Developing Team Resilience

A resilient team can be defined as a team's ability to absorb, cope with and recover from pressures, challenges or adversity. *As with individual resilience, it is important to remember that team resilience is malleable, might fluctuate, be affected by the environment and does not operate in a vacuum –for example it is likely that COVID 19 will have had an impact at some point.*

7 elements of a resilient team =

1) **Persistent under difficult circumstances**
2) **Optimistic with a forward looking perspective**
3) **Positively adapts to changing situations, responds to setbacks effectively**
4) **A high level of self-awareness among team members**
5) **Self regulates temperament and is supportive and encouraging**
6) **Takes active steps to work on their well-being**
7) **Has shared values and purpose**

The Importance of Developing Psychological Safety within teams to increase resilience

What is psychological safety?

A team feels psychologically safe to its members when they share the belief that within the team they will not be exposed to interpersonal or social threats to their self or identity, their status or to their career or employment.

They share this belief when engaging in learning behaviours such as:

Asking for help
Seeking feedback
Admitting errors or lack of knowledge
Trying something new
Voicing work-related dissenting views

Benefits of Psychological Safety

- ✓ **Better levels of communication**: sharing of knowledge and levels of engagement
- ✓ **More openness to learning (including learning from failure).** FAIL = first attempt in learning
- ✓ **Improved performance with more creativity/innovation**
- ✓ **Positive employee attitudes –** higher levels of commitment
- ✓ **Increased levels of initiative** e.g. ways to work around processes that impact performance

Examples of Psychological Safety during COVID

- **Fear –** Admitting you feel scared to a colleague about COVID, or the risk to family or friends. Explaining how the fear or lack of fear is impacting on your behaviour

- **Difficulty with change or process** – Sharing with colleagues or friends how you are finding it difficult to adjust to new processes, and that you might benefit from a different way of doing it or help to adjust

- **Lack of rule following** – Telling a colleague to maintain a social distance or wear a mask in your presence

- **Fundamentally different views** – The world is divided at present. We won't always agree with everyone around us. It is important that we feel safe around colleagues, managers and friends to talk to them about what we are/ are not comfortable with.

How else can we develop team resilience?

Create structure and keep structure. This allows a sense of predictability when there is a high degree of uncertainty.

Model vulnerability to each other. Create safe spaces for ourselves and each other to help ourselves regulate emotions.

Recognise trait, capacity and process factors in yourself and others. We are all going through this differently. Each of our resilience and ability to manage can alter at any time.

Trust and transparency. Practice intentional relationship building. Be supportive of those who are slower to trust – learning brains are offline during times of crisis.

Collaboration and mutuality. Ask for ideas and listen to and consider solutions. If the solutions aren't feasible, communicate that and thank for the input. Look for common experiences/ shared humanity (not only related to this crisis).

Voice and choice – Everyone needs to feel seen and to know their options. Invite all to contribute. Honor different ways to engage in the work.

Peer Support. Celebrate the wins for the day or week. Help yourself by helping others. Normalize trauma symptoms. Practice self- care and self-compassion and encourage others to do so.

Build individual resilience. Building individual resilience can influence team resilience. We will feel more able to experience with a full heart in light of these challenges. *See the building individual resilience pdf.*

Questions to ask yourself, your teams/friends/ colleagues

How can I better, and more regularly contact the present moment?

Why did I choose to study this/ work in this area?

Who or what motivates me?

Where do I find my soul food?

How do I challenge things that don't sit right with me, even when I feel scared to do it?

How do I be the kind/caring/creative/friendly/compassionate/competitive/bashful/humorous/adventurous…. person I want to be…. today/tomorrow/next week/ next month?