Dr. Brandt's recommended resources in the [Topic Overview](#).**



\* Fear & creativity: Why psychological safety is crucial for success. Lean Learning Center. (2022, May 10). <https://leanlearningcenter.com/blog/why-psychological-safety-is-crucial-for-creative-endeavors/>

# PRINT ANONYMOUS SURVEYS FOR YOUR TEAM

Cut here .....

**Agree or disagree with the following statements about our workplace environment:**

STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

I feel included. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to learn. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to contribute. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to challenge the status quo. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

Cut here .....

**Agree or disagree with the following statements about our workplace environment:**

STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

I feel included. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to learn. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to contribute. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to challenge the status quo. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

Cut here .....

**Agree or disagree with the following statements about our workplace environment:**

STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

I feel included. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to learn. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to contribute. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to challenge the status quo. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

Cut here .....

**Agree or disagree with the following statements about our workplace environment:**

STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

I feel included. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to learn. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to contribute. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

I feel safe to challenge the status quo. \_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |

Cut here .....