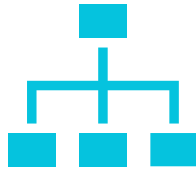


# MHAW "Action" 2026: Mattering



# Psychological Safety Defined



## Organisational

A culture that tolerates failure without retaliation and encourages risk taking, learning & innovation



## Individual

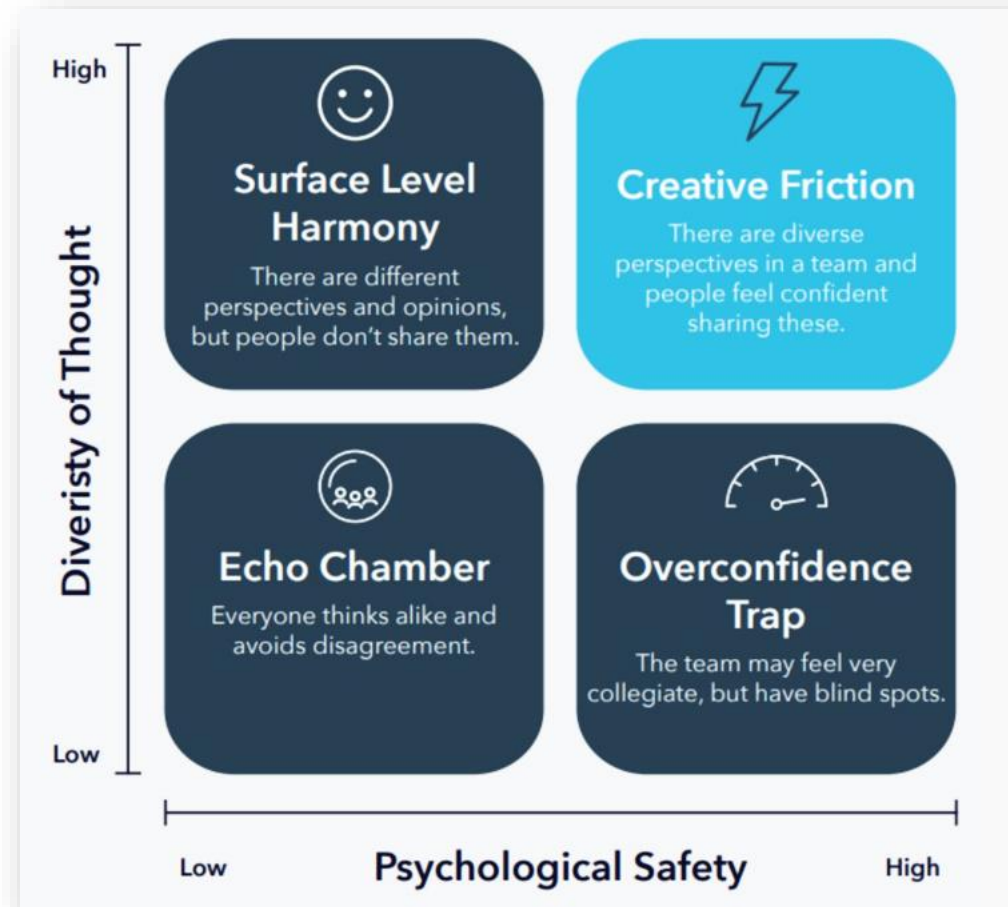
Experienced as the personal freedom to express yourself without the fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career



## Team

A shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking, where members can ask for help, admit errors, and give feedback

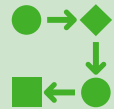
# Getting to Creative Friction



# Noticing



**Paying Attention:** sometimes to what other people might be missing



**Habit Breaking:** taking a different perspective/ route



**Sparks Creativity:** good source of learning

# Why Mattering Matters



**Complex structures and diverse landscape** (educating, research, public service, political and social pressures etc.)



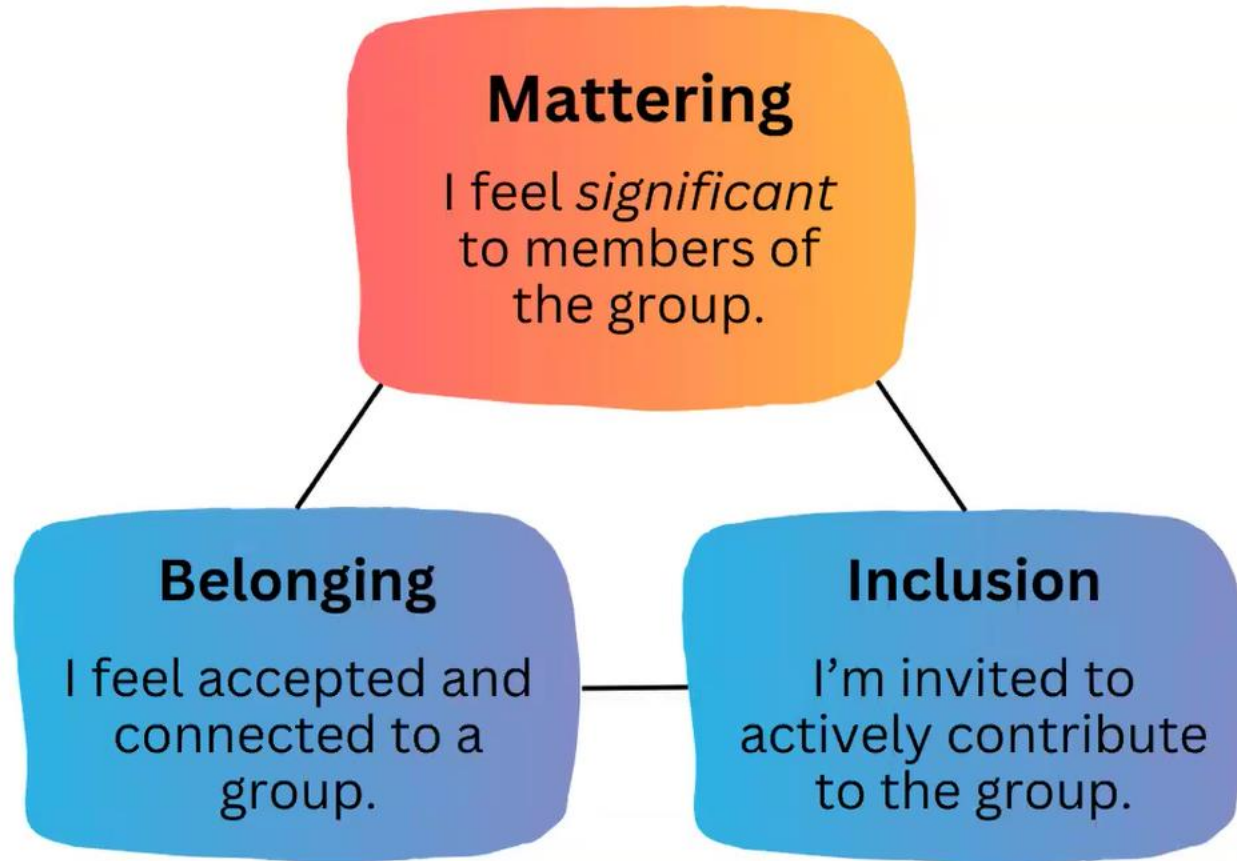
**Tension between traditional hierarchy & a place to express your views** (friction)



**Leadership responsibilities are rotated** (on an FTC basis & then handed back)



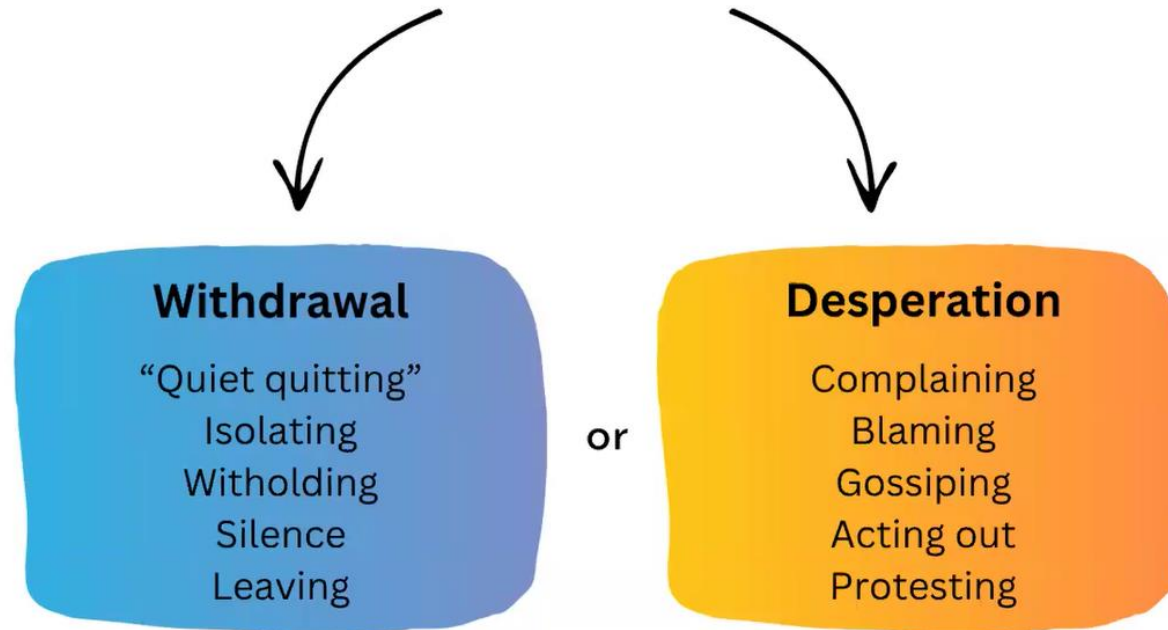
**The divide between academia and professional services** (conflicting needs and questions of value)

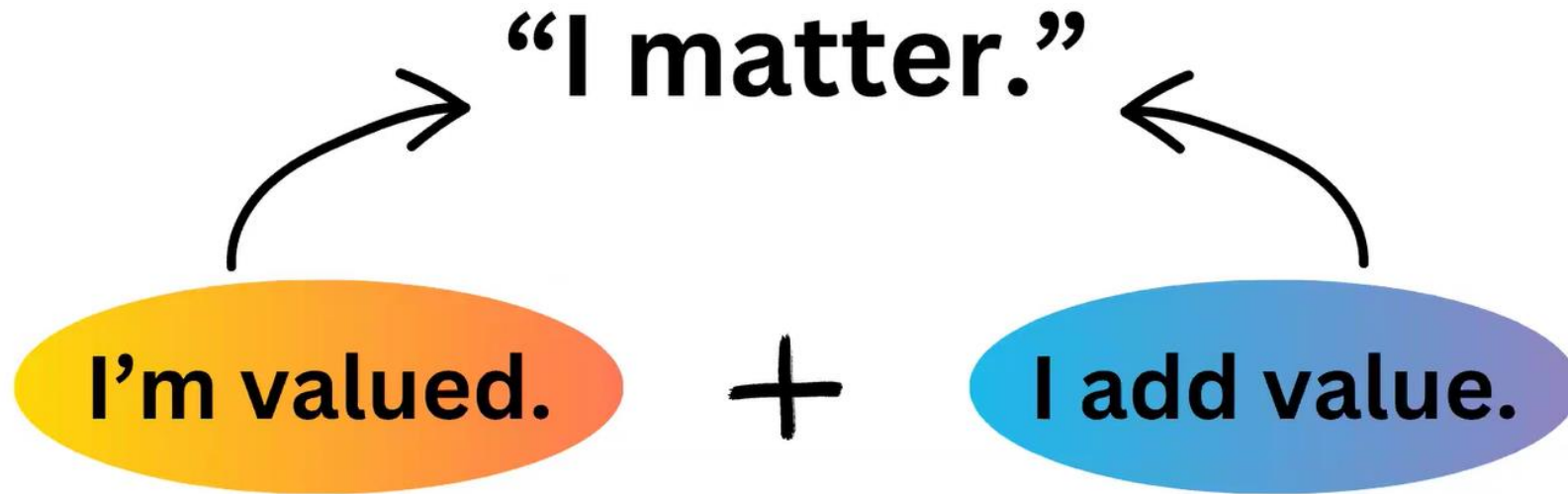


# Mattering Deficit

## NOT MATTERING

can lead to





You know my full name.  
You remember details.  
You check in on me.  
You know my struggles.  
You see and hear me.

You show me my impact.  
You name my gifts.  
You ask for my opinion.  
You give me responsibility.  
You show me how I'm needed.

# Skill based approach to mattering



- Think about when you've most felt that you mattered to someone in your work
- What 2-3 words describe what they did
- What happens when you don't have this?
- What have you learned from your high and low mattering moments?



# A Culture of Mattering



# SAID Framework



**Significance:** the feeling of being noticed and important in the everyday flow of life



**Appreciation:** being recognised for the person behind the action, not just the action itself



**Investment:** people who care about your goals and support you through setbacks



**Dependence:** knowing others rely on you and would notice your absence

# 5 Intentional Listening Habits



**Notice what is not being said:** who isn't contributing, who starts to speak and gets spoken over, or whether there is any disagreement?



**The Power of the Pause:** the aim is to be present and remember 90% of this conversation, not to respond immediately



**Listen specifically for words that are repeated:** I've heard you say "frustrated" three or four times, so this is obviously feeling hard. What do you think is prompting this?



**No Interruption Meetings:** my job to do is not interrupt



**Summarise:** asking the question, "what have I missed?"

# Intentional Noticing

**Skill: Observe + Note + Share**

**Deliberate act of paying attention** to the details, ebbs and flows and offering them proactive actions to show them that they are thought about



# Skill: Ask Meaningful Questions

~~How are you?~~

What has your attention today?

What kind of day have you had?

What's been most meaningful  
for you today?

What are you struggling with?  
How can I help?

# Skill: Do Energy Check-Ins



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**Green** means you feel safe, passionate, content, or perhaps are in flow. You're able to be present, engage, create, and learn.



**Yellow** means you can be present but may be reactionary, you may feel overwhelmed or frustrated about something, or your attention is being pulled in another direction.



**Red** means you're overloaded, stressed, burned out, reactive, or feel it's difficult to be fully present.



# Healthy Intentional Boundaries



**Know what they are & define the line:** where do I consistently overextend myself, what is non negotiable for me to perform, where do I feel most stretched or resentful, % what would I like to be doing differently?



**Tell people & say it out loud:** your clear time availability, currently focussed on x and y, which one would you like me to pause



**Unpleasing people without getting into trouble:** practice saying “no” lightly, I can’t take that on now but I’m happy to pick it up next week, let go of the reaction, saying no to things that dilute your team’s focus

# 3-3-3 Check-In



**What's working?** Starting with what's working gives you data on what to protect, not just what to fix



**What's stuck?** No solving yet. Just surfacing.  
The goal is to get everything visible before anyone starts fixing



**What's the one thing we should do about it?** Pick the most important stuck item and agree on a single next step. One owner. One action. One deadline

# Noticing More

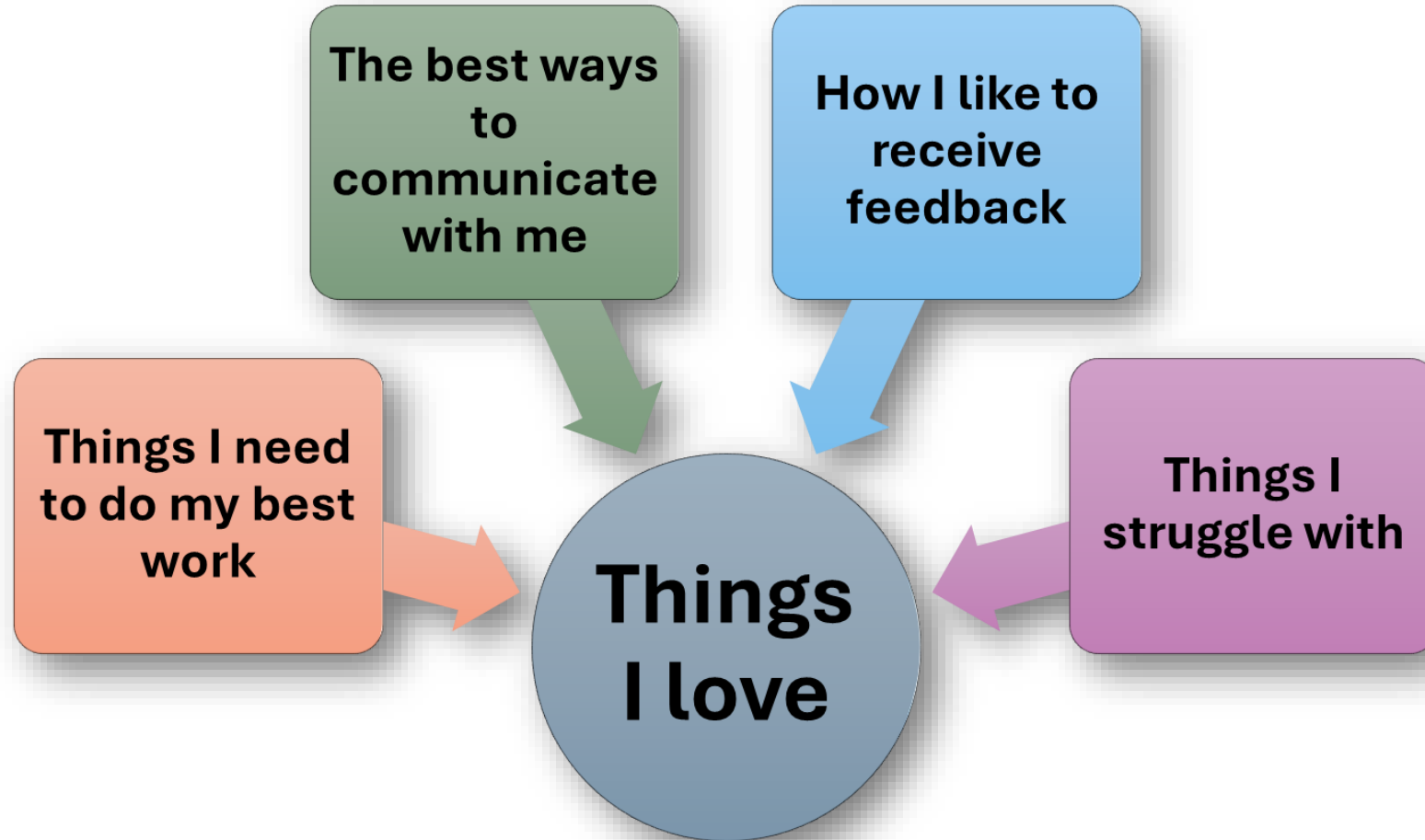


Who do I/we need to notice more?



What will I/we do to help them feel more seen or heard?

# The User Manual for Me



# The Magic of the 'Manual of Me' exercise



I am at my best when \_\_\_\_\_

I am at my worst when \_\_\_\_\_

You can count on me to \_\_\_\_\_

What I need from you is \_\_\_\_\_



# What do we think works?



## Noticing filter is “on”:

- How people show up in meetings
- “I’ve noticed that ... I’d love to hear a little more about that”

## Affirmation:

- Recognising what people do well in a meaningful way
- “Shout outs” intentionally calling out what someone has done well and is “uniquely useful” or “that was brilliant because “ (super strength)

## Needed:

- The thing that I (really) need from you that is useful and valuable is
- I want to run by several things while you were off

# Making Each Person Feel Valued



## Focus on

**“Loved it/Loathed it” exercise twice a year:** focus on building a shared awareness of what makes them feel fulfilled, and what drains them



## Understand

**Understand their response to change:** pay close attention to how each person reacts when things shift



## Individualize

**Individualize praise:** recognize people in ways that resonate

# SO-ROCK feedback model



**Situation** (when and where)



**Observation** (what did you see or hear/ not your judgement)



**Even Better If** (improvement & possibility not punishment)



**Results** (what impact did it have on others, the outcome, or perceptions)



**Options** (what could they do differently next time)

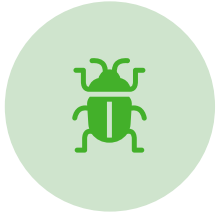


**Check-in** (when will you follow up)

# Intentional Benefits of Noticing



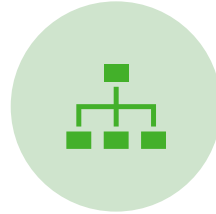
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WHEN TIME FLIES  
BY ...



WHAT'S NOT BEING  
SAID IN A MEETING



WHAT'S ON YOUR  
MANAGER'S  
"WORRY LIST"



TURNING RIGHT  
RATHER THAN  
GOING LEFT



WHAT NEVER SEEMS  
TO GET DONE



WHAT YOUR INNER  
MONOLOGUE  
SOUNDS LIKE



WHAT YOU DON'T  
KNOW



OTHER PEOPLE'S  
STRENGTHS IN  
ACTION

# Workplace Wellbeing



# Mattering Manifesto

**Mattering is the soil where all staff  
can feel seen, heard & valued**

Active listening & giving your full  
attention

20-30% in 1-2-1s

Recognising the wiring

Moments of connection

Language & tone

Acknowledge the challenges

Standing alongside not rescuing

