

# Psychological Safety

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Simply put ....

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The belief that you won't be punished  
when you make a mistake



Delizonna, L. (2017) *High-Performing Teams Need Psychological Safety. Here's How to Create It.* HBR.org

# The Neuroscience of Trust



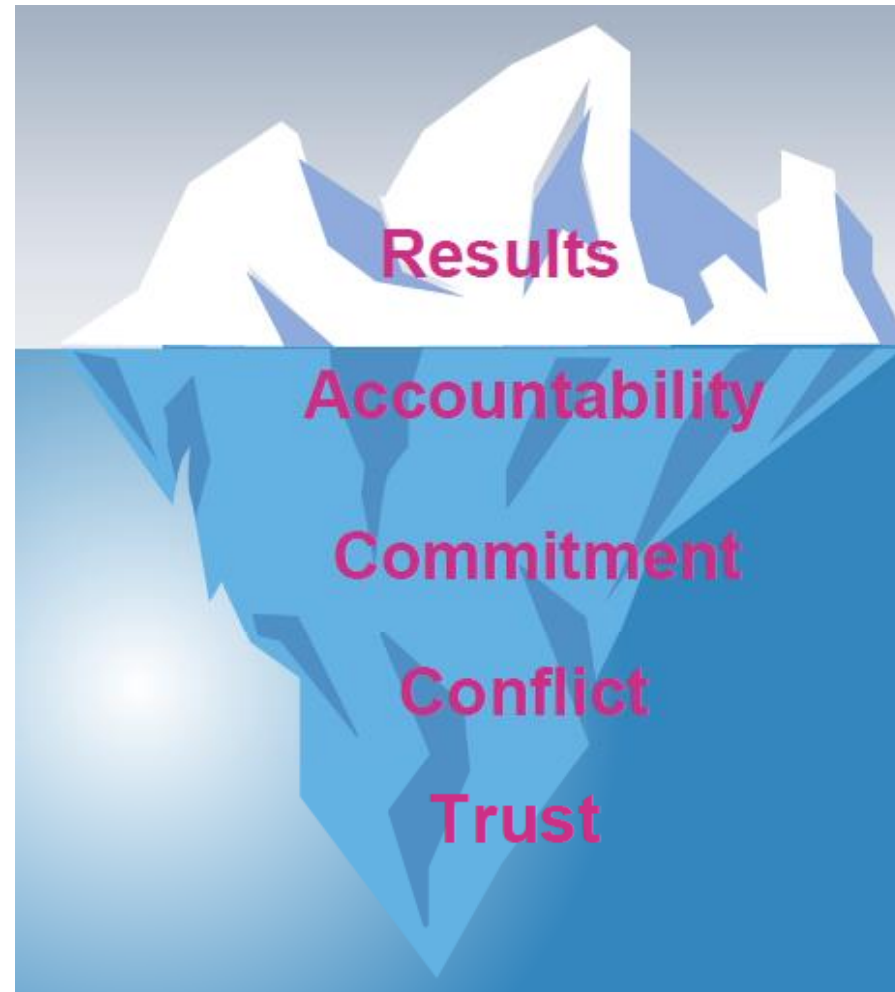
Paul Zak HBR Feb 2017

**Compared with people at low-trust companies, people at high-trust companies report:** 74% less stress, 106% more energy at work, 50% higher productivity, 13% fewer sick days, 76% more engagement, 29% more satisfaction with their lives, 40% less burnout

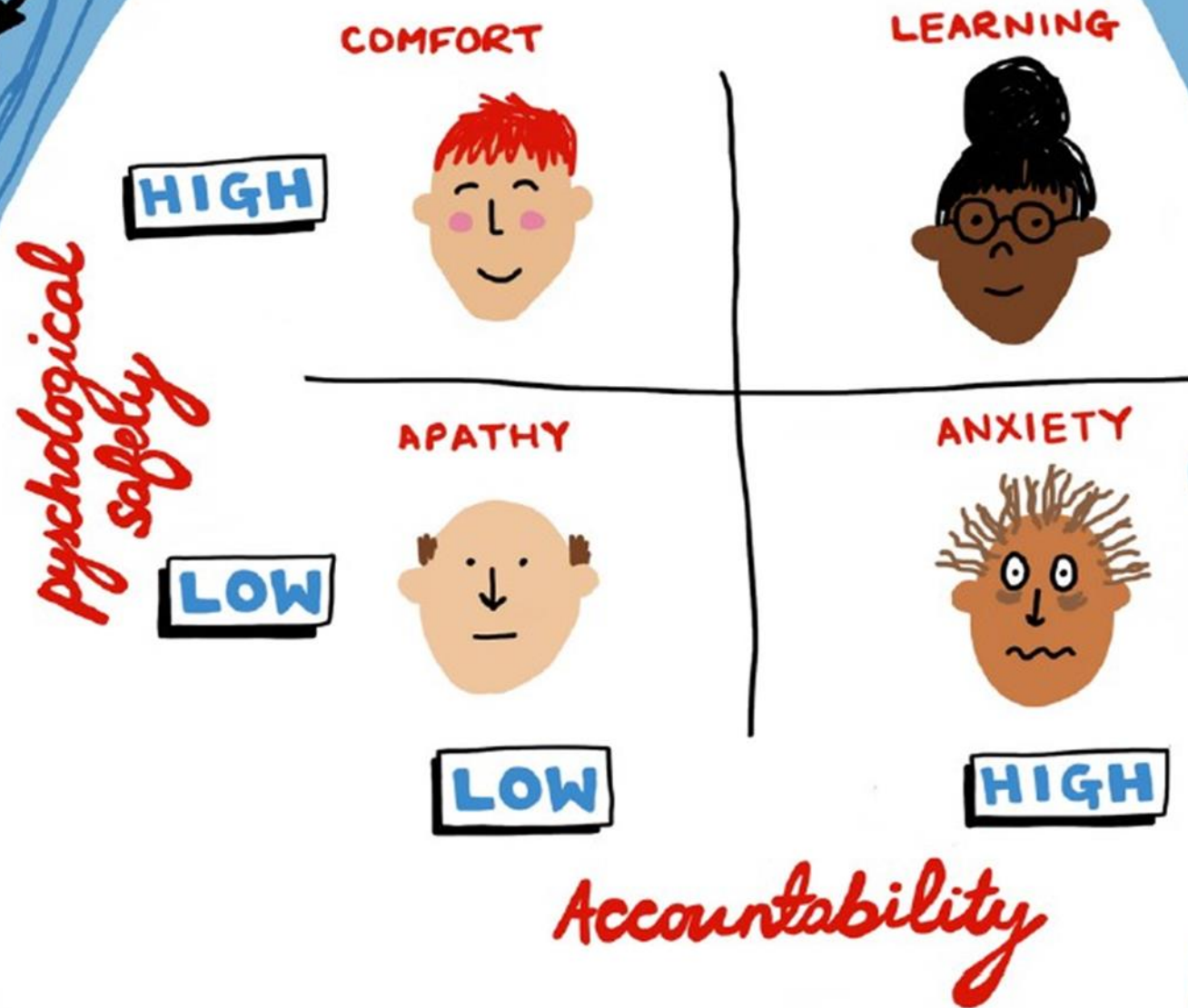
# Lencioni

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## 5 Dysfunctions of a team – the solution.....



PROFESSOR AMY EDMONDSON



**WHAT WE THINK DRIVES OUR EMOTIONS**



**WHAT ACTUALLY DRIVES OUR EMOTIONS**

# Distortion



## Permanent

"Poppy hates me and will never be my friend again "



" Poppy is cross with me today "

## Generalise

"I'm stupid"



" I failed a maths test"

## Personalise

"Its all my fault"

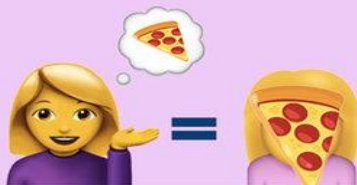


" there were lots of factors to consider and we can learn together"



## EMOTIONAL REASONING

assuming that because we feel a certain way, that we think must be true



## OVERGENERALIZING

seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw



## LABELLING

assigning labels to ourselves or other people

Hello  
my name is

STUPID

## JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

IMAGINING WE KNOW WHAT OTHERS ARE THINKING OR PREDICTING THE FUTURE



## MAGNIFICATION (CATASTROPHISING) & MINIMIZATION

blowing things out of proportion (catastrophizing), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important



"DON'T MAKE A MOUNTAIN OUT OF A MOLEHILL"

# UNHELPFUL THINKING STYLES



BALANCE  
eating disorder treatment center™

## MENTAL FILTER

ONLY PAYING ATTENTION TO CERTAIN TYPES OF EVIDENCE. NOTICING OUR FAILURES BUT NOT SEEING OUR SUCCESSES



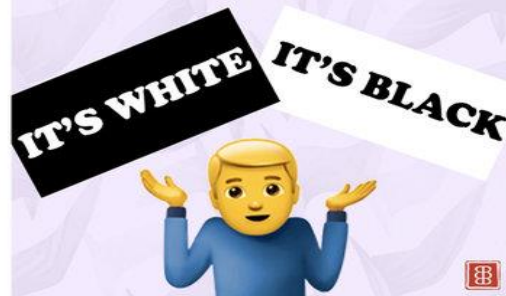
"I AM A FAILURE"

## DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE

DISCOUNTING THE GOOD THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED OR THAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER



## ALL OR NOTHING THINKING



## PERSONALIZATION

blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault.

conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.



## SHOULD/MUST

using critical words like 'should,' 'must,' or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed. If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is frustration.

"DON'T SHOULD ON YOURSELF OR OTHERS"





# Behaviours that help and hinder

	Sender	Receiver
Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Speak human to human</li><li>Role-model vulnerability</li><li>Replace blame with curiosity</li><li>Provide feedback which is specific, beneficial and kind</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Self-awareness of generalising, personalising, permanence</li><li>Approach conflict as a collaborator, not an adversary</li><li>Ask for, and thank people for feedback</li><li>Listen</li></ul>
Hinders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Using email for difficult conversations</li><li>Judgement</li><li>Assume you know best</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reacting quickly with an emotional response</li><li>Interrupt</li><li>Eye-rolling and other negative body language</li></ul>

# Tips as a leader to build psychological safety

- Check in at the top of team meetings
- Show your own vulnerability
- Avoid blaming
- Be self-aware and demand the same from your team
- Nip negativity in the bud
- Include your team in decision making where you can
- Be open to feedback (and even ask for it!)
- Champion your team (and others)



# Individual Practice

**What one thing  
can you do  
tomorrow to help  
create more  
psychological  
safety**



If you change the **nature** and **quality** of the conversations in your team, your **outcomes** will improve exponentially.  
Psychological safety is the core component to unlock this.

-Amy Edmonson

# Thinking Round

“The quality of everything we do depends on the quality of the thinking we do first”

*“The quality of our thinking depends on the way we treat each other while we are thinking”*





# Attention



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- *“Listening without interruption and with interest in where the person will go next in their thinking”*
- Attention is an act of creation.
- The quality of our attention *determines* the quality of other people’s thinking. Attention, driven by the promise of no interruption, and by respect and interest in where people will go with their thinking, is the key to a Thinking Environment. Attention is that powerful. It *generates* thinking. It is an act of creation.