Objectives

- **Understanding Psychological Safety & Intersectional Identities**: Explore and define the concept of psychological safety and its significance within intersectional identities of BIPOC professionals and how to promote an inclusive and empowering environment.

- **Fostering Inclusive Leadership and Collaboration**: Develop strategies to foster inclusive leadership practices that amplify the voices of BIPOC professionals and promote collaborative initiatives that drive equity and diversity within their roles.

- **Cultivating Resilience and Well-being**: Equip participants with tools to bolster the resilience, grit and well-being of BIPOC professionals, when psychological safety may or may not be present.

- **Equipping Allies and Advocates**: Develop strategies for educators, administrators, and peers to actively support and advocate for BIPOC women, contributing to a campus culture that upholds JEDI values.
What Is Psychological Safety?

"The belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes, and that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking."

Amy Edmondson, 1999

Psychological Safety: What It Isn't

- It's not about lowering standards.
- It's not about mental health, well-being, or wellness.
- It's not simply an Inclusion and Diversity exercise.
- It's Not synonymous with job Security.
- It's Not a Permanent State
- It's Not Solely Dependent on Leadership, nor is it only the group's responsibility.
- It's Not Linked to certain personalities
- It's Not Trust
- It's Not About Pretending Everything Is Fine
- It's Not an excuse for brutality
- It's not comfortable, particularly for people in leadership roles.
Benefits of Psychological Safety

01 Inclusive Work Environment
Psychological safety is crucial for creating an inclusive work environment where BIPOC professionals feel valued and respected.

02 Impact on Well-being
Psychological safety directly impacts the mental and emotional well-being of BIPOC professionals, influencing their overall performance and satisfaction.

03 Cultural Competence
Developing cultural competence is essential for fostering psychological safety and understanding the unique challenges faced by BIPOC professionals.

Common Issues FACED BY BIPOC Professionals...

Workforce Issues
- Being the only one...
- Stereotyping & Bias
- Micro/Macroaggressions
- Expectations of an employee / partner / mother
- Systemic Racism / Isms...
- Communication misses (misinformation, misalignment, missteps, and mismanagement)

Leadership Issues
- Lack of equitable opportunities
- Only "useful" when dealing with specific populations
- Known to "get-it-done"
- Lake of Brave and Vulnerable Leaders
- Recognition and Acknowledgment
- Tone Down
- Concrete/Bamboo Ceiling

Empowerment Issues
- Intersectionality of Identities
- Imposter Syndrome
- Automatic Negative Self Thoughts
- Playing nice in the sandbox
- Perfectionism (Blessing and a Curse)
- Sandwiched
- Lack of mentorship

Educational Issues
- Afraid of getting doctorate
- Financial wellness
- STUDENT LOANS vs. Salary Equity

Presented by: Sherra' Watkins, PhD and Shawnte' Elbert, EdD
ATTENDEE QUESTIONS:

How has your job **NOT** created a psychological safe environment for you?

How **HAS** your job created a psychological safe environment for you?

What Organizations Can Do: Cultivating Psychological Safety
Creating Safe Environments
Implementing a trauma-informed approach is vital for creating safer environments for BIPOC professionals, acknowledging and addressing the impact of trauma on their well-being.

Supporting Staff and Individuals
A trauma-informed approach helps organizations support their staff and the individuals they serve, promoting a culture of empathy and understanding.

Empowerment and Healing
It focuses on empowerment and healing, recognizing the importance of creating spaces that promote psychological safety and well-being.
Building Trust and Inclusion

01 Trust and Belonging
Organizations need to prioritize building trust and a sense of belonging for BIPOC professionals, creating an environment where they feel valued and respected.

02 Cultural Competence Training
Prioritizing cultural competence training helps in understanding the unique experiences and challenges faced by BIPOC professionals, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.

03 Open Communication
Encouraging open communication and dialogue is essential for addressing concerns and creating an environment where BIPOC professionals feel heard and understood.

Inclusive Leadership and Collaborative Practices

Presented by: Sherra' Watkins, PhD and Shawnte' Elbert, EdD
Inclusive Leadership

01 Empathetic Leadership
Inclusive leadership involves empathy, understanding, and active support for the well-being of BIPOC professionals, creating an environment of trust and psychological safety.

02 Representation and Visibility
Ensuring representation and visibility of BIPOC professionals in leadership positions is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and psychological safety.

03 Allyship and Advocacy
Leaders need to act as allies and advocates, actively addressing systemic barriers and promoting an inclusive and supportive culture.

Promoting Equitable Decision-Making

01 Establish Inclusive Decision-Making Processes
- Diverse Decision-Making Teams
- Inclusive Feedback Mechanisms

02 Foster Collaborative Decision-Making
- Team Collaboration
- Cross-Functional Teams
- Facilitate Inclusive Discussions, Panels and Presentations

03 Create a Culture of Inclusivity
- Promote Inclusive Language
- Leadership Commitment
- Leadership Accountability
Roots of Resilience: Navigating Psychological Safety as a BIPOC Professional

Policy and Procedure Alignment

01 Equitable Policies
Ensuring that organizational policies and procedures are aligned with principles of equity and inclusion is essential for sustaining psychological safety for BIPOC professionals.

02 Transparency and Accountability
Maintaining transparency and accountability in policy implementation builds trust and confidence among BIPOC professionals, reinforcing psychological safety.

03 Continuous Evaluation
Regularly evaluating policies and procedures to address any biases or barriers that may impact the psychological safety of BIPOC professionals is crucial for sustained improvement.

Mentorship and Sponsorship

Mentorship Programs
Establishing mentorship programs that specifically support BIPOC professionals in their career growth and development provides guidance and encouragement, contributing to psychological safety.

Sponsorship Opportunities
Creating sponsorship opportunities for BIPOC professionals within the organization helps in promoting visibility, recognition, and advancement, reinforcing psychological safety.

Cross-Cultural Mentorship
Encouraging cross-cultural mentorship and sponsorship initiatives fosters understanding and collaboration, strengthening psychological safety and support.
Impact Measurements

01 Data-Driven Approach
Implementing data-driven approaches to measure the impact of psychological safety initiatives on the experiences and well-being of BIPOC professionals provides insights for continuous improvement.

02 Feedback Analysis
Analyzing feedback and engagement data from BIPOC professionals helps in understanding the effectiveness of psychological safety initiatives and identifying areas for enhancement.

03 Benchmarking Progress
Establishing benchmarks and key performance indicators for psychological safety allows organizations to track progress and demonstrate their commitment to sustained improvement.

Individual Care & Practices

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Navigating An Unsafe Work Environment

**General Tips:**

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<td>• Keep a record of specific incidents, including dates, times, people involved, and details of what occurred. This documentation may be useful if you decide to report the issues.</td>
<td>• Talk to trusted colleagues, friends, or family members about your experiences. Having a support system can help you navigate the challenges and provide emotional support.</td>
<td>• Familiarize yourself with your organization’s policies on workplace behavior and harassment. This information can guide your actions and help you understand your rights.</td>
<td>• If you feel comfortable, address the issue directly with the individuals involved. Sometimes, people may not be aware of the impact of their actions. Clearly communicate how their behavior is affecting you.</td>
<td>• If the issues persist, consider reporting the problem through formal channels within your organization. This might involve HR, a supervisor, or another designated reporting mechanism.</td>
<td>• If you choose to involve HR, provide them with the documented incidents and be clear about your concerns. Request information about the steps they will take to address the situation.</td>
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**Navigating An Unsafe Work Environment**

**Tips for BIPOC Professionals:**

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<th>Network with Other BIPOC Professionals:</th>
<th>Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):</th>
<th>Mentorship:</th>
<th>Self-Care:</th>
<th>Know Your Rights:</th>
<th>Advocate for Change:</th>
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<td>• Connect with other BIPOC professionals within or outside your organization. Share experiences, advice, and support each other. This network can be a valuable resource.</td>
<td>• Join or establish an Employee Resource Group focused on diversity and inclusion. These groups can provide a platform for collective advocacy and support.</td>
<td>• Seek mentorship from more experienced BIPOC professionals who have navigated similar challenges. Their guidance can be invaluable in helping you navigate the workplace.</td>
<td>• Prioritize self-care to maintain your mental and emotional well-being. This may include activities like exercise, therapy, meditation, or other practices that help you cope with stress.</td>
<td>• Familiarize yourself with anti-discrimination laws and policies in your jurisdiction. This knowledge can empower you to advocate for yourself effectively.</td>
<td>• If you feel comfortable and it aligns with your goals, advocate for changes in policies, practices, or organizational culture that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.</td>
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Well-being Initiatives

01 Mental Health Resources
Providing accessible mental health resources and support tailored to the needs of BIPOC professionals demonstrates a commitment to their well-being and psychological safety.

02 Work-Life Balance
Promoting work-life balance and flexibility acknowledges the diverse experiences and responsibilities of BIPOC professionals, contributing to their overall psychological safety.

03 Culturally Relevant Support
Offering culturally relevant well-being initiatives and resources ensures that BIPOC professionals receive support that resonates with their unique cultural backgrounds and experiences.
Let’s Build Your Wellness Toolbox!

Your fatigue is real.
Your overwhelm is real.
Your exhaustion is real.

When Is It Time To Walk Away?

What do you do when a BIPOC colleague or leader, assumed ally, is making the workplace un-psychologically safe?
Advocacy, Allyship, and Accomplices

01
Amplifying Voices
Advocating for the representation and amplification of BIPOC voices in decision-making processes and organizational initiatives is essential for promoting psychological safety.

02
Policy Advocacy
Engaging in advocacy efforts that address systemic barriers and promote policies supporting the psychological safety of BIPOC professionals contributes to meaningful change.

03
Intersectional Advocacy
Recognizing and addressing the intersectional experiences of BIPOC professionals ensures that advocacy efforts are inclusive and impactful.
Allyship

Amplifying Voices:

- **Listening Actively:** Allies actively listen to the experiences, concerns, and perspectives of BIPOC colleagues. By creating space for their voices to be heard, allies help elevate diverse narratives.

- **Amplifying Contributions:** Acknowledge and amplify the contributions of BIPOC professionals in meetings, discussions, and projects. Ensure that credit is given where it is due, and advocate for equal recognition.

Advocacy and Support:

- **Public Support:** Allies use their privilege and influence to publicly support BIPOC professionals. This may involve speaking out against discriminatory practices, policies, or microaggressions.

- **Advocating for Opportunities:** Actively advocate for BIPOC colleagues to ensure they have access to professional development opportunities, promotions, and leadership roles.

Intervening in Microaggressions:

- **Interrupting Bias:** Allies intervene when witnessing microaggressions or discriminatory behavior. They actively address and challenge biased comments or actions in order to create a more inclusive environment.

- **Creating Safe Spaces:** Allies work to create safe spaces where BIPOC professionals feel comfortable expressing themselves and addressing concerns without fear of backlash.

What Individuals Can Do

- “If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.” - Soror Zora Neale Hurston

- Learn to spot and respond to microaggressions as they’re happening.

- Reflect on past situations when you didn’t intervene: What got in your way and how can you curb that in the future? For example, if fear of not knowing what to say in the moment caused your inaction, consider short, easy-to-remember phrases to interrupt the harm, such as, “Can we pause for a moment? I am processing what you just said to Janet.” Sometimes, this “speed bump” can give those involved a chance to reflect and resolve, during or at a later time.

- Leverage your privilege by actively amplifying the contributions of Black women you work with, particularly when something they’ve said in a group has gone unaddressed or without credit/reinforcement.

- Learn about how bias shows up in interview processes, be honest with yourself about where your tendencies lie, and ask those you trust to hold you accountable for mitigating them in real time.
All accomplices are allies, but not all allies are accomplices. While an ally is willing to stand in support of a marginalized voice, risk is rarely involved. An accomplice uses the power and privilege they must challenge the status quo, often risking their physical and social well being in the process.

Accomplices

- Accomplices are willing to take the necessary steps to ensure that their workplace is safe from physical, verbal, and mental abuse (i.e., microaggressions).
- To be an accomplice, one must be willing to do more than listen; they must be willing to stand with those who are being attacked, excluded or otherwise mistreated, even if that means suffering personal or professional backlash.
- Being an accomplice means being willing to act with and for oppressed peoples and accepting the potential fallout from doing so.
Collaborative Partnerships

Community Collaboration
Collaborating with community organizations and leaders focused on BIPOC well-being and empowerment strengthens advocacy efforts and promotes psychological safety.

Research Partnerships
Engaging in research partnerships focused on understanding the experiences and needs of BIPOC professionals contributes to evidence-based advocacy and support.

Policy Influence
Leveraging collaborative partnerships to influence policies and practices that promote psychological safety for BIPOC professionals creates meaningful and sustainable impact.

CONVERSATIONAL STARTERS
- “Can I help?”
- “Would you like me to…”?
- “May I key something with your class?”
- “May I do an observation of student skills and feed back to you?”
- “Did you know about…”?

DECK 1: DAY TO DAY STRATEGIES
- Email contacts lists to samples them and see them weekly
- Targeted sharing of good news, resources, Web 2.0 trends - follow up and offer to demonstrate
- Go to the staff room regularly at break times to network and be available
- Take an interest in professional development being offered by other staff - this can be another door opener
- Talk with head of departments about buying plans related to their current needs

BIG PICTURE OR POLITICAL STRATEGIES
- Get management on board
- Report and present to your governing body
- Link experts in school strategic plan, literacy initiatives, school-based events
- Attend all staff meetings, even if you have to engineer invitations initially
- Target curriculum messages and/or leaders to form alliances
- Focus on the teachers and thinkers, if you don’t - find out and then cultivate strong relationships
- Be on 110% committees, take part in their housed initiatives, anything relevant that allows you to be visible outside the walls of the literacy

QUESTION & ANSWER

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THANK YOU

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