

Workshop Series



Health Literacy
Solutions Center





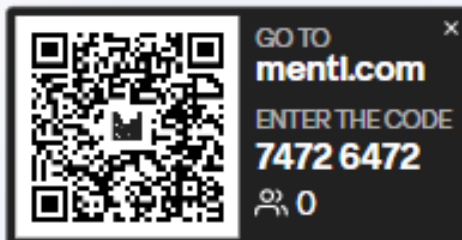
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Mentimeter

What words would you use to describe a workplace that is psychologically safe for employees?

8 answers

listening
genuine equitable
enjoyable
encouraging
open communication
no power hoarding
caring



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Practice Makes Progress: Using Creative Play and Applied Improvisation to Develop and Reinforce Psychological Safety within our Organizations

Dayna Gowan, MPH, CHES

Speaker, Improviser, Facilitator of Fun
Improvly Speaking



Group Agreements

1. Doesn't have to be funny. Say the first thing that comes to your mind. Don't overthink it.
2. Be respectful and keep it work appropriate.
3. Be here, be open, and allow yourself to be a beginner.
4. Have fun and enjoy yourself!

If at any time you want to sit out or step out and just watch, you totally can!



Psychological Safety Definitions

- “A shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking.”
- “A sense of confidence that the team will not embarrass, reject or punish someone for speaking up. This confidence stems from mutual respect and trust among team members.”
 - Amy Edmondson (novartis professor of leadership and management at the Harvard Business School and author of The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth.)



What Psychological Safety Is:

- A team climate where members feel comfortable being themselves.
- Employees feel free to:
 - “Brainstorm out loud”
 - Voice half-finished thoughts
 - Ask bold questions/openly challenge the status quo
 - Share feedback
 - Work through disagreements together
- Employees know and understand that leaders value honesty, candor, and truth-telling, and that team members will have one another’s backs.

(Center for Creative Leadership)



Three Focus Areas for Today's Workshop:

1. Letting go of perfection
2. Active listening
3. Growth Mindset



Let's Play



Warm-Up Game:





Warm-Up Game:

YES, LET'S!

Put in the chat a few activities that we can do together as a group.



Exercise

Categories



Exercise

Last Letter, First Letter



Exercise

Plan a Volunteer Day



Exercise

Build a Tower



Let's Debrief

What do all these exercises have to do with psychological safety?



What did you notice in these exercises?

- Low-stakes environment to make mistakes and learn
- Established connection, even over Zoom and at a virtual workshop
- Simple, playful exercises that allowed you to experience some profound takeaways
- Laughed and had fun (memorable experience...hopefully)
- What else??



Benefits of Improvisation

The skills of improvisation can not only help sustain a scene on stage, they can also help in our personal and professional lives.

- Growth mindset
- Active listening
- Connecting with others
- Letting go of perfection
- Trusting yourself and being more confident in your choices
- Communication and collaboration skills
- Creativity and PLAY!
- What else??



Benefits of Improvisation

- “Accept and build” is a mindset/tool for:
 - Growth
 - Curiosity
 - Dealing with change
 - Collaboration
 - Managing and Leading
 - Innovation and experimentation
 - Situations where we want to connect, create, support, expand, and explore

Yes =

Acceptance
Appreciation
Acknowledging
Encouraging
Respect
(Does not always have to be agreement)

And =

Builds Off
Adds to
Expands from
Where it becomes collaboration and co-creation



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(Center for Creative Leadership)



What Psychological Safety Isn't

- It is not everyone being nice to each other all the time.
- It is not avoiding discomfort.
- It is not warm and fuzzy, coddling, or guaranteed praise.
- It is not preferential treatment/tolerance of toxic behaviors.
- It is not unearned autonomy.
- It is not a shield from accountability.
- It is not static (meaning it's not a one-time fix).
- It is not just for leadership to worry about.

(Forbes; Learner Lab; NeuroLeadership Institute)



Benefits of Psychologically Safe Environments

- Increased problem-solving
- Higher engagement
- Inclusive practices
- Higher productivity and lower turnovers
- Better collective well-being
- Lower chance of risky mistakes
- Stronger sense of belonging
- More inclusive and diverse cultures



Picture credit: Canva.com

(PsychCentral)



What are your key takeaways from today's session?

Please share!



Key Takeaways

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What is a key takeaway that you can bring back to your work?

▶ Start Menti



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What questions do you have?

Please type your questions in the Chat box.



Contact Information

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Thank you for Attending

You will receive an email containing a link to a brief online evaluation. If you are requesting continuing education (CE) credits, you must submit an evaluation in order to receive your CE certificate.

Visit the Health Literacy Solutions Center at www.healthliteracysolutions.org to:

- Access the recording and presentation materials of today's workshop.
- Register for upcoming workshops.



Appendix – Articles/Websites Referenced

- Center for Creative Leadership - <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-psychological-safety-at-work/>
- Forbes article - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/timothyclark/2021/06/21/what-psychological-safety-is-not/?sh=1a14485e6452>
- Learner Lab - <https://thelearnerlab.com/a-guide-to-psychological-safety/>
- NeuroLeadership Institute - <https://neuroleadership.com/your-brain-at-work/5-things-psych-safety>
- PsychCentral - <https://psychcentral.com/health/psychological-safety-at-work#tips-for-leadership>



Appendix – Other Resources to Check Out

- Amy Edmondson's List of Resources -
<https://amycedmondson.com/recommended-resources/>
- Google's Project Aristotle -
<https://rework.withgoogle.com/print/guides/5721312655835136/>
- TedX Talks. (2014). Building a psychologically safe workplace | Amy Edmondson | TEDxHGSE [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhoLuui9gX8>
- *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth* by Amy Edmondson (2019).
- *The Culture Playbook* by Daniel Coyle (2022).



Appendix – Other Applied Improv Resources to Check Out

- *Harvard Business Review* article - <https://hbr.org/2015/03/3-improv-exercises-that-can-change-the-way-your-team-works>
- *Article about Applied Improvisation* - <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0035.206>
- *An Improv State of Mind: Using the Art and Science of Improvisation to Succeed at Work...and at Life* by Jennie Ayers (2015).
- *Applied Improvisation: Leading, Collaborating, and Creating Beyond the Theatre* edited by Theresa Robbins Dudeck, Caitlin McClure (2018).
- *Training to Imagine: Practical Improvisational Theatre Techniques for Trainers and Managers to Enhance Creativity, Teamwork, Leadership, and Learning* by Kat Koppett and Joel Goodman (2012).
- *Yes, And: How Improvisation Reverses "No, But" Thinking and Improves Creativity and Collaboration--Lessons from The Second City* by Kelly Leonard and Tom Yorton (2019).