
5 Ways to Create Inclusion Safety.

Inclusion safety satisfies the basic human need to connect and belong. It allows us to interact without fear of rejection, embarrassment, or punishment, boosting confidence, resilience, and independence. Whether at work, school, home, or in other social settings, everyone wants to be accepted. Here are five ways to create inclusion safety in any social setting.

1. Listen and Pause. Listen with intent to comprehend rather than the intent to respond. Do this by listening, pausing to reflect, and then responding thoughtfully. Have you ever been talking to someone and you can tell that they're simply waiting for you to finish your sentence so they can jump in? That's not always a problem, but if that's the pattern, it does become a problem.

2. Ask Twice as Much as You Tell. When you ask someone a question, it's an invitation to engage and a form of validation. Telling can be fine too, but if you tell too much, it's self-serving and it signals selfishness, arrogance, and dominance, all of which are off putting.

3. Avoid Comparisons and Competitions. When we compare and compete with each other, we lose the ability to connect. Avoid the temptation to be jealous or resentful about the strengths of others, especially when they are strengths you may not possess. If you can rejoice in the strengths of your team members the connections you make become deeper and more genuine.

4. Express gratitude and appreciation. Remember, the most powerful form of recognition is free. It's simply expressing gratitude and appreciation. When others perform well, express genuine gratitude and appreciation as much as you can. When others try hard, but fail to meet their goals, recognize their efforts with empathy.

5. Identify Negative Bias. A bias is a preference for or against a human characteristic, individual, or group of people. As humans, we all have them. Sometimes they are hidden. Sometimes they are obvious. Periodically ask yourself if you can identify any patterns of negative bias. Then act to remove them.

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