

A close-up photograph of a biodegradable seedling tray filled with dark soil. Several small green seedlings with two leaves are growing in the compartments. The tray is placed on a light-colored wooden surface.

Joan Kirner emerging leaders program

Creating inclusive and supportive work environments

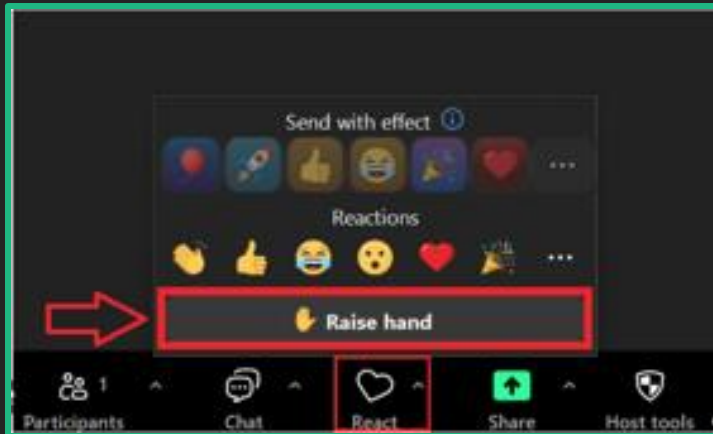
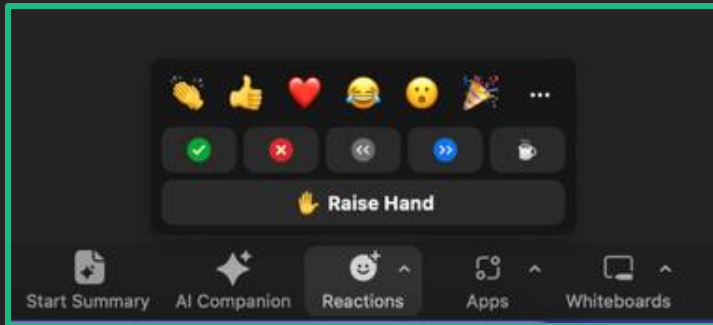
A scenic photograph of a river flowing through a lush forest. The sun is shining from the upper right, creating a bright sunburst effect with rays of light across the scene. The river reflects the light, and there are rocks along the right bank. A dirt path is visible on the far right. The sky is clear and blue.

Join the chat...

*Your name,
organisation, land/
country you're
joining from*

Acknowledgement of Country

Housekeeping



- Joining the conversation:

 *Raise hand*

 *Chat*

 *Mute*

- Slides and recording will be shared
- Please don't use AI to summarise or record this session

Your facilitator



- 20 + years community leadership
- Former CEO Victorian Student Representative Council
- Musician
- Community board member

Today's content may land personally.

If today brings something up...

Employee Assistance Program

Free, confidential support through your organisation

1800RESPECT

1800 737 732 – 24/7 sexual assault & family violence

Lifeline

13 11 14 – 24/7 crisis support

13YARN

13 92 76 – First Nations crisis support

Today's webinar

Purpose

To explore practical strategies to build psychological and cultural safety at work.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Distinguish psychological safety from cultural safety
- Diagnose where your team is now, using a simple 7-question tool
- Apply one safety-building behaviour this fortnight (and know the escalation path when it's needed)

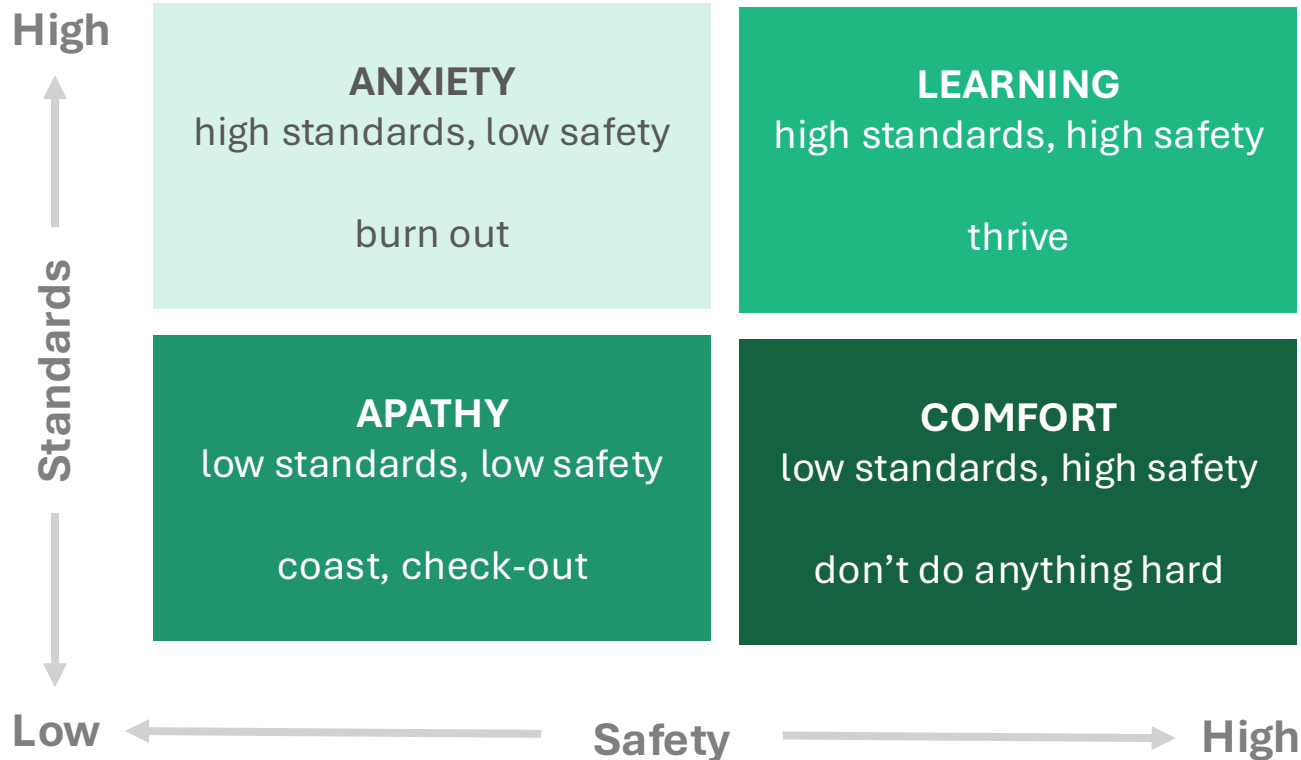
Safety at work

Think of a moment you felt
genuinely safe at work...

In the chat:

In one short sentence, what
made your experience
possible?

Psychological safety: “It’s safe to speak up”



Psychological Safety

“The belief that you won't be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes”

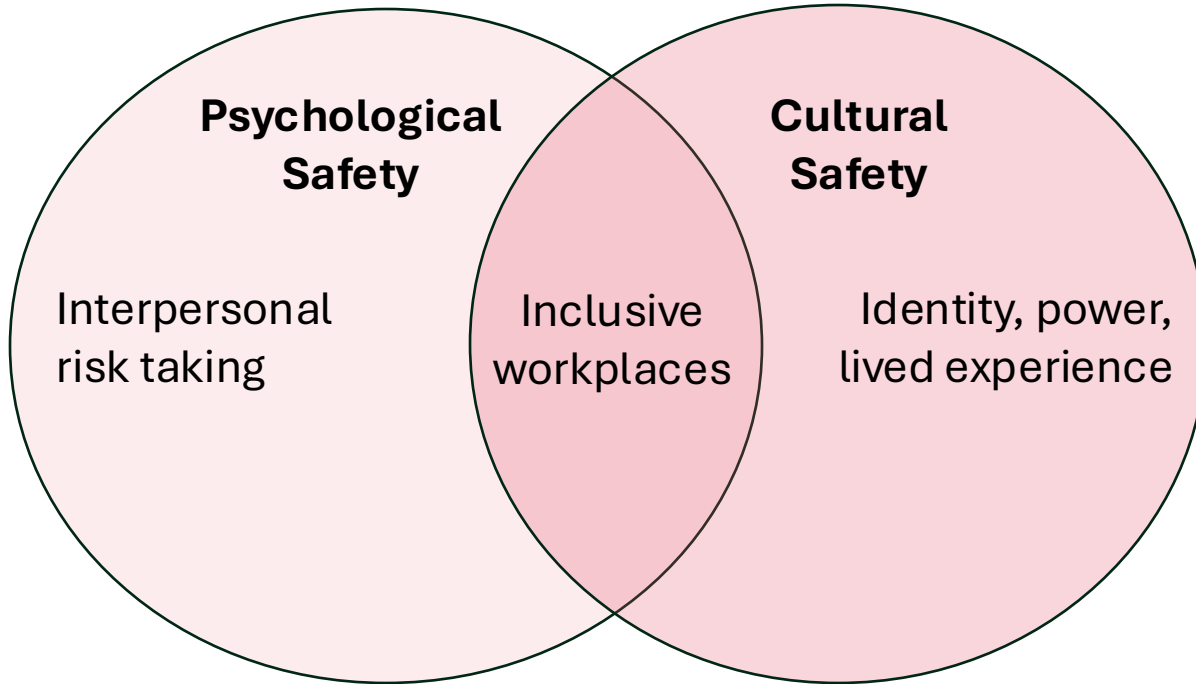
Amy Edmondson



Google’s Project Aristotle

Number one predictor of high performance.

Cultural safety: “It’s safe to be who I am”



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL & CULTURAL SAFETY

Cultural Safety

People can express their cultural identity without fear.

The key difference:

Cultural safety brings a power lens.

It asks “who has historically been unsafe in this environment, and what needs to change for that to be different?”

Australian context

This isn't just good practice. It's law.

2020 The Respect@Work Report
National inquiry into workplace sexual harassment. 55 recommendations.

2022 The Sex Discrimination Act, amended
Introduces the **positive duty** on Australian employers..

2023 AHRC gains enforcement powers
Can now investigate compliance and seek enforcement orders.

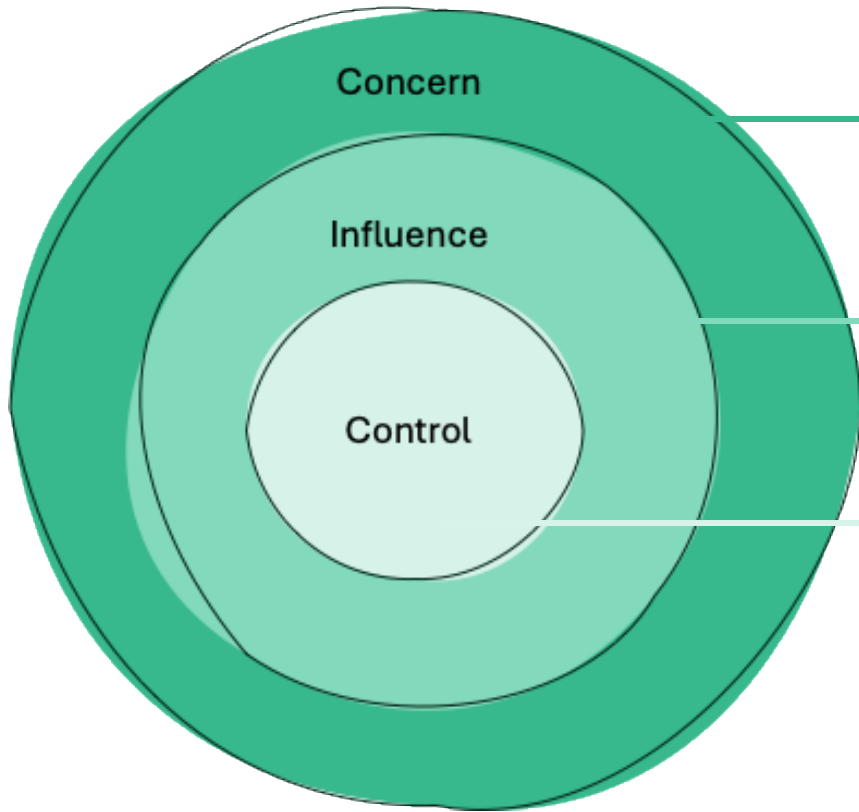
The Positive Duty

Employers must take **reasonable & proportionate measures** to eliminate, as far as possible:

- Sex discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Sex-based harassment
- Hostile workplace environments
- Victimisation

This shifts the question from "did we respond?" to "did we prevent?"

Review: Covey's circles



e.g. sector culture, national law & reporting, social attitudes, news.

e.g. Your team's norms, peer behaviour, the conversations you're already part of.

e.g. How you show up, who you check on, what you say when something unkind is said, how you make space for quiet or different voices.

A-A-R: A practical approach



Sources: Adapted from Edmondson's psychological safety scale, Williams' cultural safety framework, and AHRC positive-duty guidance.

A: Assess – 7 questions, 5 minutes

- 1 If you make a mistake on this team, it's not held against you.
- 2 Members of this team can bring up problems and tough issues.
- 3 People who are different to the majority are not rejected or ignored.
- 4 It is safe to take a risk on this team.
- 5 It is easy to ask other members of this team for help.
- 6 No one on this team would deliberately undermine someone else's efforts.
- 7 Working with members of this team, my unique identity is valued and utilized.

Scale: Often = 2 | Sometimes = 1 | Rarely = 0

SCORE

11-14 = Strong

Your team is in good shape – keep going!

5-10 = Building

Solid foundation, still some work to do.

0-4 = Fragile

Your team needs support. Use your lowest scores to identify where to start.

Source: Adapted from Amy Edmondson's psychological safety scale.

A: Act – action menu, next 2 weeks

Pick one action, try it for a fortnight...

- 1 Open with uncertainty.**
*Start a meeting by naming what you're not sure about.
Permission given to everyone in the room.*
- 2 Thank the tough question.**
When someone raises something uncomfortable, thank them out loud and by name. Reward the courage.

- 3 Quiet voice first**
Ask the quietest person what they think before sharing your own view. Shifts perceptions about who shapes decisions.

- 4 "Tell me more about that"**
*Replace "good question" with a request for more information.
Shows respect, curiosity and validates contributions.*

- 5 Own a mistake out loud**
Name something you got wrong this week, and what you're committed to doing differently next time. Models the behaviour.

- 6 "What hasn't been said?"**
Close a meeting with this question. Sit with silence and watch what surfaces.

R: Respond – 4-step pathway

When safety breaks down, know how to respond.

Notice it

Acknowledge to yourself what happened. Not all moments need action, but all unsafe moments need to be noticed.

Name it

If safe, name it with the person who caused harm, or a trusted peer. Use specific language to describe behaviour.

Check in

Privately check in with whoever was affected. Don't perform support publicly. Ask what they need, then listen.

Escalate

If an incident needs escalation, know your options

As a leader – escalate internally

- Line manager
- HR/People & Culture
- Contact officer
- WHS/safety team

For the affected person:

- EAP
- 1800RESPECT
- Lifeline
- 13YARN
- AHRC
- Fair Work Commission

Activity: A-A-R in action

Break-out groups

- Choose a note-taker
- Think of a team you're either leading or working with
- Discuss the most relevant element of A-A-R →
- Identify one action you'll commit to trying in the next two weeks (and come back ready to share it in the chat)

A: Assess

How do you expect your team to score on the 7 questions? How might you test this? (*Strong, building, fragile*)

A: Act

What's one item from the menu that you'll try in the next two weeks? What might get in the way? (*open with uncertainty, thank the tough question, quiet voice first, "tell me more about that", own a mistake out loud, "what hasn't been said?"*)

R: Respond

If you are facing a situation where safety has broken down. What action do you need to take? (*notice it to yourself, name it with the person or a trusted peer, check in with the affected person, escalate*)

Commitment

In the chat...

What safety-building action will you try in the next 2 weeks?

Resources

Recommended reading

- Joan Kirner Emerging Leaders Program Workbook (your full program reference)
- [*AHRC · Guidelines for Complying with the Positive Duty* \(2023\)](#)
- Edmondson, A: *The Fearless Organization* (2018)
- Williams, R: · [*Cultural safety — what does it mean for our work practice?*](#) (1999)
- Reconciliation Australia · [2024 workplace RAP barometer](#)
- Community Directors help-sheet: [10 tips for leading in a polarized world](#)
- Respect@Work: [Human Rights Commission](#)

Share your thoughts



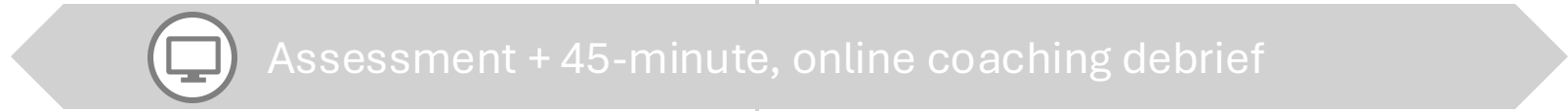
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2025JK-webinar>

Up next: Graduation @ Our Community House!

5 x full-day workshops
(3 in-person, 2 online)



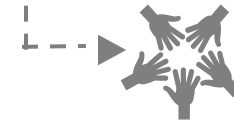
Leadership strengths assessment



4 x 1-hour webinars



Mentoring circle 15 June 6pm
(60-minutes, online)



Graduation 22 June 3pm
(2-hours, in person)

