

# Psychological Safety

## The Foundation of Effective Teams

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# Today

1. Reality, Relationships & Psychological Safety
2. What happens when we don't feel safe
3. Strategies for creating Psychological Safety



# The Reality



# The Reality

- You do work in teams
- Medicine is a team sport
- Resource scarcity, which includes people power
- Systems problems – Behaviour reports
- Less tolerance for poor behaviors or single-minded attitude
- Culture shift CanMEDs, Codes of Conduct, regulatory expectations
- Patient Safety, Psychological Safety, Safety



# The Reality



***“You are only as effective as your relationships”***

Michael Bungay Stanier – The Coaching Habit

# Aristotle project

1. Psychological Safety
2. Dependability
3. Structure and Clarity
4. Meaning
5. Impact



# Psychological Safety



“...a belief that no one will be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes”

Amy Edmondson (1999)

# The Fundamentals of Psychological Safety

Psychological Safety  $\neq$  Niceness



Amy Edmundson

What happens when we feel unsafe?



# ***NEUTRALIZE THE SPACE***



- **Move AGAINST**
- **Move AWAY**
- **Move TOWARDS**

**JUDGEMENT > *DYSREGULATION***

***SAFETY***

**Power differentials**



# What makes you feel unsafe?

# What affects this space?

Lack of

- Certainty
- Choice
- Relatedness
- Communication – transparency
- Fairness – scarcity

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**CARE**



# Common contributing factors

- Not Self aware .... Blindspots, fixed story, Red flags
- Lack skills
- Minimizing the power differential
- Poor boundaries – over/under



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# Common contributing factors

- Not Self aware .... Blindspots, fixed ideas about role/responsibilities
- Lack skills
- Minimizing the power differential
- Poor boundaries – over/under
- Confusing intention/impact
- Not recognizing changing climate/culture/expectations
- Burned out/depleted – Red Flags



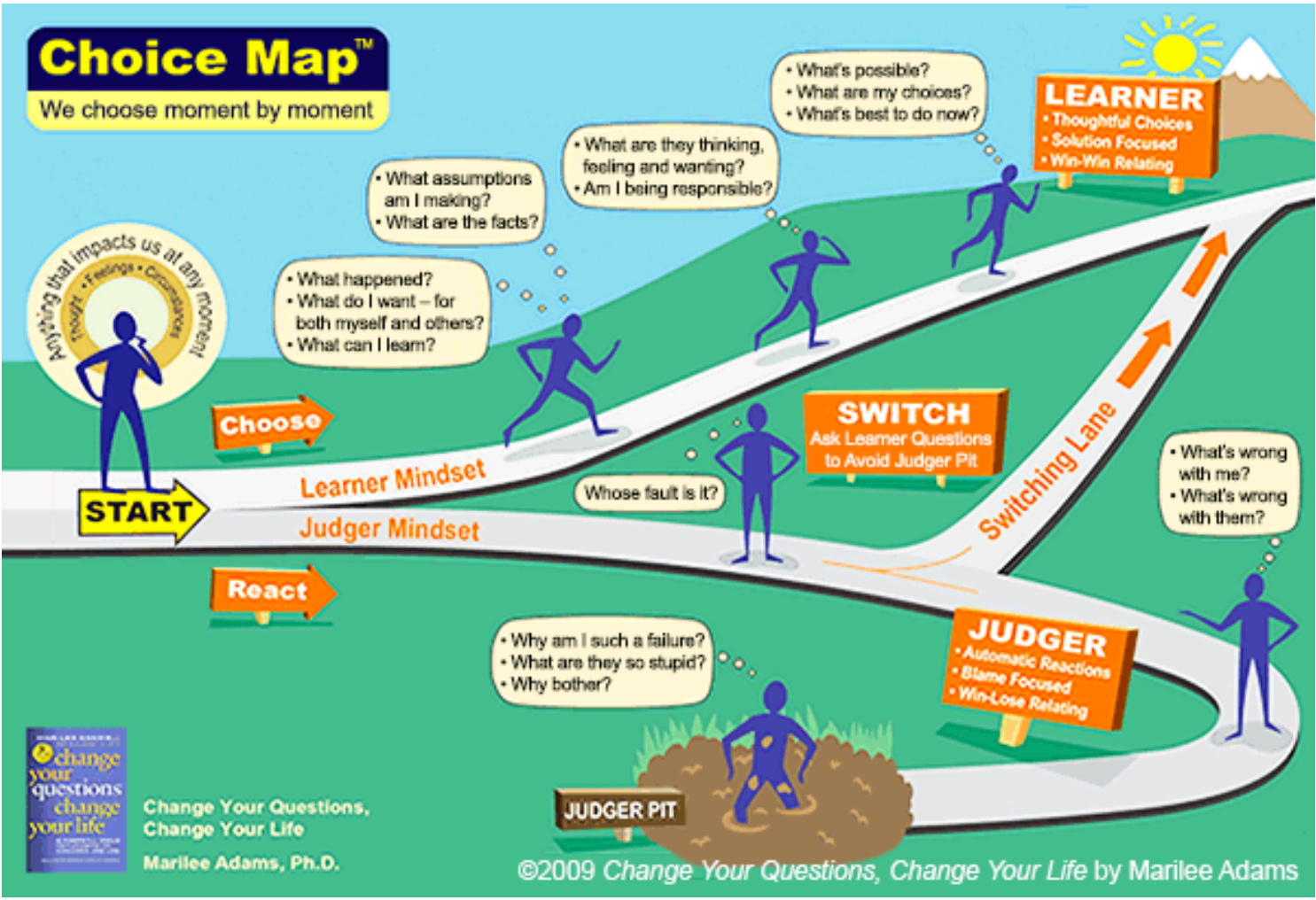
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# Strategies

1. Mindset
2. Intentional Psychological Safety
3. Build social capital
4. Recognizing Resistance
5. Helpful phrases
6. Feedback



# 1. Mindset - Choice Map



## 2. *Intentional* Psychological Safety

Psychological Safety  $\neq$  Niceness



Amy Edmundson

# *Intentional Psychological Safety*



Amy Edmundson

1. Frame the work as a learning problem
2. Acknowledge your own fallibility
3. Model curiosity and ask questions

# 3. Build Social Capital



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## Transient **VS** Social Capital

**Social Capital** is the value created through building a positive relationship with another/others over time

Social Capital minimizes overpersonalization and creates safety



# Building Social Capital

- Eye contact
- Saying hi, thank you
- Knowing names
- Asking questions about the other
- Actively listening
- Reciprocally sharing ...
- Managing Blind Spots/**Red** Flags

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT + INTEREST = CARE**

## 4. Recognize Resistance

- Silence
- “Yes, but”
- Debating, rationalizing, minimizing
- Lack of eye contact
- Tone in voice
- Facial expressions
- Gut feeling
- Hearing gossip
- Body language
- Repeating behavior
- Obstructive behaviors
- Avoidant behavior

## 5. Helpful phrases – Words matter

- *“I’m confused”, “Help me understand” “How can I be helpful”*
- *“Here’s where I struggle ...”*
- *“Perhaps I misunderstood ...*
- *“Duly Noted”*
- *Tentative language “I wonder...”, “ Sometimes...”*
- *And, not but ...*

**NEUTRALIZE THE SPACE**

# 6. Feedback

*Silence is not approval ...*

- Proactive seek feedback





**What is one thing you will be doing differently/trying moving forward?**

# Contact

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