

WHY INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY ARE THE KEYS TO UNLOCKING EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION.



attuned

Melissa Tarantola
PhD | Psychologist at Attuned

Kristine Ayuzawa
Director - People Operations at EQIQ





What is Psychological Safety?



Psychological Safety

“The feeling of comfort that arises when employees believe: they are valued, and engaging in ‘risky behaviors’ will not result in negative outcomes.”



What are the Benefits of Psychological Safety?

Value of Psychology Safety – Performance



“Liberates members to act in ways that are
beneficial to the team’s performance”

Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng (2011)



Value of Psychology Safety – Change Goes Better



“The centerpiece of any change process should be to increase climate factors such as psychological safety before larger changes are tackled”

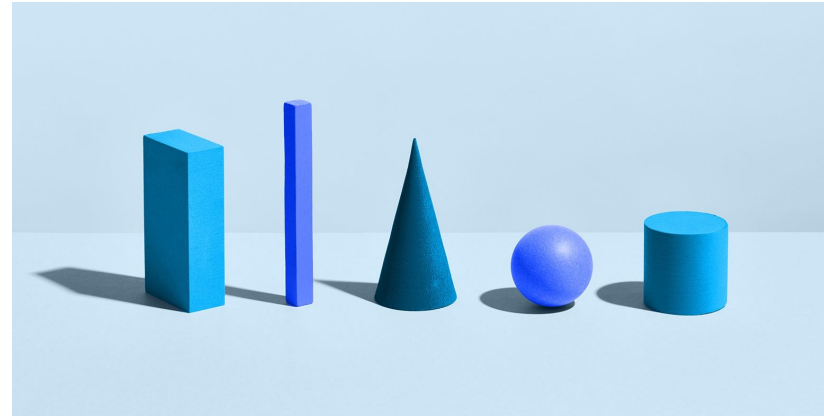
Baer & Freese (2003)

Value of Psychology Safety – **Diversity, Inclusion, & Belonging**



Helps attract and retain employees
from under-represented minority
groups by fostering inclusivity.

Chicca & Shellenbarger (2020)





Psychological Safety and Creativity & Innovation



Creativity is:

“The production of ideas, products, or procedures that are **novel or original**, and potentially **useful** to the employing organization”

– Amabile (1983)

Signals for psychological safety are one of the most important contextual variables related to creativity.

Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv (2010)



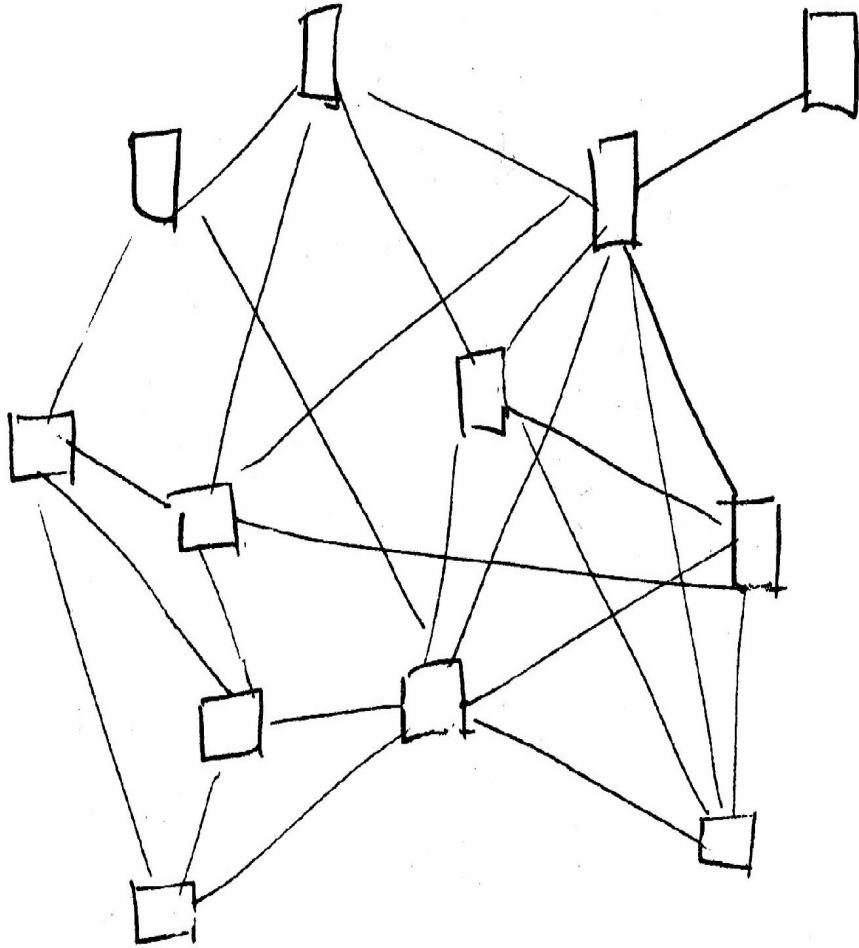
Psychological Safety & Creativity



Unsafe Team



Safe Team



What is involved in Creativity & Innovation?

Introduces novelty and increases uncertainty

Creative thinking skills:

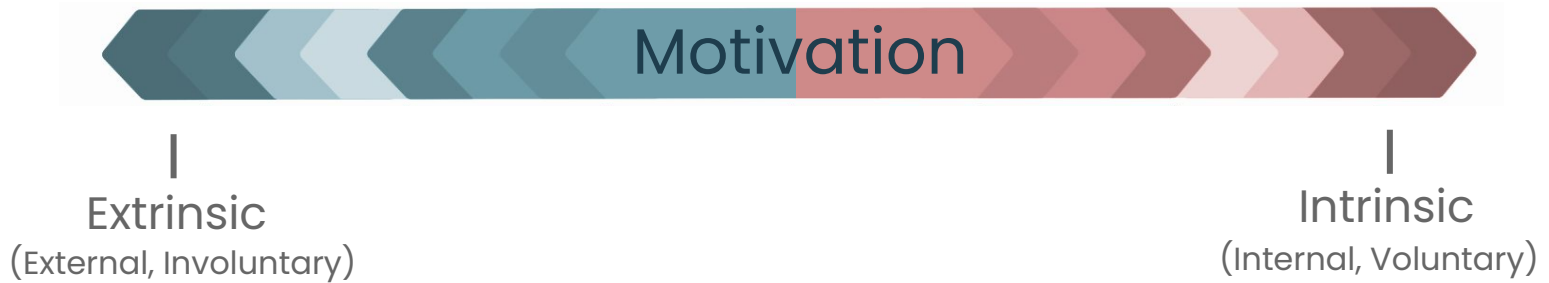
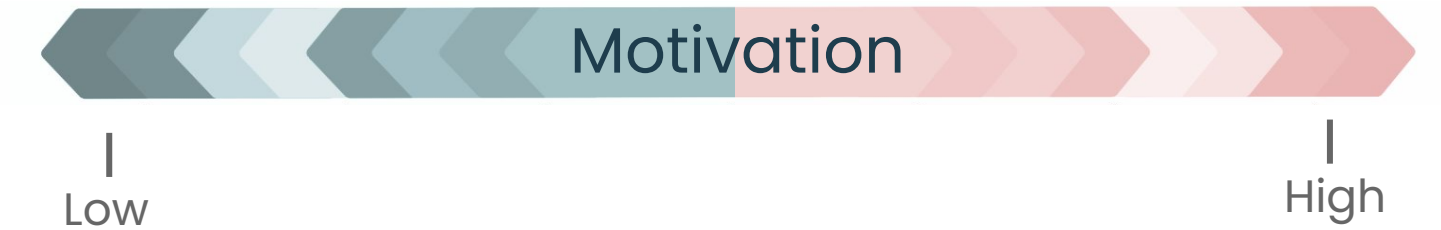
- Generation of alternatives
- Divergent thinking

Open, honest communication to hone creativity into innovation



The Role of Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation at Work





Motivation

|
Extrinsic
(External, Involuntary)

|
Intrinsic
(Internal, Voluntary)



“People are most creative when they are motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of the work itself—i.e., by intrinsic motivation.”

—
Hennessey & Amabile (2010)



Connecting All the Pieces

Psychological Safety & Intrinsic Motivation – A Two-pronged Approach



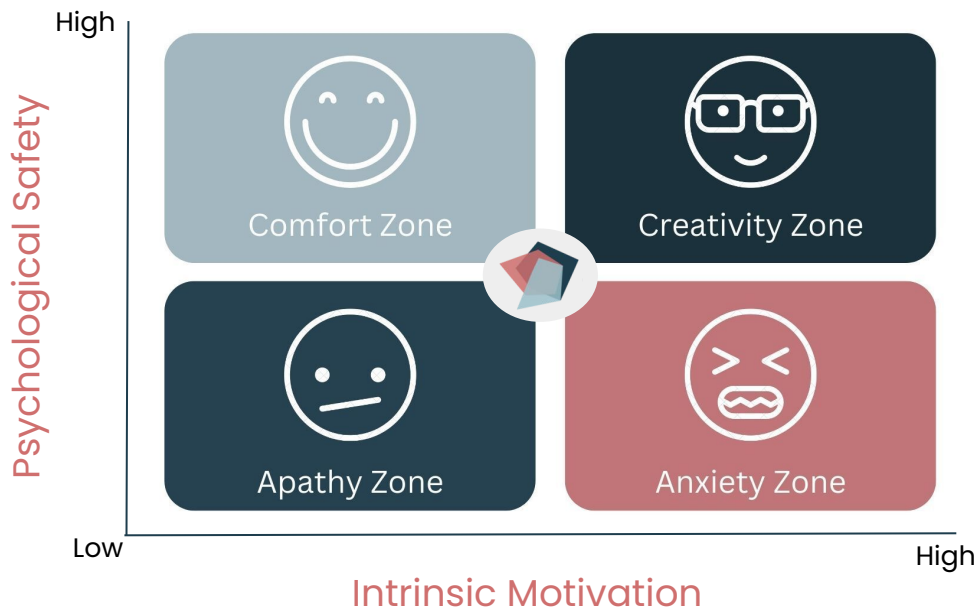
Psychological Safety & Intrinsic Motivation – A Two-pronged Approach



“**Psychological safety** needs to be coupled with **intrinsic motivation** for you to be willing, not only to take risks, but to just keep striving”

—
Dr. Amy Edmondson (2022)

Psychological Safety & Intrinsic Motivation – A Two-pronged Approach

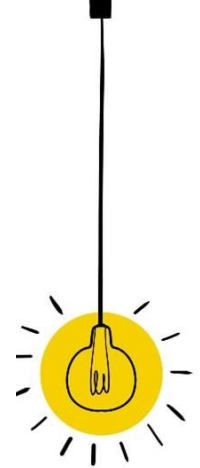
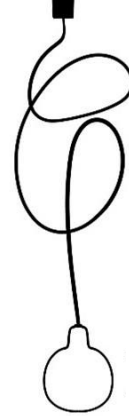
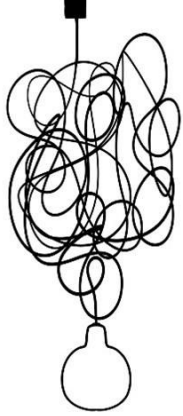


(Edmondson, 2022)



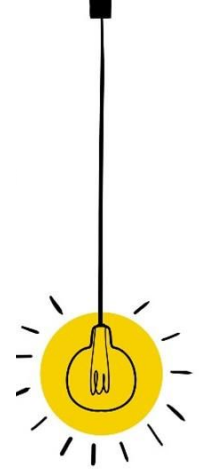
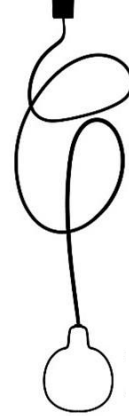
How?





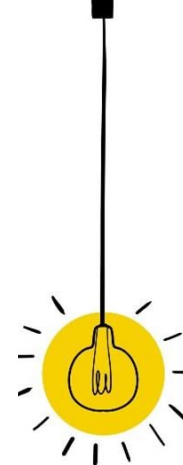
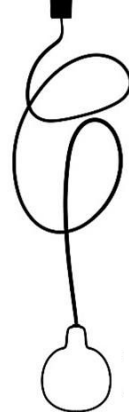
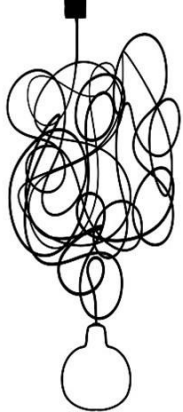
Tip 1: Non-punitive, Learning-focused Response to Failures

- Do not punish well-intentioned mistakes or failures
- Do not focus on blame or fault
- Respond calmly, respectfully, with attitude of curiosity and interest
- Take a problem-solving approach:
 - Promptly provide help
 - Use as learning opportunity
- Create failure-positive norms:
 - “Failure is normal”
 - Open discussion of failures



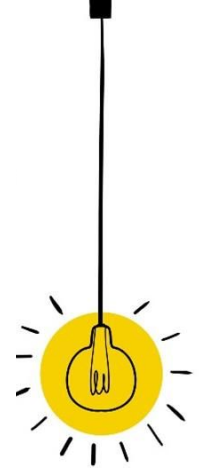
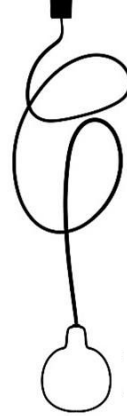
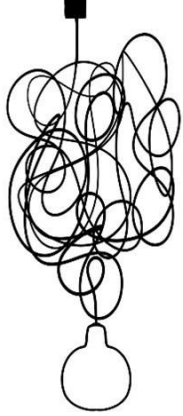
Tip 2: Provide Autonomy & Discretionary Power

- Be Autonomy Supportive:
 - Choice
 - Convincing rationale
 - Reduce surveillance
 - Hear employee concerns & questions
 - Reduce fear of overstepping boundaries
- Give employees authority to:
 - Make decisions
 - Design, plan, manage tasks



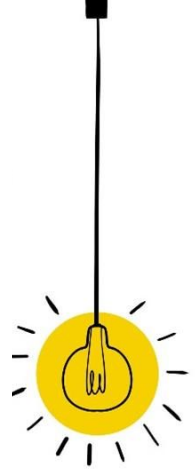
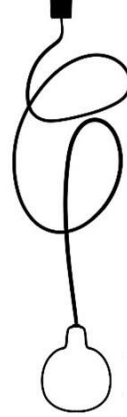
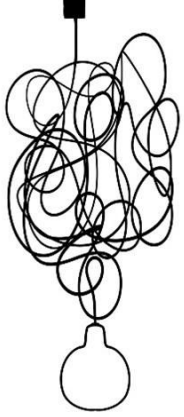
Tip 3: Expectation to Express Dissent & Disagreement

- Celebrate, Encourage, Expect:
 - Change
 - Diverse thinking
 - Dissent & disagreement
 - Challenge norms
 - Disruptive ideas
- Be Non-defensive
- Provide communication training
- Open, candid discussions



Tip 4: Invite and Respectfully Respond to Ideas

- Use open, respectful communication strategies:
 - Body language, tone of voice, etc.
 - Constructive feedback
 - Etc.
- Dedicated safe spaces for idea sharing
 - e.g., “No-Criticism-No-Comment Brainstorming”
- Invite and express appreciation for the contribution of *all* team members



Tip 5: Avoid Mixed Messaging!

- Be consistent in applying today's tips
- Ensure your overall message is consistent
 - e.g., "We've got to be innovative, but it's got to be done on time and be perfect." ❌
 - e.g., "The way to get ahead around here is to make your targets." ❌

Thank you!

✨ ✨ To listen to Attuned's interview with Amy Edmondson, visit: ✨ ✨
"Why Would Anyone" @ tania.substack.com