

## **Creating Psychological Safety: Strategies for Practitioners**

Psychological safety fosters open communication, trust, and collaboration, enabling practitioners to effectively support their teams and service users. This checklist provides actionable strategies to build a safe and supportive environment in daily practice.

### **1. Building Trust and Respect**

- **Establish Clear Expectations:**
  - Communicate the purpose and goals of interactions clearly.
  - Set boundaries and ensure mutual understanding.
- **Show Consistency:**
  - Be reliable and follow through on commitments.
  - Demonstrate fairness and dependability in your actions.
- **Model Respectful Behaviour:**
  - Listen actively without interrupting or judging.
  - Validate the feelings and concerns of others.

### **2. Encouraging Open Communication**

- **Create a Safe Space:**
  - Begin meetings or sessions with a check-in to understand emotions.
  - Use non-judgmental and inclusive language.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:**
  - Facilitate discussions by encouraging sharing of thoughts (e.g., "What support do you feel would be most helpful right now?").
- **Acknowledge Vulnerability:**
  - Share your own learning experiences to normalise discussions about mistakes or challenges.

### **3. Providing Constructive Feedback**

- **Balance Feedback:**
  - Start by recognising strengths and positive contributions.
  - Frame feedback around behaviours rather than personal traits.
- **Focus on Solutions:**
  - Collaboratively develop action plans to address areas for growth.
  - Emphasise opportunities for skill-building and improvement.

### **4. Promoting Inclusion and Equity**

- **Ensure Equal Participation:**
  - Encourage all voices to be heard in discussions or team activities.
  - Actively counter any tendencies towards exclusion or bias.
- **Recognise Individual Needs:**
  - Adapt your approach to accommodate diverse preferences and needs.
  - Be culturally sensitive and aware of potential barriers to inclusion.

## 5. Supporting Well-Being

- **Monitor Emotional Health:**
  - Check in regularly with colleagues or team members about their stress levels.
  - Be attentive to signs of burnout or secondary trauma.
- **Encourage Self-Care:**
  - Share strategies for maintaining balance and well-being.
  - Provide information about resources for mental health support.

## 6. Encouraging Reflective Practice

- **Facilitate Reflection:**
  - Ask thoughtful questions to encourage critical thinking about work experiences (e.g., "What went well, and what could be improved?").
- **Celebrate Growth:**
  - Recognise and applaud progress, both personal and professional.
- **Foster Problem-Solving:**
  - Guide discussions towards identifying solutions rather than focusing solely on challenges.

## 7. Maintaining Follow-Up

- **Document Key Takeaways:**
  - Summarise key points and action items from discussions.
  - Share summaries to ensure alignment and accountability.
- **Monitor Progress:**
  - Regularly revisit agreed-upon actions and provide support as needed.