A Culture of Core Values as a Path to Safety, Health, and Well-being

Robin M. Nicholas
Health and Safety Communications

234 Fiesta Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501 / USA
Tel: 505-986-8780
Mobile: 1-505-660-0787
E-Mail: robin.m.nicholas@gmail.com
All of us are human beings.
All of us have human strengths

All of us have human weaknesses
Do we punish each other for the human weaknesses that we all share?

— OR —

Do we support and protect each other from our weaknesses?
One shared weakness:
We all make mistakes.

Why?
Why the lack of focus?
CORTEX
Conscious
Rational
Long-term
Choice

AMYGDALA
“Alarm Bell”
Unconscious
Instinctive
Instantaneous
Automatic

PHYSICAL
SAFETY
Training
Procedures
Regulations

HUMAN SAFETY
PHYSICAL
EMOTIONAL
PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY
AMYGDALA

“I must survive!”

Fight-or-flight

This is our human response.
This is our alarm bell

…and it will win!
Safety

Programs  Directives
Practices  Regulations
Physical Safety

Programs  Directives

Practices  Regulations
Physical Safety

Programs  Directives
Practices  Regulations
Emotional Safety

Physical Safety

Psychological Safety
Whole person and their wellbeing
Is a workplace that is emotionally safe — and — psychologically safe ... a safer workplace?
How do we recognize an emotionally and psychologically safe workplace?
Culture and Values

Culture
  - “… the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and…it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs.”

Knowledge
  - “As human beings, we cannot act without employing background knowledge — that knowledge that informs our decisions. Some call it Culture.”

Values
  - Key beliefs that people consider most important and valuable
“In some days we will be announcing a new treaty – protection, dignity – to protect all the workers in Chile, not only in mining, but also in transportation, agriculture, fishing, [and] industry.”

—Sebastián Piñera, President of Chile
San Jose Mine, Chile - October 13, 2010
(Translated by CNN)
"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

— Martin Luther King

Local 1199 Salute to Freedom, March 1968
Address to sanitation workers, Memphis, Tennessee
International Labour Organization
(Cited within the Seoul Declaration)

Decent Work
Productive work for men and women in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity
Dignity
A quality of safety for the entire person
Less — intellectual concept
More — personal and individual experience

Discussed in terms of other core values
Trust / Respect / Self-respect
Contributing / Being heard
Fulfilling responsibilities

We often become aware of dignity when it is absent.
The opposite of dignity is humiliation.
Humiliation is an injury.
Is a workplace without humiliation

...a safer workplace?
Is a workplace with dignity

...a safer workplace?
When we talk about multitasking…

ONE THING = ONE ACTIVITY

…but in terms of the amygdala

ONE THING = ONE THING
SURVIVAL = SURVIVAL

— physical / emotional / psychological —
In front of you

Down the hill

Across the river
Boss Yelling NOW

Deadline Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ VERY SOON

Potential Accident POSSIBLE FUTURE
Boss Yelling NOW

Deadline Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ VERY SOON

Potential Accident POSSIBLE FUTURE
Boss Yelling NOW

Deadline Cut ½ VERY SOON

Potential Accident POSSIBLE FUTURE
Emotional Safety

Psychological Safety

Physical Safety
The Solution

Provide safety for the entire person — physical / emotional / psychological —

— dignity at work —
Wellbeing & Dignity

Good Work (Safety)
Culture / Core Values

Good Work (Safety)
Timing is Everything

*Our traditional understanding...*

Greater success

↓  ↓  ↓

Greater wellbeing

—Lyubominsky / Achor
Timing is Everything

Our new understanding...

Greater wellbeing
Greater success
Greater creativity
Better efficiency
Less burnout — less turnover
Greater productivity

—Lyubominsky / Achor
Dignity and the Two Brains

"THEM" BRAIN
Divides people
Us vs. them
Protection from enemies
Short-term survival

"US" BRAIN
Unites people
Inclusive
Taking care of each other
Long-term survival
OUTWITTED
Edward Markham

He drew a circle that shut me out…
He drew a circle that shut me out…

…We drew a circle that took him in.
Perhaps dignity and safety are simply a matter of where we draw our circle... how we define “us”.
“The medium is the message.”
—Marshall McLuhan

At work...we are the message.

How we communicate with each other and treat each other is the message.
Head — Heart
Compassion
Empathy
Understanding Guidance
Dignity is a safe work practice.
Best wishes to you, your families, and your friends.
To find this and other videos...

Human Beings 1&2
The Right Thing to Do

http://www.lanl.gov/safety/videos/humanbeings

http://www.lanl.gov/safety/videos/safetycinema

Los Alamos National Laboratory

http://www.aiha.org/about-ih

American Industrial Hygiene Association