



# CREATE MATTERING™

Skill-Building Workshop

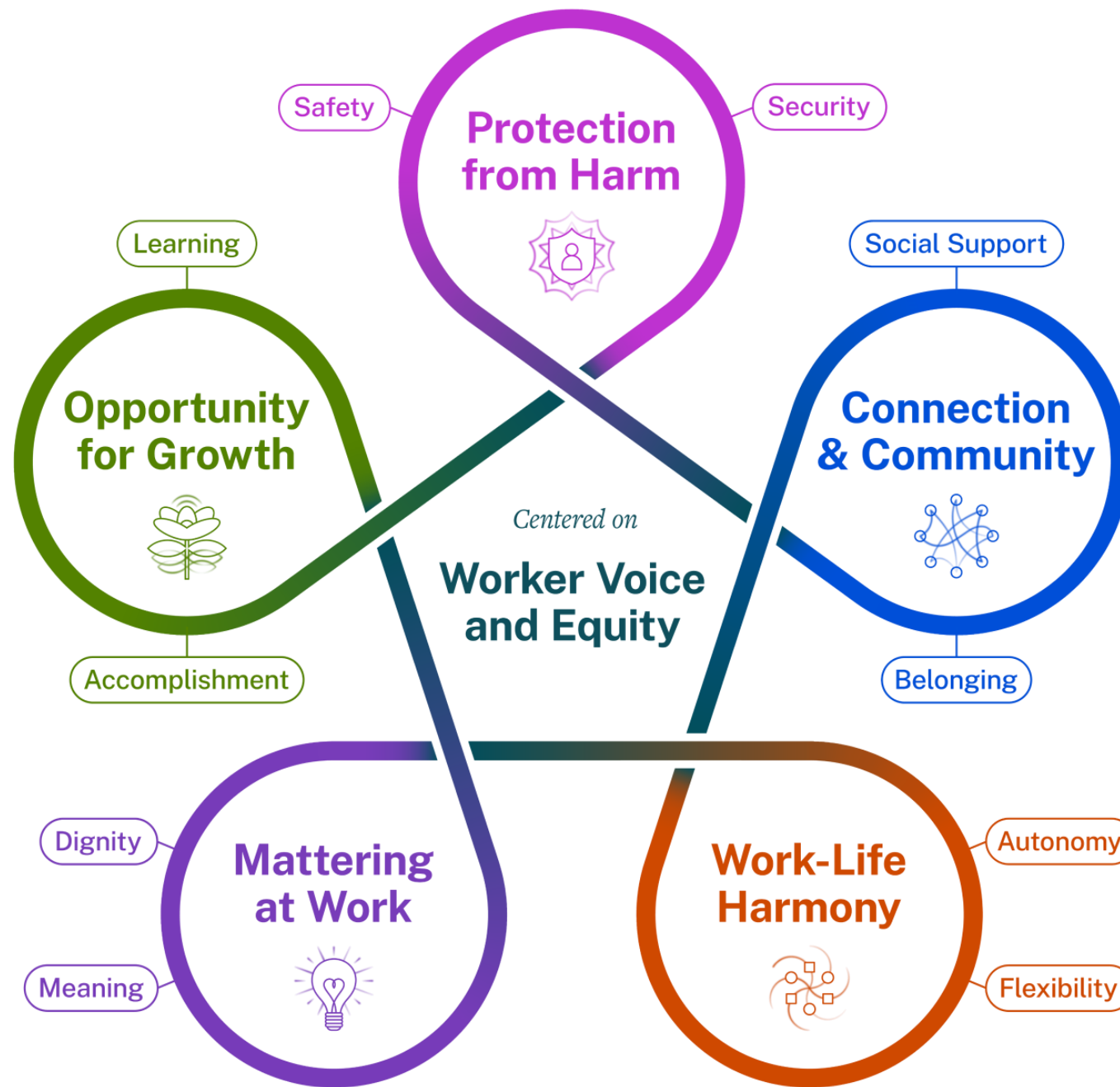
Zach Mercurio, Ph.D.

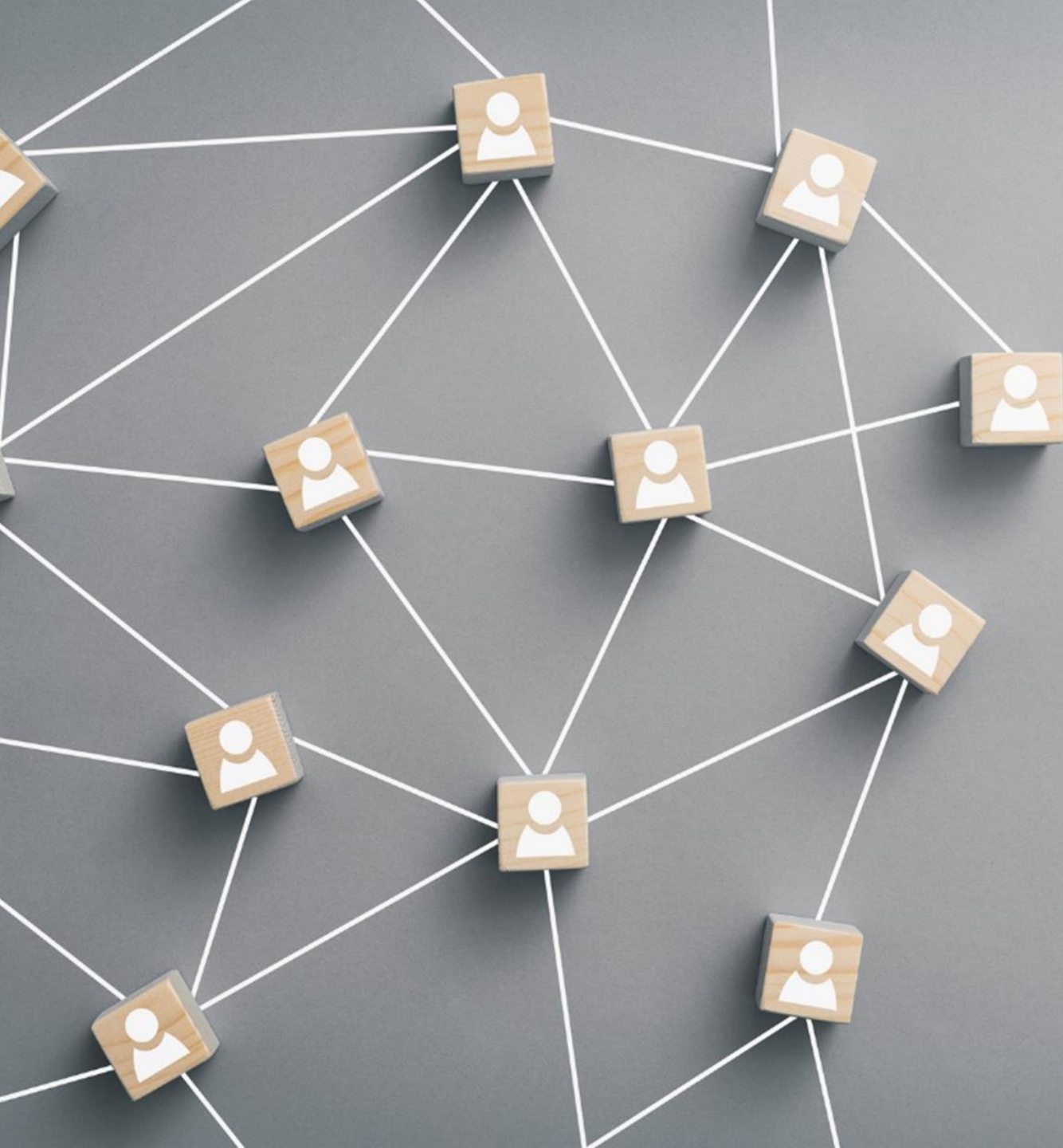


University of Wisconsin  
Whitewater

# Today

1. Review the major practices to Create Mattering
2. Try and plan actions to Notice, Affirm, and show people how they're Needed
3. Self-assess your mattering skill set and create a plan of action
4. Do a “mattering audit” to plan where to focus first





## Mattering

The belief that we're a significant part of the world around us that comes from *feeling valued* and *adding value*.



To **matter** is a:

1. Survival instinct
2. Basic need
3. Universal longing

# I MATTER



**I'm valued.**

+

**I add value.**

You know my full name.

You ask about my life.

You know my struggles.

You remember me.

You miss me.

You check in on me.

You show me how I make a  
difference.

You affirm my unique gifts.

You ask for my opinion.

You give me responsibility.

You show me I'm relied on.

Common sense is usually not  
**common practice.**

← Importance relative to compensation →

**Toxic corporate culture**



- Undervalued
- Disrespected
- Non-inclusive

**Job insecurity and reorganization**



**High levels of innovation**



**Failure to recognize employee performance**



- No recognition
- Unnoticed performance

**Poor response to COVID-19**





# FEELINGS OF INVISIBILITY

*lead to*



## ACTS OF WITHDRAWAL

*or*

## ACTS OF DESPERATION

"Quiet quitting"

Silence

Withholding

Isolating

Leaving

Disagreeableness

"Gossip"

"Complaining"

Blaming

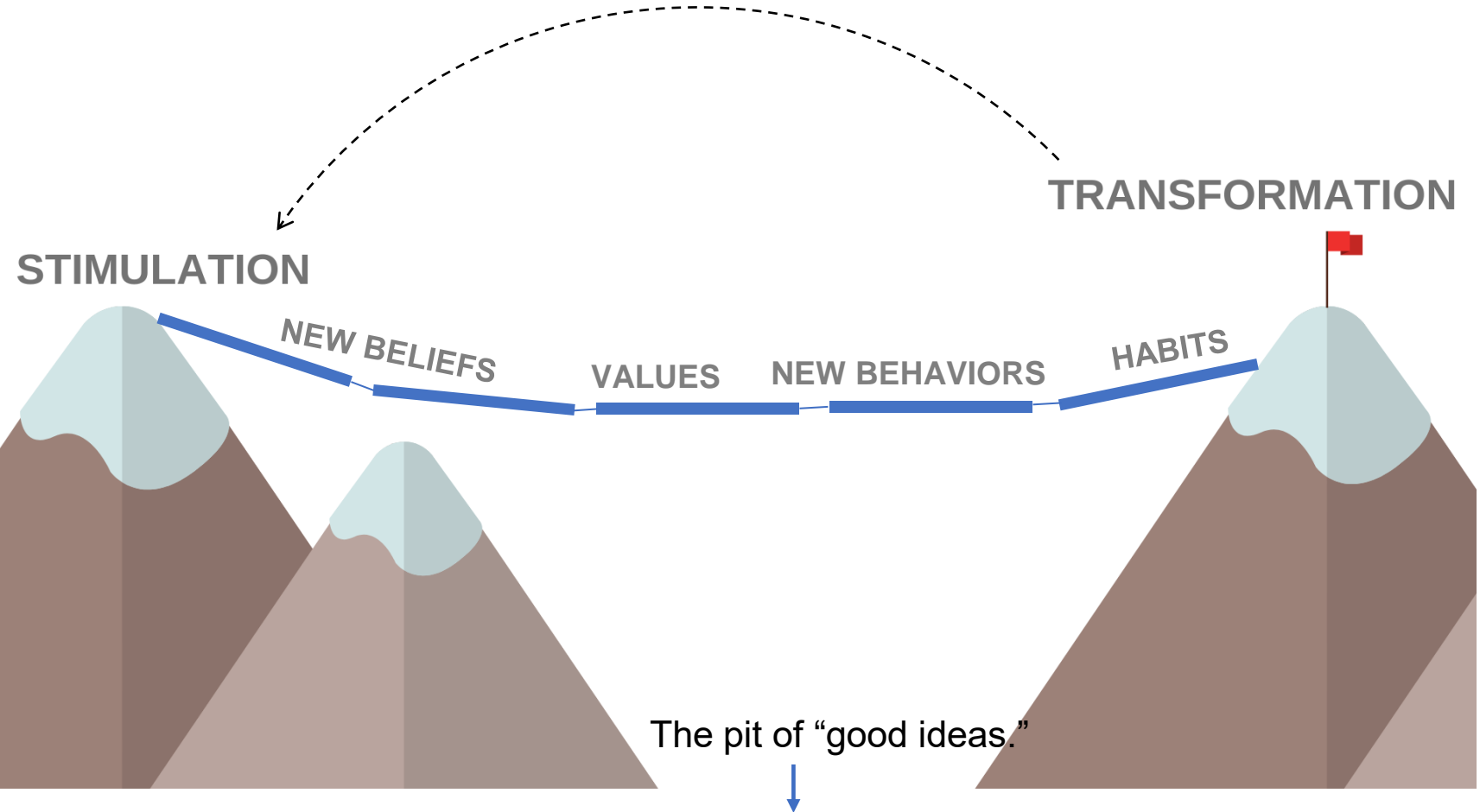
Protesting

People won't care until they feel  
**cared for.**

It's hard for anything to matter to  
someone who doesn't believe that  
**they matter.**

How can we make creating  
mattering a **common practice**?

# STIMULATION VS. TRANSFORMATION



## **MOTIVATION**

Do people want to do it?

## **ABILITY**

Do people know how & when to do it?

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Does the environment make it easy for people to do it?

**Skill**

(how to do something)

+

**Practice**

(doing it → learning → refining → doing it again)

# PRACTICE-SPOTTING (p. 3)

Think about the moment in your work at UWW when you *most* believed you mattered to someone else. Be specific.

What did they do? What did they say?



**NOTICED**

---

People feel *seen*  
and *heard*.

**AFFIRMED**

---

People see how  
their unique  
strengths make a  
unique difference.

**NEEDED**

---

People feel relied  
on, indispensable,  
and essential.





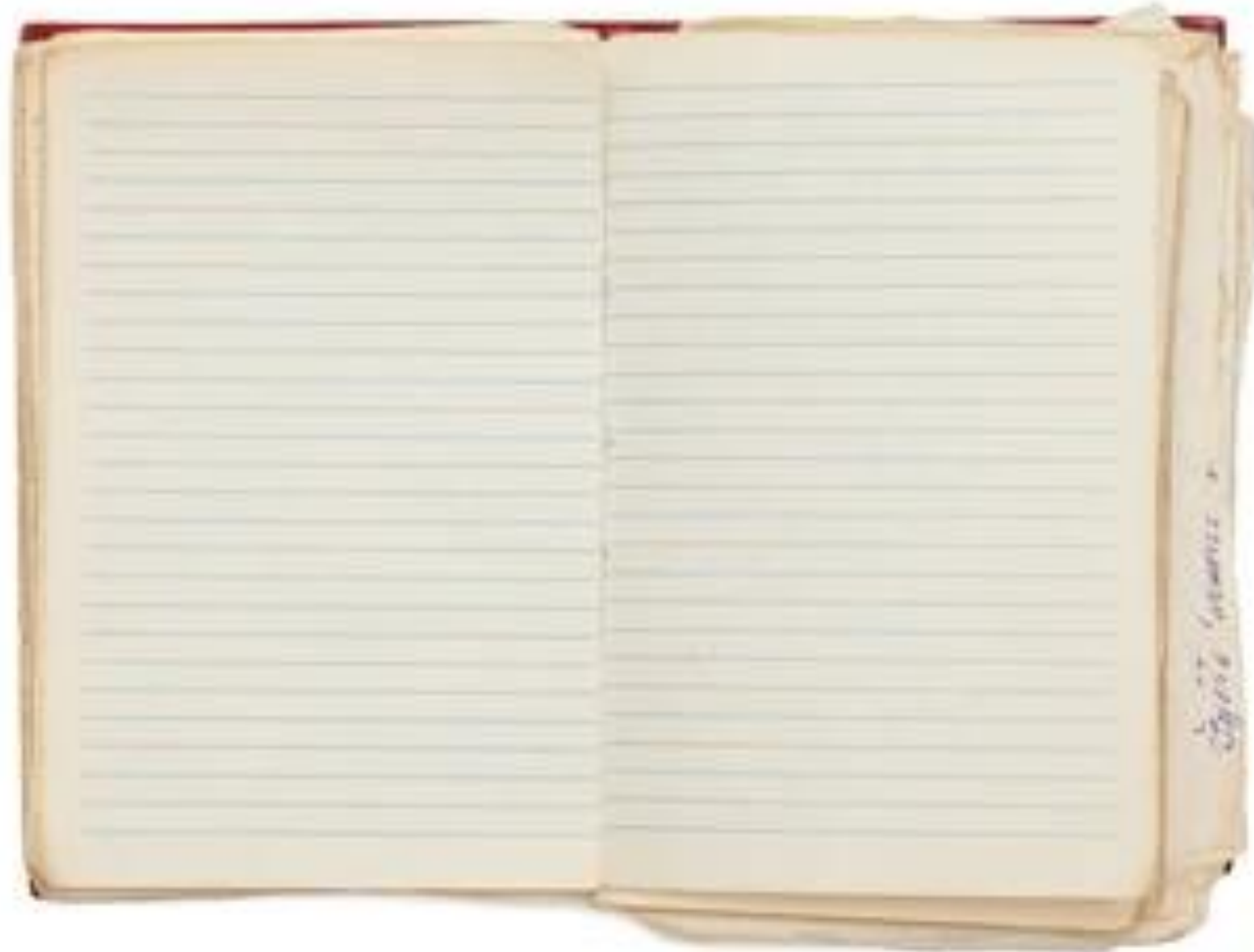
## **NOTICED**

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**Make eye contact,  
show interest,  
remember personal  
details, check in**

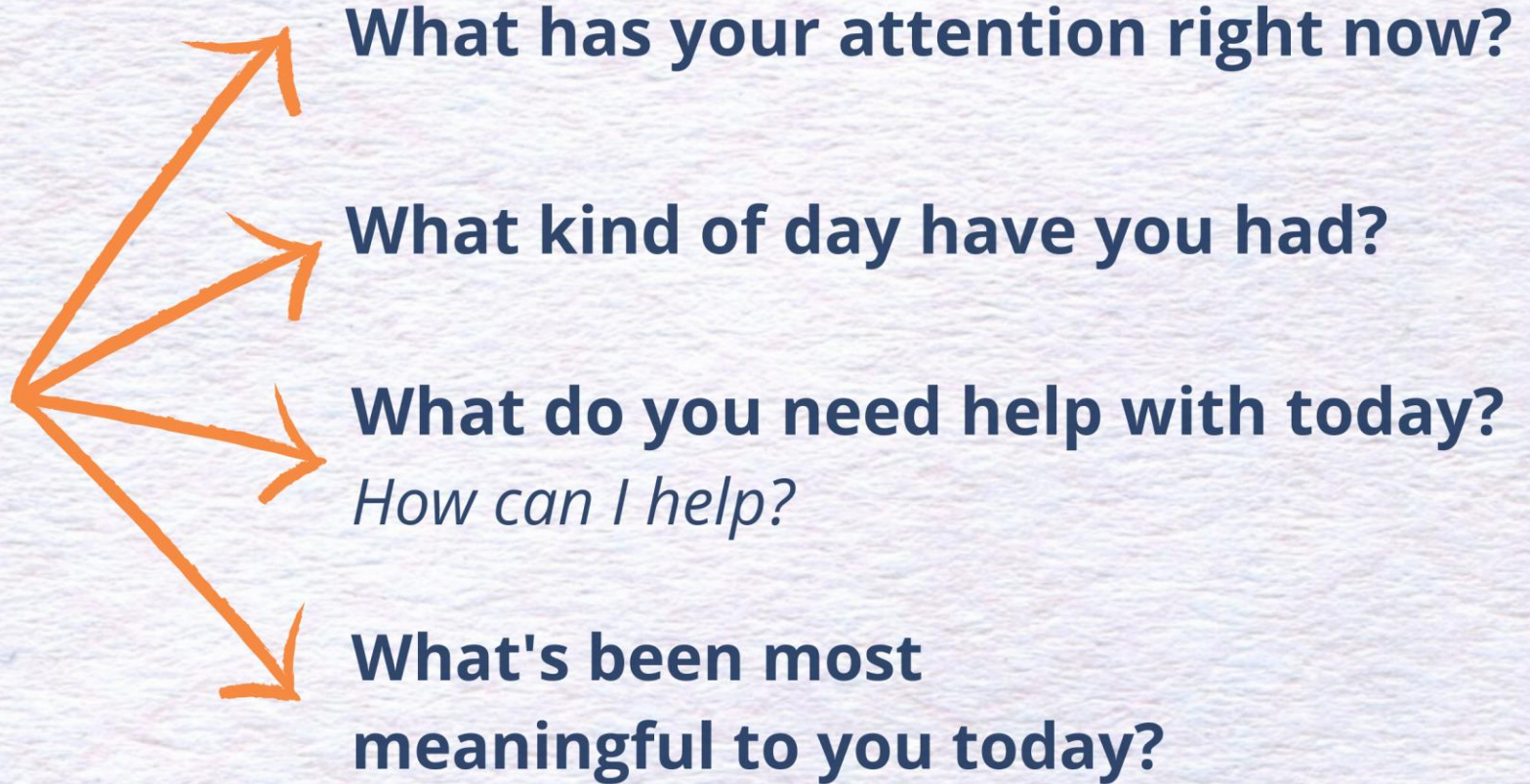
1. Make eye contact, create space
2. Ask about, remember, and check in on people's details
3. Practice **compassion**: Notice others' moods, inquire, offer to do something to help
4. Ensure people feel heard
5. Appreciate small, everyday acts

# Practice: Make Noticing a Process



# Ask Better Questions

~~"How are you?"~~



# Practice: Authentic Check-Ins



**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.



REMINDER

Schedule your good  
intentions.

---

Okay, got it!

# ACT (p. 4)

Who do you need to notice more?

List 3 people.

What is one action you will take to help each of them feel more seen or heard?



## **AFFIRMED**

---

**Point out people's  
unique gifts, show  
them how they make  
a unique difference**

Real affirmation is showing  
**how** someone's unique  
strengths make a unique  
difference.



## **AFFIRMED**

---

**Point out people's unique gifts, show them how they make a unique difference**

1. Collect and tell stories of people's impact
2. Know and name others' unique strengths
3. Show others' how their strengths **make a difference**
4. Show people how what they do impacts others and what their work **makes possible**





## SITUATION

---

When and where did it happen?



## BEHAVIOR

---

What behaviors did the person do? What unique strengths did you see?



## IMPACT

---

What was the impact on you or others?

# Give Purposeful Affirmation

Don't just tell people "good job," show them the **difference** they make and how they make it.

# ACT (p. 5)

1. Think of someone you need to thank or affirm.
2. Write them a purposeful affirmation. Share it with your partner and discuss how you can deliver the SBI model in your own authentic style.
3. How, when, and where will you tell more stories of people's "upstream impact"?

# PURPOSEFUL DELEGATION

## Significance

Show how the task impacts other people.



## Necessity

Describe what the task will make possible.



## Strengths

Remind people which strengths they can use to do the task.

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# ACT

1. Think of a task you might need to “reframe” through purposeful delegation to help people see their significance.
2. How can you better describe the significance and necessity of the task? What strengths can you invite your team to use to do the task?



**NEEDED**

---

Show people how  
they're relied on,  
irreplaceable, and  
indispensable

Treat everyone  
like they're  
**essential.**

# Practice: Laddering



Source: Carton (2017). "I'm Not Mopping the Floors, I'm Putting a Man on the Moon": How NASA Leaders Enhanced the Meaningfulness of Work by Changing the Meaning of Work."



## **NEEDED**

---

**Show people how they're relied on, irreplaceable, and indispensable**

1. Show people how they are indispensable to your team and a bigger purpose
2. Say, **“if it wasn't for you...”**
3. Tell people how you rely on them, notice when they're gone

# ACT (p. 6)

Who needs to be shown how you rely on them?

Write them an **“if it wasn’t for you...”** statement.



# WHAT IT MEANS TO **MATTER**



**NOTICED**

People feel *seen*  
and *heard*.

**AFFIRMED**

People see how  
their unique  
strengths make a  
unique difference.

**NEEDED**

People feel relied  
on, indispensable,  
and essential.



# CREATE MATTERING SELF-ASSESSMENT

1 – Never    2 – Rarely    3 – Sometimes    4 – Frequently    5 – Always

Considering your current leadership approach, score the following statements using the above scale (1-5). Be honest.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

1. When it comes to creating mattering on your team, what do you need to **stop** doing and what do you need to **start** doing?
2. Where did you score highest? What are two, specific core behaviors you will continue doing?
3. Where did you score lower? What are two, specific core behaviors you will start doing? How can the people in your group help you commit to these core behaviors?

# MATTERING AUDIT (p. 8)

NAME/GROUP	NOTICED	AFFIRMED	NEEDED
	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:
	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:
	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:	Current practices:  Committed practices:

# GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What gaps did this team mattering audit reveal for you? What opportunities did this mattering audit reveal to you? What will you do as a result?
2. What do you need to let go of to create more mattering for people you identified as needing it?

Assume the people around you  
feel unseen, undervalued, and  
lonely, and **act accordingly**.



**THANK  
YOU.**

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