

# Welcome

## Today's Presenter: AJ Adams, MAPP



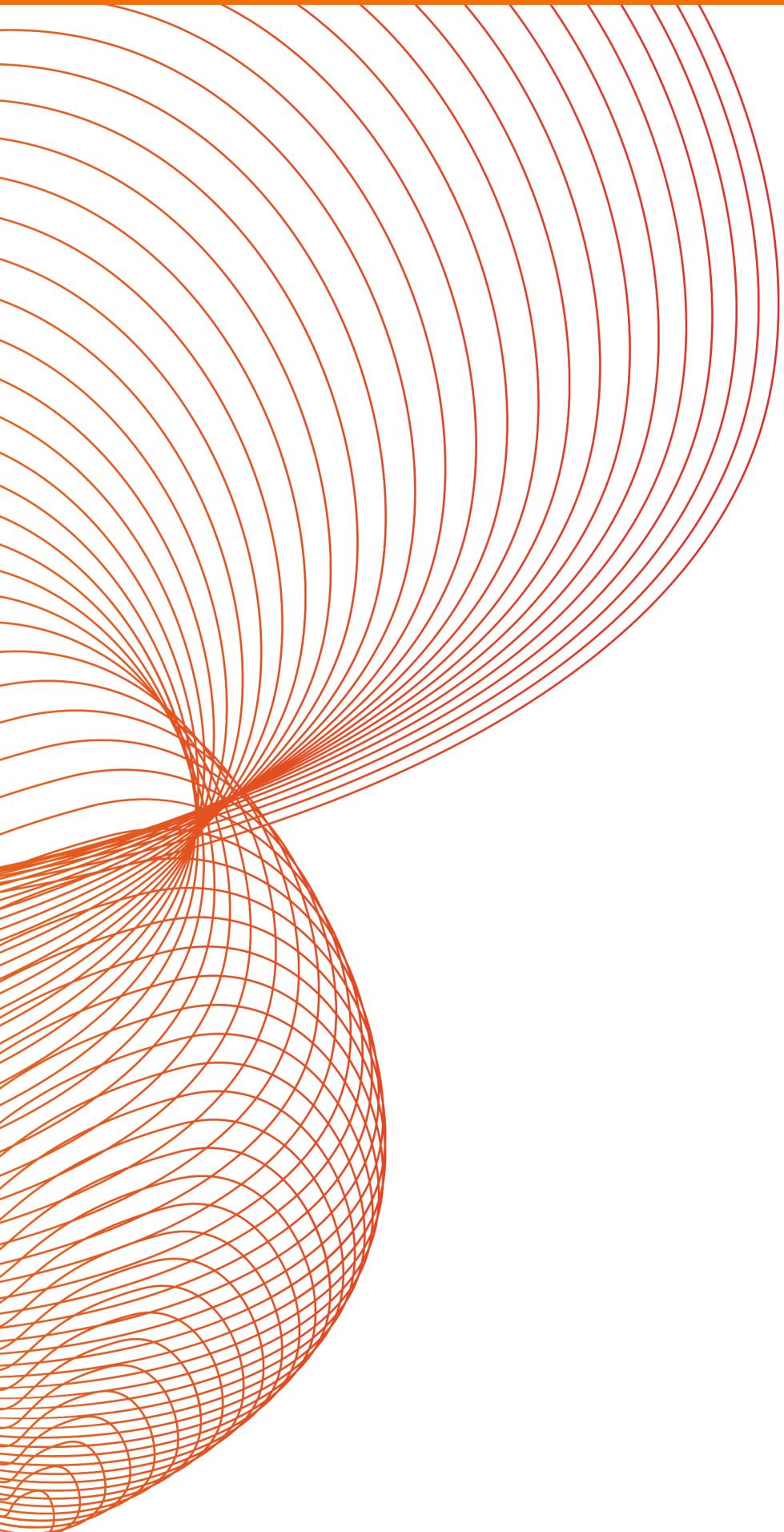
As one of the first 150 people in the world to graduate with the Master's in Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) degree from University of Pennsylvania, AJ is a pioneer in the field of enhancing employee wellbeing and burnout prevention. For over a decade, AJ has supported the wellbeing efforts of organizations such as the Wharton Business School, the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Army, Merck & Co., the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute. Not only does AJ specialize in teaching people how to learn and apply resilience skills, AJ has also taught thousands of people how to train resilience skills through the world's largest scaled train-the-trainer programs.

# Creating Belonging through Psychological Safety



Presenter: AJ Adams, MAPP





# Today's Workshop



- A Sense of Belonging
  - Benefits of Psychological Safety
  - 4 Stages of Psychological Safety
  - The Neuroscience of Safety
  - Warnings & Indicators
  - The SAFER Model
  - Review
- 

# Ways to Engage

- Complete the exercises on your handout as I guide you to
- Q&A throughout the webinar

**Belonging: "the feeling of security  
and support when there is a sense of  
acceptance, inclusion, and identity  
for a member of a certain group."**

### **Exercise 1: Belonging**

Belonging is "the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group."

Think of a time when you felt a sense of belonging within a group. How were you made to feel accepted? What made you feel included? Be specific about behaviors.

What emotions did you feel? How did you help others to feel a sense of belonging in this group?

A 2015 study code-named  
**Project Aristotle**

# Psychological Safety

**“a shared belief held by members of a team that  
the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking.”**

# Safer, Not Smarter

# Benefits of Psychological Safety

## Performance

PS enhances work performance, creativity and job team performance.

## Well-Being

PS increases personal well-being as well as job satisfaction.

## Physical Health

PS buffers people from the impact of workplace stress.

## Relationships

PS creates greater social bonds and relationship satisfaction.

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# 4 Stages of Psychological Safety



**STAGE 1:  
INCLUSION SAFETY**



**STAGE 2:  
LEARNER SAFETY**



**STAGE 3:  
CONTRIBUTOR SAFETY**



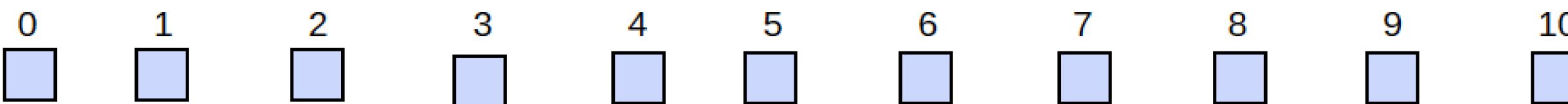
**STAGE 4:  
CHALLENGER SAFETY**

### **Exercise 2: Psychological Safety Team Rating**

Rate where your team is in terms of psychological safety. 0 equals a complete lack of this stage of psychological safety while 10 equals 100% psychological safety for that given stage.

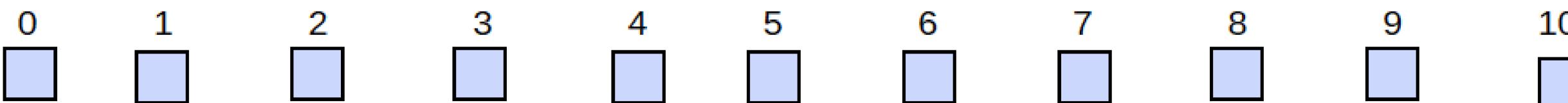
#### **Stage 1: Inclusion Safety**

In this stage, team members feel a sense of belonging, connection and community within the team. Each person feels accepted for their unique strengths and skills.



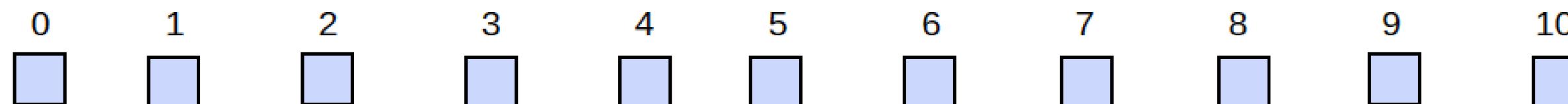
#### **Stage 2: Learner Safety**

In this stage, team members feel safe to engage in the learning process through sharing information, asking questions, and experimenting without fear of embarrassment or being marginalized.



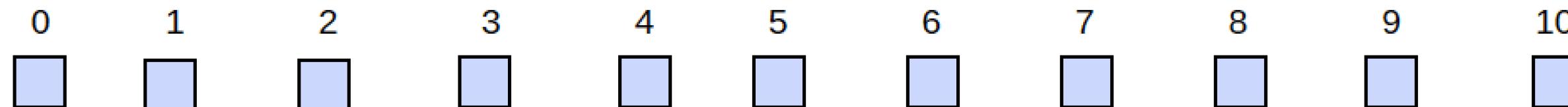
### Stage 3: Contributor Safety

In this stage, team members feel safe to contribute their strengths, skills and ideas to the team's mission without fear of being embarrassed, marginalized, or punished in some way.



### Stage 4: Challenger Safety

In this stage, team members feel safe to challenge ideas, norms, and the status quo without retaliation or the risk of damaging our personal standing or reputation.



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# Physical Safety





## "Am I safe here?"



**When the amygdala perceives a threat, it activates the stress response.**



**The brain processes social threats the same way it processes physical threats.**



# Stress Response Styles

## Fight Response Characteristics

- Feels irritable and/or angry
- Blames and/or criticizes others
- Becomes aggressive during conflict

## Freeze Response Characteristics

- Feels overwhelmed and/or helpless
- Doesn't fight or flee
- Uncertain of how to react to conflict

## Flight Response Characteristics

- Feels anxiousness
- Withdraws from others
- Backs away from or avoids conflict

## Fawn Response Characteristics

- Feels uncomfortable and/or nervous
- Unable to express thoughts/feelings
- Deals with conflict by accommodating others

**Exercise 3: Stress Styles and Psychological Safety**

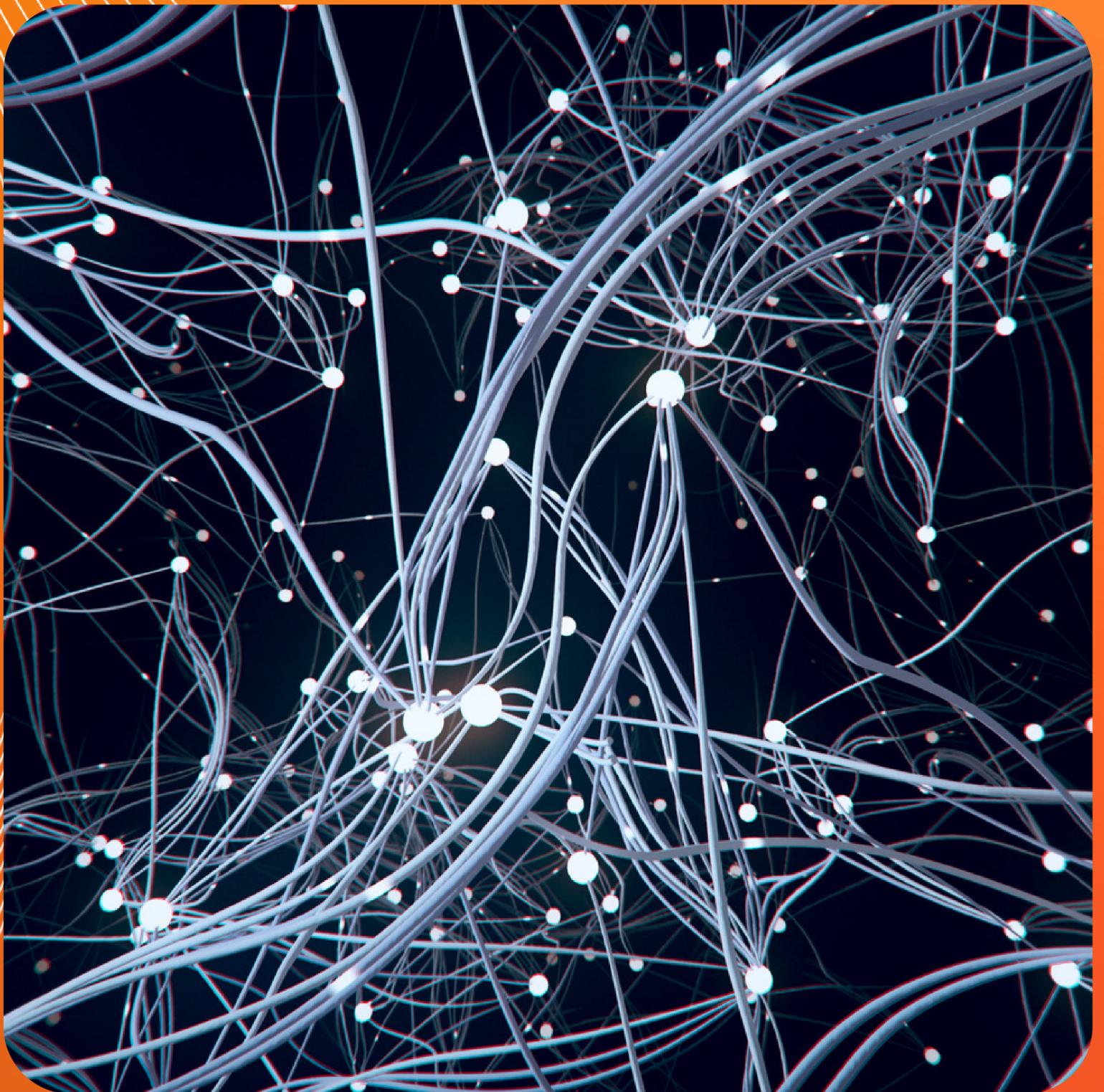
When you feel a lack of psychological safety, which stress response style is activated? What specific behaviors linked to that stress response style do you engage in? How might your behaviors contribute to a lack of psychological safety for others?



## "Am I safe here?"



Your brain becomes wired for the environment it's in.



You can't keep a cucumber  
from turning into a sour pickle...  
*when marinating in a vat of vinegar.*

# Psychological Safety

"An environment of  
rewarded vulnerability."

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# Reward Vs Punishment



**The brain is designed to help us seek reward and avoid punishment**



# The ABCs of a Psychologically Safe Culture

## Warnings

- Abasement
- Blame
- Censorship & Conformity
- Defensiveness & Distrust
- Exhaustion
- Fighting
- Groupthink & Gossip
- Hostility

## Indicators

- Autonomy
- Belonging
- Candor & Commitment
- Disagreement
- Engagement
- Feedback
- Growth
- Helping

# The ABCs of a Psychologically Safe Culture

## Warnings

Abasement  
Blame  
Censorship  
Defensiveness & Distrust  
Exhaustion  
Fighting  
Groupthink & Gossip  
Hostility

### Emotional Outcomes

Anxiety  
Anger  
Fear  
Frustration  
Shame  
Embarassment

## Indicators

Autonomy  
Belonging  
Candor & Commitment  
Disagreement  
Engagement  
Feedback  
Growth  
Helping

### Emotional Outcomes

Admiration  
Trust  
Confidence  
Curiosity  
Inspiration  
Gratitude

### Exercise 4: Warnings & Indicators

Put a check mark next to any warnings and/or indicators that show up frequently within your work team.

#### Warnings

- Abasement
- Blame
- Censorship
- Defensiveness
- Distrust
- Exhaustion
- Fighting
- Groupthink
- Gossip
- Hostility

#### Indicators

- Autonomy
- Belonging
- Candid Communication
- Commitment to the group
- Disagreement (Healthy)
- Engagement
- Feedback (Upward & Downward)
- Growth
- Helping



# Making Your Workplace Psychologically SAFER

**S**

- Seek advice, feedback & help
- Show support & care for others' well-being

**A**

- Admit mistakes & failures
- Amplify employee voice

**F**

- Facilitate inclusion & belonging
- Focus on facts, feelings & values

**E**

- Exchange blame & bias for curiosity
- Encourage healthy disagreement

**R**

- Respect & reward vulnerability
- Reframe failure as a learning opportunity

**Am I showing up (behaviorally) in a way  
that makes others feel safe?**

### **Exercise 5: Making Your Work Team Psychologically SAFER**

Considering your PS Team Ratings as well as the warnings and indicators you put a check mark next to, what can you do to help make your team culture psychologically safer? With a check mark, identify at least one of the 20 behaviors listed in the SAFER model below that you will commit to engage in at work over the next few weeks.

**S**

- Seek advice, feedback & help
- Show support & care for others' well-being
- Share your concerns
- Spot strengths in yourself & others ([viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org))

**A**

- Admit mistakes & failures
- Amplify employee voice
- Ask powerful questions
- Adopt a Growth Mindset  
(Dweck, 2006)

F

- Facilitate inclusion & belonging
- Focus on facts, feelings & values

E

- Exchange blame & bias for curiosity
- Encourage healthy disagreement

R

- Respect & reward vulnerability
- Refrain from defensiveness

- Forgo gossip
- Foster a positive team climate through quality connections

- Embrace challenge
- Explore & examine unique & various perspectives

- Reframe failure
- Recognize each individual's unique contribution

# Creating Belonging through Psychological Safety

## Main Points

- Psychological safety at work can facilitate a sense of belonging
- Our brains process psychological threats the same way they process physical threats
- When we feel threatened on a regular basis, an environment of stress persists
- Everyone has an opportunity to help others feel psychologically SAFER

THANK YOU

Creating Belonging through Psychological Safety

