Leading a Psychologically Healthy Workplace

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Arriving

- Burnout

- Psychological Safety

- Leading

- Flourishing

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to identify signs of burnout among their team members and develop effective intervention strategies to mitigate staff burnout.

- Participants will be able to define and explore the concept of psychological safety, its significance in the workplace and factors that contribute to a psychologically healthy workplace.

- Participants will be able to recognize common barriers that hinder the creation of a psychologically safe work environment and how this correlates with burnout.

- Participants will discuss the role of leadership in championing psychological safety, buffering against burnout and modeling healthy self-care.

Burnout

A psychological syndrome characterized by three main dimensions

- Emotional Exhaustion
  - Weariness
  - Difficulty adapting at work due to insufficient emotional energy
- Cynicism or Depersonalization
  - Detachment
  - Indifference
  - Irritability
  - Interpersonal Avoidance
- Reduced Personal Achievement
  - Negative self-evaluation
  - Low morale and coping skills
  - Decrease in productivity

(Maslach & Jackson, 1981)

Vicarious Trauma and More

- Vicarious Trauma/Compassion Fatigue:
  - Transformation by empathic connection with another
- Perfectionism & Productivity Culture
- Pandemic Impact
- Contextual Marinade
  - Social Justice Issues
  - Political Divisiveness
  - College Health

How Does Burnout Develop?

- Social Cognitive Theory
  - Efficacy crises are triggered lead to low professional fulfillment
- Organizational Theory
  - Organizational and work stressors overwhelm individual coping strategies
- Social Exchange Theory
  - Lack of equity between efforts made and results obtained in work
- Demands-Resources Theory
  - Imbalance between the demands and resources derived from work
- Structural Theory
  - Coping strategies fail in response to chronic job stress
- Theory of Emotional Contagion
  - Imitation and synchronization of nonverbal behavior and shared emotions in work groups

What triggers burnout?

Organizational Factors

- Work Overload

- Emotional Labor

- Lack of Autonomy at Work

- Ambiguity & Role Conflict

- Inadequate Supervision/Perception of Justice

- Lack of Perceived Social Support

- Poor Working Hours

- Lack of psychological safety

Individual Factors

- Neuroticism

- External Locus of Control

- Type A Personality

- Alexithymia

- Emotion-focused Coping

Consequences

Psychological

Poor Memory & Concentration

Difficulty Making Decisions

Anxiety/Depression

Health

Aches & Pains

GI Distress

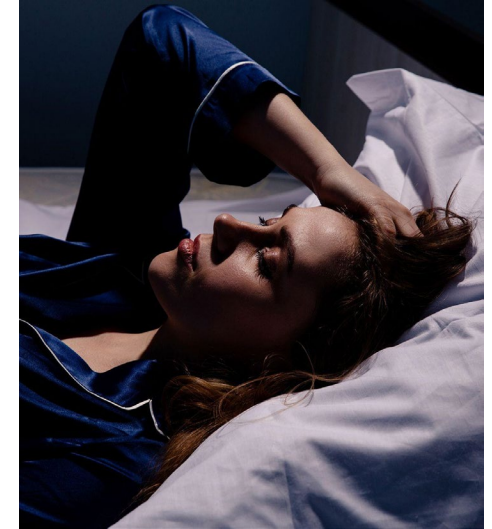Insomnia and Chronic Fatigue

Behavioral

Job dissatisfaction

Turnover

Increased Absenteeism

Organizational

Reduction in Quality of Services

Economic Loss

Overcoming burnout is not an individual thing, but something that must be tackled at a systemic level.

Psychological Safety

"The extent to which individuals feel secure and confident in their ability to manage change" (Schein and Bennis 1965)

"An individual's perceptions as to whether he or she is comfortable to show and employ his(her/their)self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career." (Kahn 1990, p.708)

"Shared belief held by teams that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking" (Edmondson, 1999, p350)

**Psychological safety
is a measurement of shared comfort
amongst a team for
interpersonal risk-taking.**

(Edmonson, 1999)

Why is this important

Leads to

- Greater Communication

- Learning and growth

- Inclusion

- Creativity and knowledge sharing

- Higher performance

- Improved decision making

- Wellbeing

Predicts

- 27% reduction in turnover.

- 76% more engagement.

- 50% more productivity.

- 74% less stress.

- 29% more life satisfaction.

- 57% more collaboration.

- 67% higher probability that learning will be applied on the job.

(Newman, et. al., 2017; Aguiar, 2022)

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Psychological Safety is…..

- ❑ When members of a team feel comfortable throwing out ideas, asking questions, and taking risks without fear of how their team might react or respond.

- ❑ An environment where your team can make and learn from mistakes.

- ❑ Felt ability to freely challenge the status quo without fear about how it might be received.

- ❑ Comfort in being able to ask for help when needed.

- ❑ Knowing that no one on your team would actively work against you.

- ❑ Feeling that your team knows what you bring to the table and that they value those contributions

- ❑ Feeling safe to bring your authentic self to work
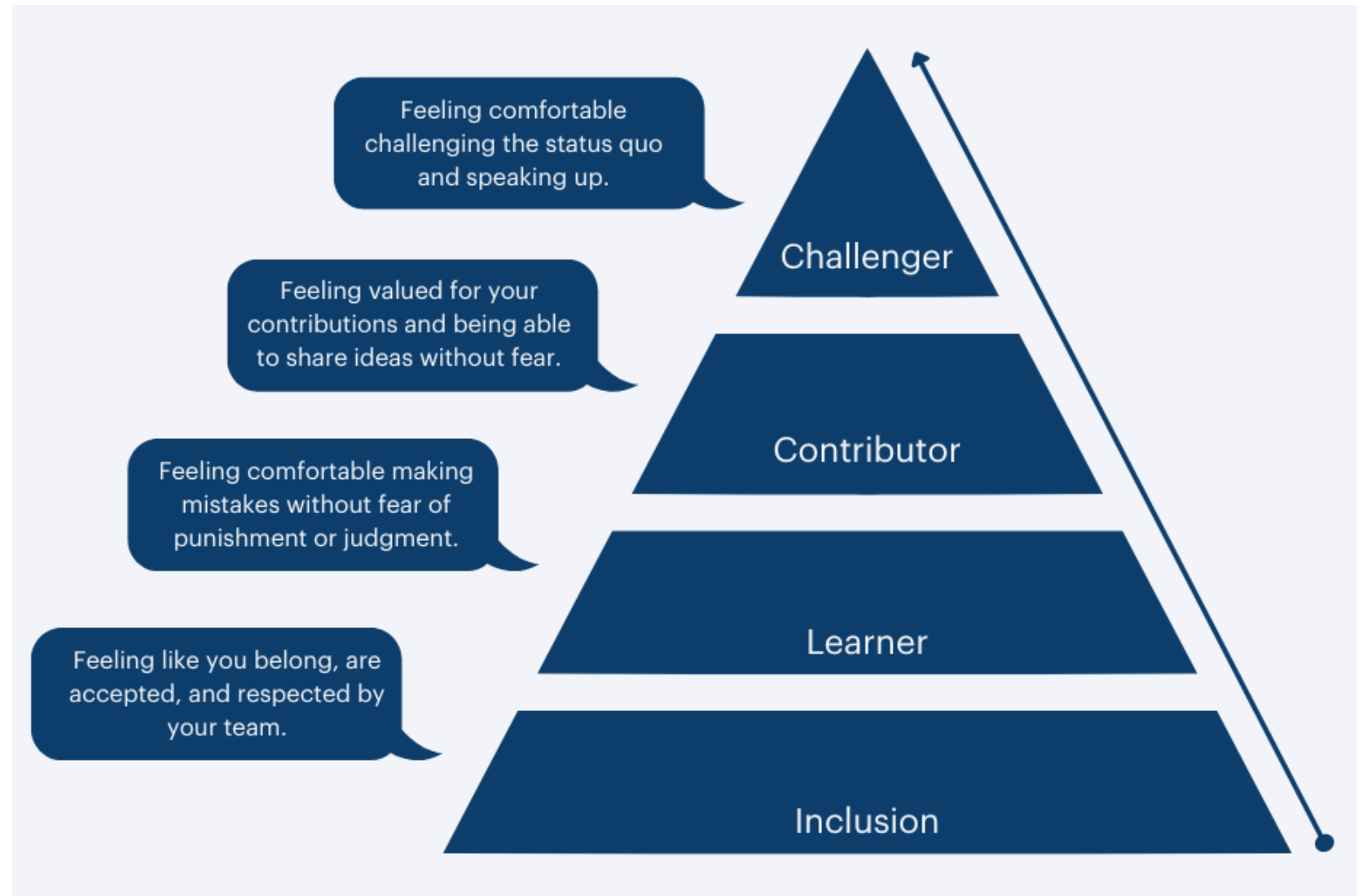
(Duhigg, 2016; Aguiar, 2022)

Psychological Safety is Not….

❏ Avoiding holding your team accountable so that they never feel bad.

❏ Avoiding conflict or hard discussions within the team.

❏ Avoiding delivering feedback for fear of bruising egos.

❏ Democratizing team decision-making.

❏ Automatically giving full autonomy by default.

4 Stages of Psychological Safety

(Clark, T.2020)

Factors that hinder

- Leader with poor emotional control

- Lack of diversity & inclusion

- Unclear communication

- Harsh critiques/blame

- Lack of clarity

- Fear of failure

- Mistrust

- Unresolved conflicts

- Emotional invulnerability

Measuring Psychological Safety

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SCORE
1. If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you.						
2. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.						
3. People on this team sometimes reject others for being different.						
4. It is safe to take a risk on this team.						
5. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help.						
6. No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.						
7. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilised.						
TOTAL SCORE						

(The Fearless Organization, Edmondson, 2019)

The Connection

Burnout & a Psychological Safety

Psychological safety can serve as a protective factor against burnout in the workplace.

Psychological safety ⇧

Emotional exhaustion ⇩

Depersonalization ⇩

Psychological safety ⇩

Personal Accomplishment ⇩

(Vevoda, Vevodova et. al., 2016)

The Connection

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What you can do as a Leader

- ❑ Communicate Courageously

- ❑ Master the Art of Listening

- ❑ Manage your Reactions

- ❑ Embrace Risk & Failure

- ❑ Design Inclusive Rituals

(Helbig & Norman, 2023)

Communicate Courageously

- ✓ Welcome other viewpoints: "What am I missing?"

- ✓ Solicit diverse perspectives: "That's one viewpoint, let's hear others."

- ✓ Express your own emotions

- ✓ Remove the mask of perfection: "I don't know yet."

- ✓ Nurture appropriate humor: Laugh more

Master the Art of Listening

- ✓ Listen to understand instead of to prepare a response: Listen, pause, respond

- ✓ Be fully present : Tame your wandering mind

- ✓ Clarify your understanding: I hear you saying…

- ✓ Listen for emotions: Hear what is not being said

- ✓ Commit to Curiosity: "Tell me more."

Manage your Reactions

✓ Model non-defensive reactions: Hit the pause button

✓ Respond productively: Label emotions

✓ Watch out for a narrow outlook: "What stories am I telling myself?"

✓ Embrace being challenged: Thank people for their courage.

✓ Build on the ideas of others: "Yes, And."

Embrace Risk & Failure

- ✓ Normalize failure: "This is new to us; we may experience failure in order to learn."

- ✓ Reframe failures as learning opportunities: "Interesting! What can we learn from this?"

- ✓ Get comfortable with discomfort: Welcome difficult emotions

- ✓ Model learner behavior: Admit mistakes and share lessons learned.

- ✓ Celebrate continuous learning: Implement blameless postmortems.

(Newman, 2017 ;Gallo, 2023)

Design Inclusive Rituals

✓ Be an "Inclusion Booster"

✓ Respect all voices: No interruption rule

✓ Take turns speaking and invite all voices: Listen and pause

✓ Check for psychological safety: Gather feedback after meetings

✓ Appreciate the team: Express gratitude

(Newman, 2017 ;Gallo, 2023)

What you can do as a Leader

- Lead with empathy & compassion
- Model Inclusiveness
- Be Supportive
- Elicit trustworthiness
- Demonstrate Openness
- Act with Integrity
- Reframe Vulnerability into Courage
- Notice people not just Roles

- Invite input
- Make clear why all team voices matter
- Establish clear norms & boundaries
- Provide freedom to choose when appropriate
- Clarify / reduce job demands
- Show and verbalize appreciation

(Brown, 2018; Newman, 2017; Gallo, 2023)

To learn more…..

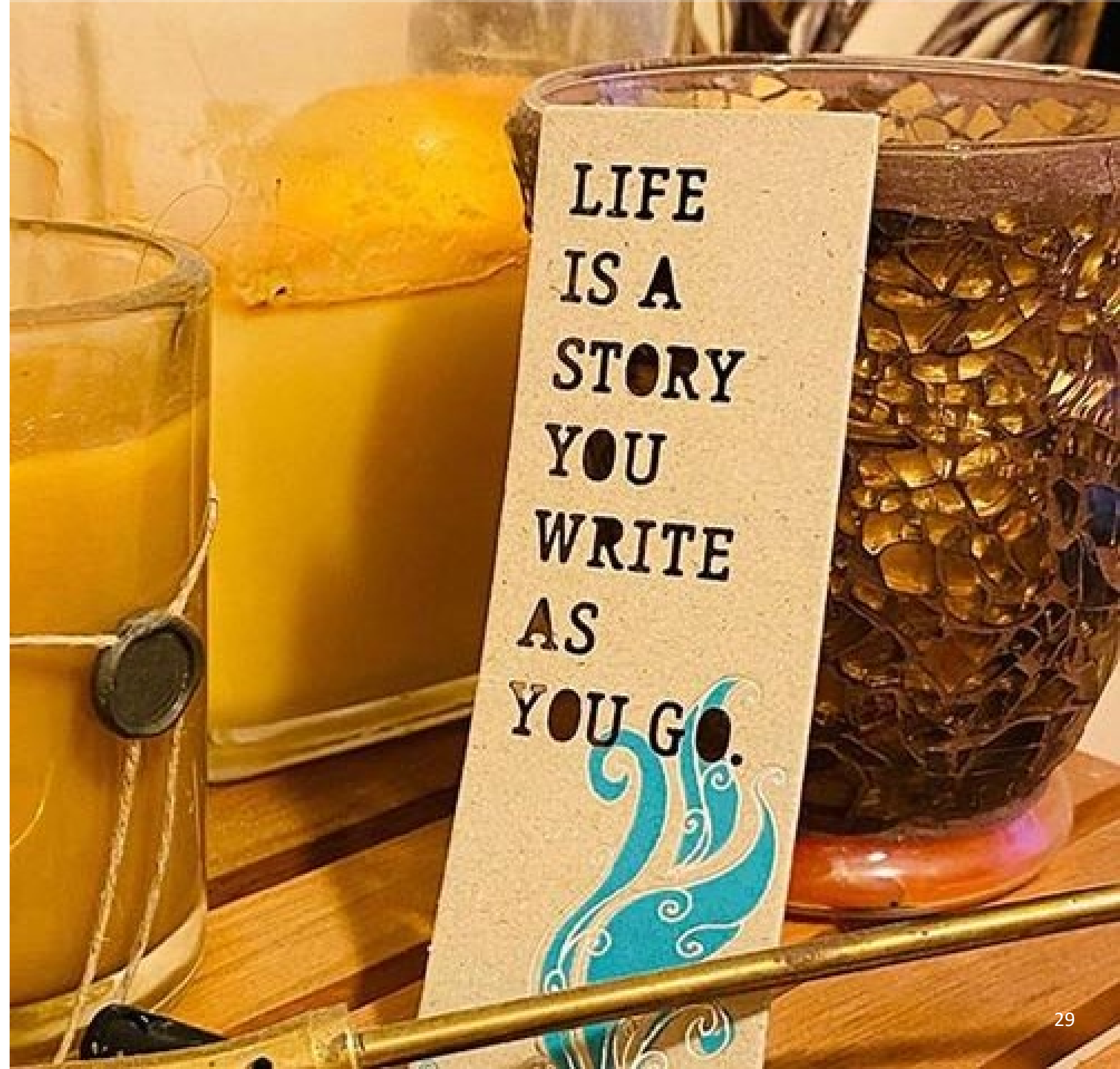4 Stages of Psychological Safety – Behavioral Guide

- Timothy Clark 2020

LeaderFactor.com

What you can do as an individual / for yourself

- Integrate self-care
- Increase nourishing activities
- Decrease depleting activities
- Embrace flexibility
- Develop support networks
- Practice compassion

If you could only be remembered for one thing, what would it be?

If you could actually be remembered for 2 things what would be the second thing you'd add to the first?

Your challenge

If you choose to accept it…

Daily Mindful Actions

- Begin your day with this question:

- What opportunities are there for me to practice the 2 things I want to be remembered for?

  - Be realistic with time expectations

Daily Mindful Actions

- **At the end of the day, take time to appreciate how you practiced those 2 things**
  - **With complete acceptance**

The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.

Walt Disney

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Thank you