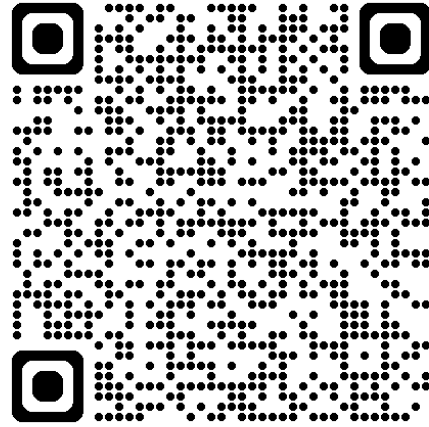Menti Code – 3694 9689

High Performing Teams and Psychological Safety

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land that I work and live on, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

I also respectfully acknowledge the muwinina (mou wee nee nar) people, the traditional custodians of the land which we gather on today.

As a resident and visitor, I show gratitude for both these lands and their ancestors who have been the caretakers for countless generations and pay my respects to elders past and present.
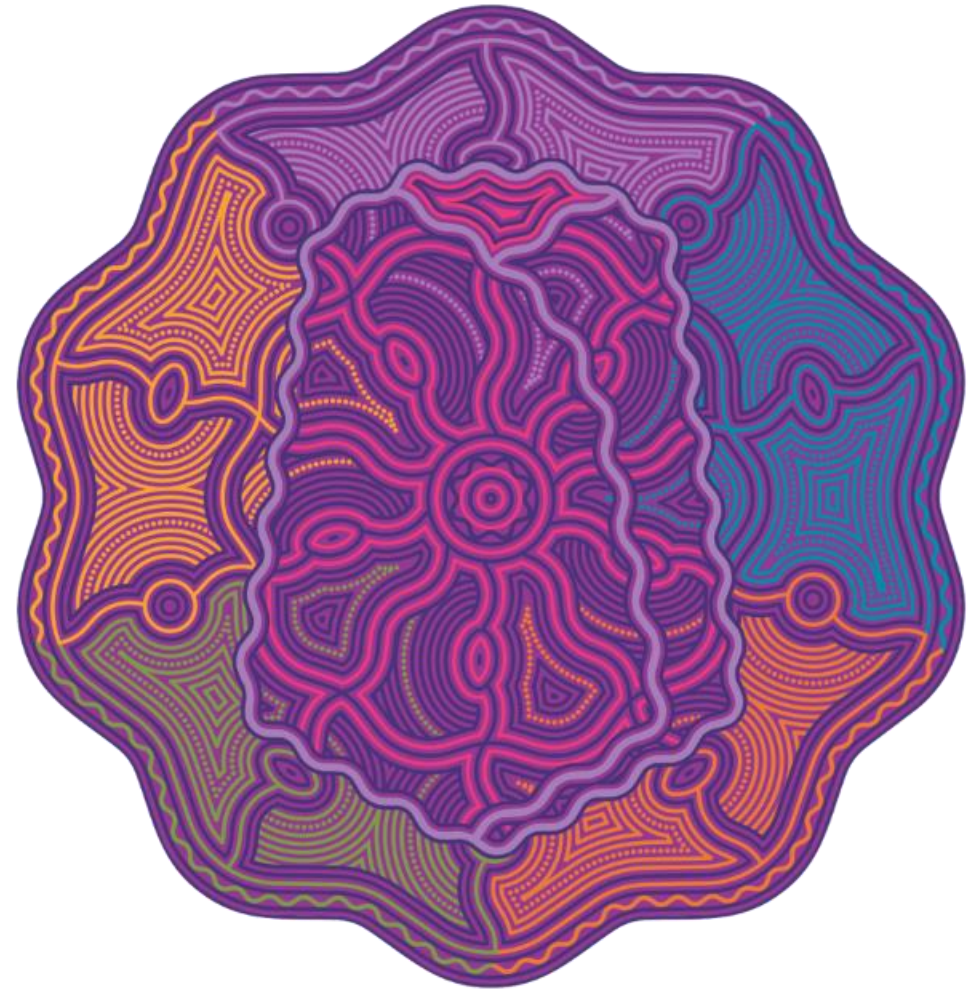
Peter Mac RAP artwork by Marcus Lee Design
Possum Skin Cloak, 2021

What is needed for a team to be high preforming or successful

focus bold

leader

creative

fast

inspiration

transpiration

What creates a High Performing team?

A little story about Google…

Google spent 2 years, studying 180 teams to "codify" the secret to team effectiveness (Project Aristotle)

Specifically, why some teams continually succeeded while other teams struggled

Logical assumption: the successful teams are comprised of the best people in the field with PhD's and MBA's etc…

Outcome: No pattern or combination of personal characteristics that could generate a "High performing team"

It was only once they started looking outside the box of personality characteristics and started looking at behavioral norms that they found a pattern
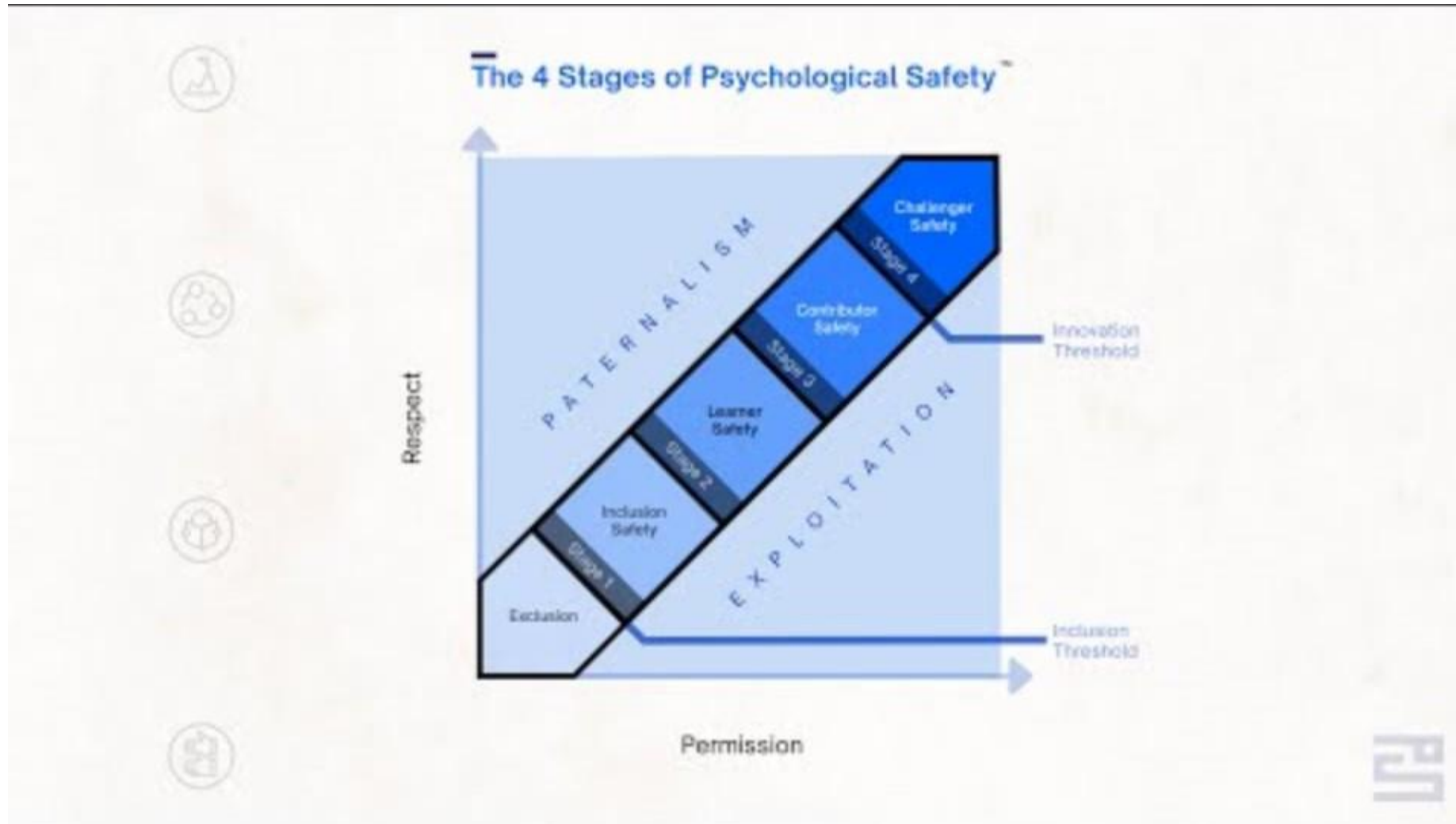

5

What is psychological safety?

"Psychological safety is a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes."

-Dr Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business School

4 Stages of Psychological Safety

The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety™

Inclusion Safety

Scenario

The Lab team are planning to go out for lunch together

Low Psych Safety

The team chooses a place which has no vegetarian options but one of the team is vegetarian, as a result they don't attend the lunch and feel excluded

High Psych Safety

The team chooses a place which caters to everyone's needs so that everyone is included and can enjoy the lunch together.

Learner Safety

Interesting Fact from the Google experiment:
The highest performing teams also had the highest reports of errors/mistakes

Scenario

SRL staff member sorts the wrong population into a collection tube

Low Psych Safety

SRL staff member doesn't tell anyone because they are scared they will get into trouble. Without constructive feedback they will continue to make the same mistake

High Psych Safety

Staff member notifies the researcher and SRL manager, as they know they will be given the opportunity to learn from their mistake.

Collaborator Safety

Scenario

A new SOP is being developed by the Lab team

Low Psych Safety

The SOP document is shared to all team members for population but one member doesn't add any comments because they don't feel their input will not be valued

High Psych Safety

The SOP document is shared, all team members contribute to its development and leverage their individual strengths to create a comprehensive SOP

Challenger Safety

Increased stress levels, burnout decrease the ability to follow SOP's

Scenario

The Lab manager assigns an additional task to a staff member

Low Psych Safety

The staff member takes on the task even though they are already busy with something else but don't feel comfortable telling their manager, resulting in both tasks being done poorly

High Psych Safety

The staff member voices that they are unavailable to take on that task due to another task they have committed to, the manager re-assigns the task to someone else

Measurable outcomes of teams with high psychological safety

What project Aristotle found:

- **Enhances Creativity and Innovation -** generate 50% more innovative ideas than those without it.

- **Fosters Communication and Collaboration**

- **Reduces Fear of Failure -** 15% expansion in project scope or a 25% reduction in the occurrence of costly errors.

- **Increases Engagement and Productivity -** 76% more engaged than those who don't feel safe speaking up.

- **Creates Trust and Cohesion -** 25% more likely to collaborate effectively

- **Improves Decision Making -** experiencing a 10% reduction in decision-related errors and a 20% increase in project adaptability

Measuring Psychological Safety

You can measure a team's level by answering these questions published by *Dr Amy Edmondson*

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.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you.

Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.

People on this team sometimes reject others for being different

It is safe to take a risk on this team.

It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help

No-one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts

Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilised

1.0

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

What can you do if you don't have psychological safety?

"The standard you walk past is the standard you accept".

Lieutenant General David Lindsay Morrison – Australian Army

- ➢ Be aware – learn the signs and be aware of your work environment
- ➢ Acknowledge it – talk about it, honor that it's happening
- ➢ Call it out - "That's not OK"
- ➢ Back up your colleagues – protect from gaslighting, "I saw what happened, you didn't mishear, that really did happen and it's not OK"
- ➢ Report it – Manager, HR, workplace safety
- ➢ Speak to someone – Mentor, Care Champion, Wellbeing Officer, EAP (Employment assistance program)
- ➢ Consider a new environment if;
  - Work is causing an unwanted change in your behavior
  - There are no actions being supported to change the work environment

What can you do to foster a psychological safe workplace culture

Communication – Let your manager or team know what you are thinking/feeling. Don't assume people can read minds.

Curiosity – Ask questions: "what is your goal here", "why is this task so important?", "is everything OK?" Asking questions opens the door for communication and better understanding of motivations behind actions

Learn – Participate in educational courses to become a better Manager, Leader, Emerging Leader. Most institutes will have internal courses available through education or HR departments

Accept you won't get it right every time – opportunity to repair and grow, show you are human, honesty

Align yourself with positive role models – Sometimes your Manager might be good but not "great". Mentorship is a way to find someone who aligns with your values and can help support you through your career. These relationships foster personal and professional growth through knowledge sharing, skill development, and valuable networking opportunities.

Acknowledgments

PeterMac – For offering opportunities and supporting a safe working environment

Katy Betar, Manager Organisational Development – For introducing these concepts and their importance

The Research Flow Core team Fatma, Lara, Seri and Elle which make it a pleasure coming to work everyday

Fireside:
Mentoring partnerships with Kaylene Simpson and Eva Orlowski-Oliver

Once you know your Cytometer

Find the mentor group that matches your Cytometer

The session will be 5min rotations within your group, introduce yourself ask some questions, have fun!

When the bell goes, rotate to another mentor/mentee

Ice Breaker Questions

Introduce yourself, field of work, where you work/how long

Mentors to ask Mentees

➢ What inspired you to pursue your current career path or field of study?

➢ What are your short-term and long-term goals?

➢ Can you tell me about a project or achievement you're particularly proud of?

➢ What are some skills or areas you're eager to develop further?

➢ How do you prefer to receive feedback—directly, constructively, or with a bit of encouragement?

➢ What motivates you to stay engaged and passionate about your work or studies?

➢ Are there any role models or professionals you look up to in your field?

Mentees to ask Mentors

➢ How do you balance work and personal life?

➢ What drew you to your current career or profession?

➢ Can you share a significant challenge you faced and how you overcame it?

➢ What skills or qualities do you think are most important for success in this field?

➢ How do you stay updated with industry trends and developments?

➢ Can you recommend any resources—books, podcasts, or courses—that have been valuable to you?

➢ What advice would you give to someone just starting out in this field?

Thank you.