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In 2015, Google commissioned Project Aristotle to answer the question: *what makes a Google team effective?* Over two years, they gathered and rigorously analyzed an enormous volume of data. Their findings concluded that the #1 driver behind an effective team was the collective experience of what is called "psychological safety."

Psychological safety is the shared belief held by members of a team that others on the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish them for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes. It is intended to promote vulnerability, allow team members to be their authentic best selves, and enable a collective sense of belonging. The benefits of psychological safety also include stronger levels of innovation, improved effectiveness, and enhanced organizational adaptability according to several McKinsey studies.

It sounds like an organizational nirvana, where people feel genuinely valued and embraced for who they are, and organizations achieve stronger levels of performance. And yet, most organizations fail to cultivate psychological safety.

Workhuman conducted a study that indicates that only 26% of us feel psychologically safe at work. They also found that women experience less psychological safety than men, and working parents had lower levels of psychological safety compared to those who aren't parents. Furthermore, they found that white employees experienced the highest levels of psychological safety, with other races falling behind.

This study considered a few demographic categories, but there are many other dimensions of our personal uniqueness that can impact our sense of safety