

Leadership Training

June 2026



Clarity Is Kind

Gossip Severs Connection

Repair Builds Culture

*Patients Don't Remember Everything,
But They Remember How They Felt*



Today...
**Choose to Be
Extraordinary!**

Clarity Is Kind

Let's go over some commonplace misconceptions I see across many teams:

- Avoidance is not kindness.
- Silence is not peace.
- Vague communication is not protection.

In strong teams, clarity is an act of care. It may feel uncomfortable to address something directly and it may feel easier to let it go. But when expectations are unclear, frustration grows quietly, and unspoken expectations create hidden tension. But clarity removes guesswork. It sounds like this:

- "I need this completed by 3:00."
- "That comment felt sharp, can we reset?"
- "I may have misunderstood, can you walk me through your thinking?"

Clear communication does not attack anyone's character, it simply addresses behavior, focusing on what happened and what needs to change, without exaggeration or accusation.

When clarity is paired with respect, trust increases. When clarity is avoided, stories are created. And stories running wild in our heads are rarely generous.

A Connected Team Experience depends on shared understanding, so if something is important, say it. If something needs correction, address it. If something was handled well, name it.

Clarity protects connection because it prevents resentment from building. It prevents small misunderstandings from becoming larger fractures and it communicates that the relationship matters enough to be honest.

Kindness without clarity feels pleasant in the moment but is costly over time. Clarity without kindness feels harsh and unsafe. But clarity with kindness feels mature. It feels steady. It feels trustworthy.

Practical Application:

If there is one conversation you have been postponing, schedule it this week. Prepare your thoughts. Keep it direct. Keep it respectful.

Reflection Question:

Where might greater clarity strengthen connection rather than threaten it?

Gossip Severs Connection

Few things weaken a team faster than conversations that happen in the wrong place. Yes, I'm talking directly about gossip. It often begins subtly:

- A shared frustration.
- A sarcastic comment.
- A private complaint that feels justified.

It may feel harmless in the moment, but it is not. Gossip fractures trust in three directions:

- It damages the person being discussed.
- It weakens the listener's confidence.
- It erodes the integrity of the speaker.

In a Connected Team Experience, concerns are not ignored, they are directed properly. If there is a problem, it belongs in the right conversation, with the right person, at the right time. Gossip feels like connection because it creates temporary agreement, but it builds unity around negativity. Healthy teams build unity around shared responsibility. That shift requires the courage to redirect conversations:

- "Have you talked to them about that?"
- "Let's bring this to the right place."
- "I'd rather not discuss this without them present."

These responses may feel uncomfortable at first, but they protect culture. Trust grows when people know they are safe even when they are not in the room. When gossip becomes normal, psychological safety disappears. People begin guarding themselves, withholding ideas, and protecting themselves rather than contributing. Team connection weakens.

But when gossip is redirected consistently, teams grow stronger, transparency increases, issues surface and are solved sooner, unity deepens.

A Connected Team Experience requires discipline in speech. Not perfection. Discipline.

Practical Application:

If a conversation begins drifting toward gossip this week, redirect it respectfully. Choose integrity over agreement.

Reflection Question:

Would my teammates feel safe knowing how I speak when they are absent?

Repair Builds Culture

Even healthy teams misstep. Even mature leaders say things imperfectly. Even strong cultures experience strain.

But connection is not defined by the absence of mistakes; it is defined by the willingness to repair them. Repair sounds like:

- “I didn’t handle that well.”
- “I can see how that landed wrong.”
- “That wasn’t my intention, but I understand the impact.”

Repair does not defend first; it listens. Repair does not justify immediately; it acknowledges.

When repair becomes normal, tension does not linger, resentment does not compound, and people feel valued because relationship is prioritized over pride. In a Connected Team Experience, repair is not rare, it is practiced often. And when leaders model it, teams follow.

Avoidance delays healing and defensiveness deepens division. Repair restores safety, clarity, and momentum.

Visualize and feel the difference that shift could have amongst your team! Then, lead by exercising humility as one of your greatest strengths.

Practical Application:

If there is a minor strain you’ve sensed but not addressed, take the first step. Keep it simple. Own your part.

Reflection Question:

When connection is strained, do I protect my pride...or...the relationship?

Patients Don't Remember Everything, But They Remember How They Felt

Patients rarely remember every clinical detail. They don't recall every term used. They don't remember every step explained. They won't be able to repeat your exact wording.

However, they will always remember how they felt:

- Did they feel rushed, or considered?
- Did they feel processed, or cared for?
- Did they feel pressured, or guided?
- Did they feel like a procedure, or a person?

A Connected Patient Experience begins long before treatment starts. It begins in the tone of the greeting, the steadiness of the assistant, the attentiveness of the hygienist, the clarity of the doctor.

You know patients walk into your practice carrying more than dental needs. They bring anxiety, past experiences, financial concerns, embarrassment, questions they may not voice. Of course, clinical excellence matters deeply, but it is emotional steadiness that builds up trust.

If a team is internally rushed, patients feel it. And if a team is connected and calm, patients feel that too. That is why internal culture and external experience are inseparable. Connection within the team creates calm within the practice...calm creates trust...trust creates acceptance...and acceptance allows patients to move forward with confidence instead of hesitation.

The goal is not to perform warmth; it is to practice presence. Presence looks like this:

- Sitting down instead of standing over someone.
- Explaining without rushing.
- Asking what concerns them most before prescribing solutions.
- Pausing to ensure understanding.

Because when patients feel understood, resistance decreases...and when resistance decreases, conversations become collaborative.

Read this carefully: I'm not suggesting you slow everything down—I'm advocating you slow down the most impactful moments. And watch for them with a heightened awareness, because the big moments are often disguised as little ones.

Practical Application:

In one patient interaction this week, intentionally slow the first two minutes. Make eye contact. Ask a thoughtful question. Listen fully before transitioning.

Reflection Question:

If patients described how they feel in our practice, what words would they use most often?