Essential Ingredients for Workplaces with a Culture of Wellness: Safety, Justice and Connectedness

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Today

• Share some ideas
• Engage in discussion on what psychological safety and organizational justice means and why it matters
• Create a sense of safety at this workshop to support your participation
• That this in the end is generative…
Themes that come to mind

• Psychological safety …. Critical for therapeutic relationships; group therapy
• Nothing about me without me…building groups where people feel meaningfully a part
• Physician health – began with ensuring confidentiality for the sick physician
• Behavioural issues – disruptive MD – high impact…focus on the individual
• Burnout … impact…gosh this is all of us (potentially)!
• Bullying and harassment (generational themes, IPV)
• Culture of wellness, broad themes of resilience
• Psychological safety

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Psychological safety – what is it?

• “A shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking.”
• Permission to talk freely?
• That I am accepted if I say something ‘dumb’ and that I am can learn from them
• Increases my learning behavior, such as help seeking, creativity and discussion of mis-steps and errors.
Psychological safety – what is it?

Schein and Bennis (1965) – ground work – looking at how people successfully manage organizational change

Kahn (1990) - "being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career"

Edmondson (1999) – views psychological safety from the perspective of the group – shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking”
Organizational justice - what is it?

• Three components include distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice

• The extent to which one experiences workplace procedures, decisions, and interactions to be fair, equitable and respectful

• Organizational justice correlated with health and performance

Kivimäki et al 2003; Virtanen and Elovanino, 2018

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Near cousins

• **Cultural Safety** (recognition and respect to support the unique cultural identity of (often marginalized) cultures so those who receive services experience a safe respectful engagement to find paths to well-being)

• **Just culture** (e.g. healthcare workers are supported and treated fairly when something goes wrong with patient care)

Walker et al 2009; Boysen P. G., 2nd; Churchill et al 2017
It is all about respect and trust
Hurdles we face?

- The medical model of teaching tends towards shaming…
- Got to keep the focus on success (my success, my advancement)
- Why delegate when I can do it right
- Patient safety – I am the one with the responsibility
- Attend the meeting? Did you see my patient list?
- Medical system - juggles personal expertise that depends on a broader system
- Tensions between administrative demands, increasing complexity of patient care and resources constraints
- More…

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What promotes psychological safety?

• Leadership skills allowing for open conversations
• Curiosity when outcomes might be unexpected rather than blame
• A culture of peer support following adverse events
• Attending to the alignment between professional values and corporate values
• Leadership that encourages stretch conversations when safety, trust or disrespect arises
• The option of a restorative justice approach to bullying and harassment
• Monitoring levels of psychological safety across the organization

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What would it look like to not have psychological safety in the workplace?

• If a resident didn’t feel safe to speak up when s/he notices something going wrong
• When a nurse second-guesses his/herself about calling the doc on call?
• When a doctor feels there is no option other than to work when unwell?
• Being in a meeting and not feeling okay to speak up?
• Others…
Quick Poll: Yes - No

1. I feel respected by those in leadership roles?
2. When someone makes a mistake it is often held against him or her.
3. It is difficult to ask other team members for help.
4. There are team members who deliberately undermine my efforts or reputation.
5. At work my talents and contributions are valued and respected
Speaking Up?

• The most frequently reported barriers to speaking up about a risk of error in an academic radiology department included reluctance to challenge someone in authority (67%), fear of disrespect (53%), and lack of listening (52%).

• There continues to be a reluctance among learners to speak up about experiencing incivility because it will not make a difference or fear of retribution.

• Many physicians remain reluctant to tell others and seek help for their own psychological distress … “believing the situation is not severe enough” and “ashamed to seek help.”
Polling: Do you speak up?

1. A colleague looks tired and pale when they arrive for their ER shift?

2. A resident is about to order tests for well known psychiatric patient – she has significant chest pains, shortness of breath - the senior resident says lets just monitor and hold off given the history longstanding psych history of anxiety and drug seeking behaviours?

3. You notice several colleagues rolling their eyes every time a junior colleague speaks up in a department meeting
Polling: Do you speak up?

4. A senior male anesthetist is pimping and bullying a young male PGY2 anesthetist by mocking his knowledge and skills in front of OR staff. He calls him a “know nothing” and tells him he should re-think his choice to be an anesthetist.

5. PGY 3 resident notices a few pictures on a facebook site of a colleague showing some ‘funny’ themes but negatively portraying gender and racial groups. This colleague is a direct competitor for a fellowship position. Should the resident say something to the colleague?
Do you speak up?

Importance of Speaking Up?

Likely

Bravely

May be

Not likely

Safety Trust Support Matters

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• Take a moment to think of a time you faced a challenging time or adversity at work - perhaps a time you experienced a heightened sense of stress, concern or responsibility.

• Who did you talk to about this time – if anyone?

• What helped you to choose to talk about the event?

• What contributed to any reluctance to talk about the event?
At your table discuss:

• What helps – makes it safe for you to talk about a challenging or difficult time at work?

• What factors contribute to a reluctance to talk about a challenging time with your colleagues?

• Are there some topics or events that feel more or less safe to discuss at work? How come? What is the role of physician leaders?

*Keep in mind you do not have to share details of the event.*
Building Blocks of Safety

Promoting Safety

Individual to Systemic Level

Career Stage
Going Forward

At your table in a sentence identify 1-2 concrete actions/practices you can use to maximize the level of psychological safety (respect / trust) with others.
Do connections really matter?

After 80 years the Harvard Study of Adult Development concluded… connection to others sets the stage for joy and wellbeing at the age of 80
Thank You For Participating In Our Workshop!

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