



THE 55<sup>TH</sup> THERAPEUTIC RECREATION INSTITUTE – JANUARY 8, 2024  
**LOVE LOYALTY, AND THE LANGUAGE OF LEADERS DURING CHAOS, AND CHANGE!**

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**ACTS OF LOVING or ACTS OF LEAVING?**

**BUILDING YOUR SKILLS DIRECTLY INFLUENCES RETENTION AND ENGAGEMENT!**

The most important leadership tool is a mirror! Our actions matter, but not as much as our mindset and beliefs about the situations around us.

- Do you believe in your ability to influence others around you toward greater hope and harmony?
- How often do you reflect on your power as a role model for your organization's mission, vision and values?
- What goals will you set that move your department and everyone toward a culture of empathy, support, and courage?
- In what ways are your colleagues better people as a result of your relationship and influence? Do they work harder? Are they better professionals? Are they more kind? Are they more patient? Are they less anxious in the face of great challenges and change?

**THERE ARE NO NEW TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, OR TRICK TO CREATING A CULTURE WHERE EVERYONE FEELS CHERISHED.**

1. Take consistent steps to intentionally build relationships that inspire, esteem, and encourage elevated loyalty from those around you, including colleagues who are neither your favorites or your usual crowd. Take into consideration race, position, country of origin, and department. If you don't stretch, no one else will.
2. While often uncomfortable, soliciting feedback is the **most ignored** tool to conquering low retention, poor morale, and uninspired resident care. How often do you invite your team to share their feedback about your leadership? What can/will you do to ensure that your peers and team members feel more comfortable in sharing their sincere feedback?
3. Get **CURIOUS** about the **REASONS** behind situations rather than use words of blame, shame, or judgment to label the reaction of others.
  - "She's so emotional!" "He's always flying off the handle." "I question their work ethic." "I think you're overreacting!"
  - "She's such a Debbie Downer." "Nobody wants to work anymore!" "They'll never change." "Those darned millennials!"
4. We **JUDGE** others by their actions/reactions, but often overlook how **OUR** actions, biases, triggers, and areas for growth impact those around us.
5. It is easier to criticize and complain than it is to hold ourselves accountable for the same patience, empathy, and grace we expect from others.
6. We **ALL** have battles, struggles, and challenges that impact those around us. We have to examine our own habits and behaviors before we demand accountability from anyone else. Leaders are equally responsible for a degree of the team's success, but also the team's dysfunction.
7. Unlike "write-ups," purposeful, consistent **COACHING** changes culture and behaviors. Those who have the least influence within our organizations, "get in trouble" at a dramatically higher percentage than leaders. The more emotionally intelligent the leader the greater the team performs, and retention rates skyrocket.

**EVERYTHING CHANGES WITH COURAGE!** Acts of courage do not have to feel like mic drops. They often show up as “baby steps.” Our buildings would be profoundly different if more people were courageous in their words and actions. The success of our organizations and departments depend on our ability to rise as Role Models of Emotional Intelligence. Authenticity and collaboration created Psychological Safety which encouraged the entire group to participate whole-heartedly. Your bravery and intention could spur a movement within your department/organization where everyone feels honored and cherished! Until that happens, the Workforce Crisis, Quiet Quitting, and “Nurses-Eat-Their-Young” will continue.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY:** is a term used to describe the security, freedom, and belonging that occurs when our feelings, thoughts, and opinions, are valued. Job performance elevates when no one is punished, ignored, demeaned, or diminished for sharing concerns, ideas, questions, or mistakes. Amy Edmondson, Harvard PhD, is the researcher who coined the phrase.

### **FACTS**

- Psychologically Safe teams make fewer errors and readily identify solutions to emergent problems.
- Psychological Safety reduces favoritism, passive aggressiveness, low morale, and eliminates human “workarounds.”
- The ability to create Psychological Safety is a critical leadership competency and is not a personality trait. Psychological Safety encourages greater confidence, communication, honest feedback, and competence.
- Psychological Safety is not about being soft on accountability or **lowering performance standards, but instead** leads to greater productivity and retention.

**LEADERSHIP MANTRAS** are **POWERFUL!** Consider integrating at least 3 of the following statements into your leadership practice. You can also use these phrases as points of discussion for team meetings or in-services.

1. **I WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENERGY AND ATTITUDE I BRING TO MY TEAM.**
2. **No one offends me without my permission.**
3. **NOT ON MY WATCH!**
4. **As a role model, I will hold myself more accountable than I do anyone else.**
5. I welcome the discomfort that comes with learning and growing.
6. **I am a lightning rod for positivity and optimism.**
7. I commit to stop calling my colleagues “employees,” “staff,” “frontline workers,” or anything other words that demean their value.
8. **I will build trust and seek opportunities to partner with others whose life-experiences and perspectives differ from my own.**
9. The more I stretch, the more my team succeeds, and the residents thrive.
10. **I cannot do everything, but I WILL commit to the right thing.**
11. I will actively and consistently seek feedback from others.
12. **My team will be changed by my example, and not by my criticism or judgment.**
8. I am a role model of courage and purpose.
9. **ALWAYS, PRIORITIZE RELATIONSHIPS OVER TASKS!**

### **FULL-ON ACTION STEPS!**