

# Infusing Psychological Safety into Your Creative Process.

It's a Wednesday morning and you walk into an art museum. The paintings on the walls are quiet and serene—betraying the effort that went into them. But these works of art didn't appear out of thin air. Sometimes taxing, and often flowing, there was a creative process behind them.

The creative process begins and ends with this nuclear truth: There's no such thing as perfection. When you expect perfection, you encourage a process that isn't psychologically safe. Artistic merit isn't based on flawlessness anyway. When you give yourself permission to be creative (including embracing all parts of the process), you infuse psychological safety into creativity, and the results are gorgeous.

**Next time you need a creative solution, try one of these tips and see how psychological safety can change your creativity game:**

**Focus on production before reduction.** Your first step in the creative process should be a non-judgmental one. Generate and ideate without editing, critiquing, limiting, or censoring. Let it all flow out. You'll have time to sort through it later.

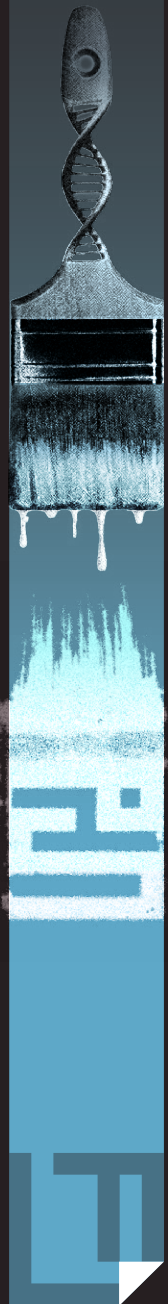
**Avoid an over-planned process.** Much like a vacation without an itinerary, incremental discovery will bring you to places that you could never have planned for. Let yourself wander and be open to new avenues of thinking.

**Persevere into the unknown.** There may be a point in your creative process when you ask yourself: "How did I get here?" or maybe even "Where is this going?" It will take stamina and resilience to revise and edit when the outcome still seems fuzzy. Keep trying.

**Distill for clarity.** The more you squeeze and wring out your creation, the clearer and more beautiful it becomes. Don't settle for your first iteration, or even your tenth. Ask yourself: what could make this a little better? You'll know when you get there.

**Find tension and harness it.** The ability to connect things from different fields can uncover tensions that make art interesting. Enhancing your powers of observation will help you see patterns, connections, and paradoxes, note the ironic, and find the pulse on what's relevant and timely.

The creative process isn't linear and clean. It's messy and iterative. Much like psychological safety is a culture of rewarded vulnerability, art embraces vulnerability. What you create is valuable because it's true, good, and beautiful, not because it's perfect.



Note #28