



unsafe people

by Henry Cloud and John Townsend

Personal Traits of Unsafe People

- ⊕ Unsafe people think they “have it all together” instead of admitting their weaknesses.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are religious instead of spiritual.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are defensive instead of open to feedback.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are self-righteous instead of humble.
- ⊕ Unsafe people only apologize instead of changing their behavior.
- ⊕ Unsafe people avoid working on their problems instead of dealing with them.
- ⊕ Unsafe people demand trust, instead of earning it.
- ⊕ Unsafe people believe they are perfect instead of admitting their faults.
- ⊕ Unsafe people blame others instead of taking responsibility.
- ⊕ Unsafe people lie instead of telling the truth.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are stagnant instead of growing.

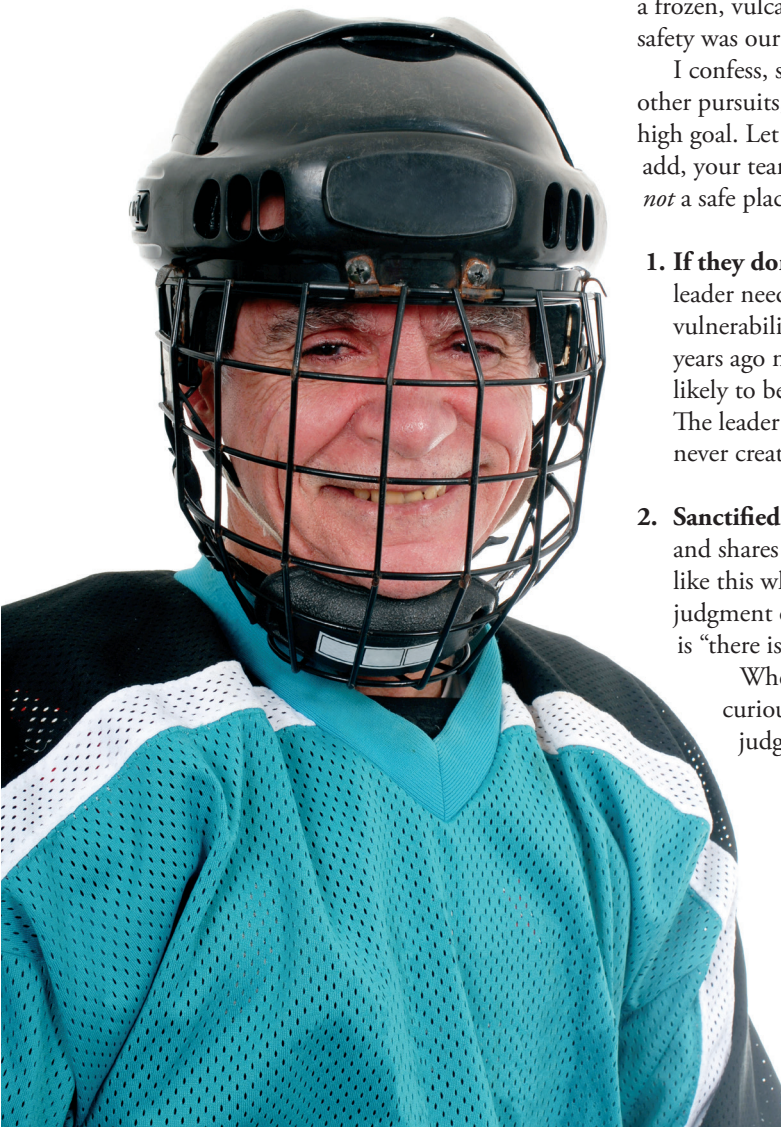
Interpersonal Traits of Unsafe People

- ⊕ Unsafe people avoid closeness instead of connecting.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are only concerned about “I” instead of “we.”
- ⊕ Unsafe people resist freedom instead of encouraging it.
- ⊕ Unsafe people flatter us instead of confronting us.
- ⊕ Unsafe people condemn us instead of forgiving us.
- ⊕ Unsafe people stay in parent/child roles instead of relating as equals.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are unstable over time instead of being consistent.
- ⊕ Unsafe people are a negative influence on us, rather than a positive one.
- ⊕ Unsafe people gossip instead of keeping secrets.

Used with permission. *Safe People* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend

*Unsafe people
blame others
instead of taking
responsibility.*

*If safety was
our first concern,
we wouldn't be
on the ice!*



Upfront

real talk about real stuff . . . upfront

THE NAVIGATORS®

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5 essentials for a safe team

by Brad Hillman
People Resources Team Director

We were seconds away from dropping the puck to start the annual “Ol’ Geezer Summer Classic.” The organizer of this ice hockey game for players over 50 years old stepped to the microphone and announced, “The number one goal of every player on this ice is safety. We don’t want anyone to get hurt.”

As one of those players, my immediate thought was, “A bunch of men from 50 to 74 years old, on a sheet of ice, wearing thin steel blades, carrying long sticks and shooting a frozen, vulcanized rubber puck as hard as they can towards other players . . . if safety was our first concern, we wouldn’t be on the ice!”

I confess, safety is not among my top goals when I play ice hockey. But in other pursuits, it is. For the People Resources Team, creating a safe place is a very high goal. Let me share five areas I consider essential for a safe team. And, may I add, your team will not function or bear lasting fruit at the level God desires if it’s *not* a safe place.

1. If they don’t see it in you, you won’t see it in them. In other words, you as a leader need to model an appropriate level of vulnerability . . . and that means vulnerability that’s current. Sharing your struggle with alcohol in college 10 years ago may be a good start. But vulnerability that fosters a safe team is more likely to be about the shame you felt when you yelled at your son last week. The leader who is committed to presenting himself as having it all together will never create a safe team.

2. Sanctified curiosity, not condemnation. When someone does take the risk and shares vulnerably, it’s a critical moment. Most of us have experienced times like this when the response, or lack of response, communicated condemnation, judgment or rejection. One of the greatest scriptural truths I continue to learn is “there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

When others share vulnerably, rather than condemn, we should get curious. I call this a “sanctified curiosity,” as opposed to a voyeuristic or judgmental kind of curiosity. I’m thinking about questions like:

- ⊕ What was that like for you?
- ⊕ What do you think caused you to do that or think that way?
- ⊕ What did you hope to accomplish?
- ⊕ When did you first start having this type of response, acting this way, or having this feeling?

Here’s a challenging exercise for you. The next time someone shares vulnerably, ask at least five questions in a row without com-
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on being safe

by Cynthia Hagen
People Resources Team

We as disciple makers are all about helping others become more like Jesus. When Lindy Black,

Associate U.S. Director, met with the PRT's leadership team

two months ago,

we updated

her on the

work of PRT.

Our discussion

soon turned to the

importance of safety

in ministry. If we want

true life change, people need to bring their sin and struggles into the light, but they're unlikely to do this if they fear judgment. They need to feel confident that if they're honest, they won't be rejected or condemned.

During that meeting, we decided our next *UpFront* would focus on the importance of safety and what it takes to create that kind of environment. If you're like most Navigators, you want to see lives changed. As you read this *UpFront*, think about ways you and your ministry setting can become a safer place.

PRT EVENTS IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Sabbatical Orientation Workshop

February 3-6, 2015

July 27-30, 2015

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October 28-30, 2014

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5 essentials

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menting or teaching. Can you do it? See if this doesn't help you understand more deeply what's going on in the person's heart. I think you'll be amazed at what you learn and how deeply the other person feels understood.

3. **I'm not a cake mix.** The creation of a safe team has a chance to gain traction when we stop fixing each other. Yes, if I'm asking how to make a cake, tell me the ingredients and directions. But when we're sharing vulnerably, we are far more interested in being understood and accepted than being fixed. (It might be worthwhile to read that last sentence again.)

I remember a staff person I'd spent quite a bit of time with. I felt we had a meaningful relationship. One afternoon, I talked to him about my lifelong struggle with overeating and its impact on my view of myself, my freedom to love God, and my ability to minister to others. After I'd poured out my story for some time, he said, "Have you considered eating less and exercising more?" Needless to say, I didn't feel understood, and there was not an environment to share further.

4. **Grace doesn't equal blindness or weakness.** It troubles me to hear people sometimes talk about grace as weakness or overlooking sin. Jesus was full of grace and truth, and I daresay he wasn't weak, nor did he ignore sin. A safe team is gracious, but it will also deal with the elephant in the room.

Back in the 1990's, I served on a team that had a significant ongoing conflict. We asked the PRT to do a team building exercise with us, and Don Lanier came out to handle that. As part of what we'd asked him to do, he began leading us to an understanding of our Myers-Briggs Type Indicators and how we might better interact with each other. About ninety minutes into the training, a man on my team said, "I apologize for interrupting, Don. But quite honestly, until we deal with the current conflict and hurts and offenses on this team, it doesn't matter what our MBTI type is."

An awkward and uncomfortable moment? Definitely. But both Don and the people on my team appreciated this man's honesty. He opened the way for us to shift focus and tackle the tough, personal issues.

5. **Even if you're Dopey or Grumpy.** At times, we all see or hear things about a person that are less than worthy of the Gospel. And we've all felt the pull to share this information with others.

Gossip is sharing something negative about a person with someone who isn't part of the problem or the solution. In the PRT, if we violate confidentiality just once, it doesn't matter how many times we've been helpful or facilitated healing in the person's life. That violation can blow everything else off the table. I like to say, "Even if you're Dopey or Grumpy, if your concern is with Snow White, you don't talk to the other dwarfs!"

Being taken into another's trust is an amazing gift. It's also a foundation block for creating a safe team. When someone confides in me and later says something about it to my wife, I want her to be able to honestly say, "I have no idea what you're talking about." This encourages everyone involved.

How would you rate yourself and your team on these five essentials? Is there work to do, or can you affirm your team for being a safe place?

By the way, my team lost the Ol' Geezer game 3-1 . . . but I didn't get hurt!



a safe environment

by Cynthia Hagen

During a party with NavMissions this summer, a campus director's name came up in conversation. I hadn't met this man, but I commented that he must be a good leader because his staff team is healthy. By "healthy" I don't mean problem free, but rather aware of their issues, seeking help, not living in hiddenness. Leaders who can create a safe environment are essential to building healthy, vibrant, and growing teams.

When I arrived at my first ministry assignment, I was excited to help make disciples. One problem, though—I was afraid of my director, Jim. I'd been to his home for family dinners and had watched movies on Friday night with him and his wife. Still, I would sit in staff meeting and not say a word.

One Friday afternoon, Jim asked me to go to campus and play some basketball with him. Some might think this inappropriate, but Jim had me figured out. He was fairly sure getting me out on a court or ball field would help me relax and feel safe around him. He was right. I soon began to contribute and participate in staff meetings.

Jim created a safe environment for everyone. He understood and applied Proverbs 27:23: "Know the state of your flocks, and put your heart into caring for your herds" (NLT).

Under his leadership, the ministry flourished. Many students came to Christ, staff and students grew, laborers were sent. As the leader, Jim intentionally thought about both the individual and the team as a whole. He knew his success in ministry depended on creating a safe environment where growth and community could thrive.

I learned a great deal from his leadership. That early experience is probably the reason I'm still around, and still passionate about helping people.



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