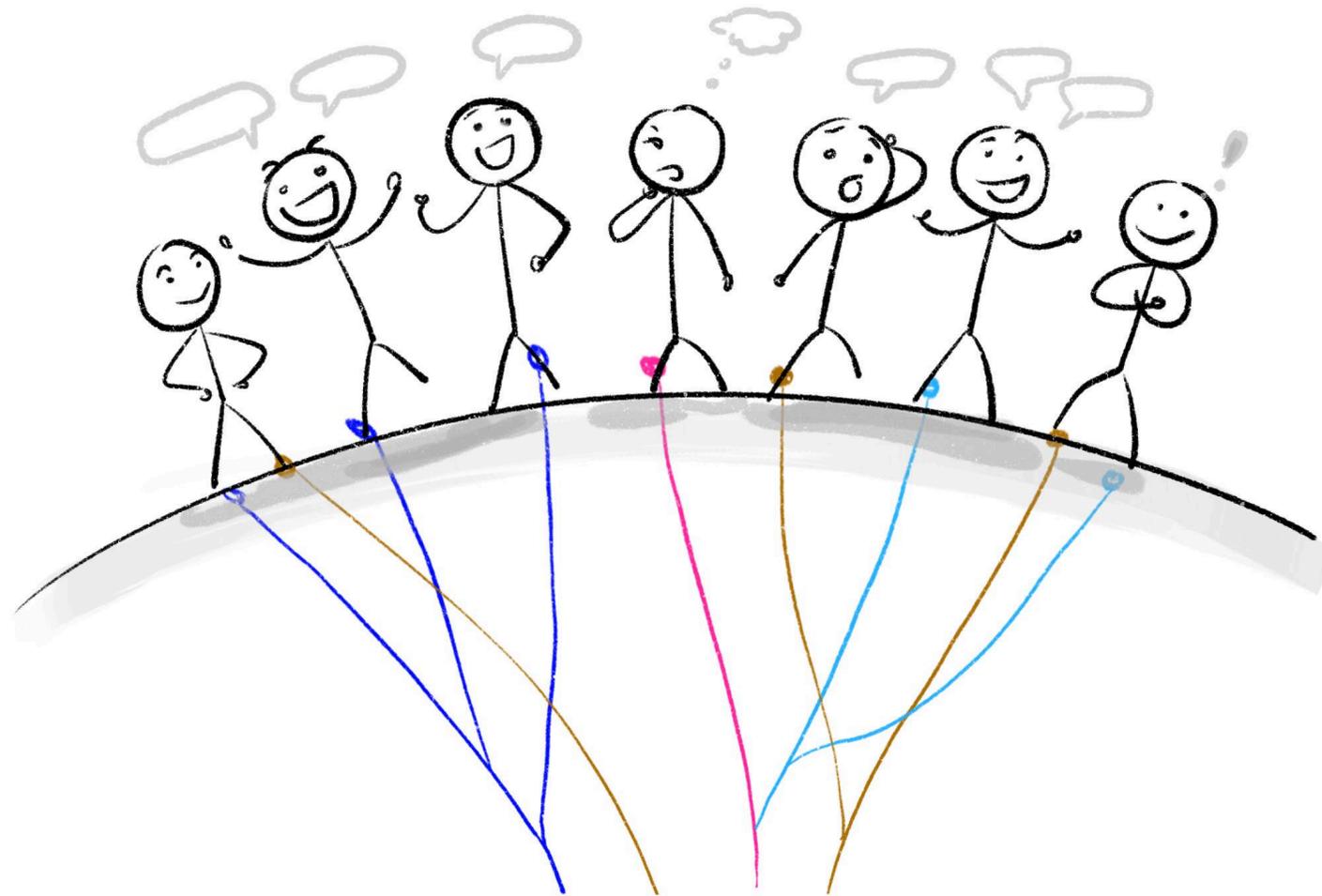


A FIELD GUIDE TO EMBODY BRAVE SPACE

#Engaging in Constructive Conflict and Navigate Tension

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July 2025, TU Delft



*A handbook from experience of facilitation design
for value-centered discussion*

TABLE OF CONTENT

common challenge in value-centered discussion	01	embody brave space in practice practical example	09
foster open communication psychosocial spaces	02	design a workshop showcase	13
a gradual transition to brave space	03	explanation of design context micro-experiment	14
tool safe-brave-panic liminality framework	06	during a workshop facilitation overview	15
how to use safe-brave-panic liminality framework	07	facilitator guide ice-breaker & prepare the ground	16
looking for logic behind? concept map	08	facilitator guide deep dive into values	17
		facilitator guide clash of perspectives	18
		facilitator guide flipping the tension	19
		recommendation and limitation suggestion on context adaptation	20
		appendix example of using concept map	22

COMMON CHALLENGES IN VALUE-CENTERED DISCUSSION

When diverse stakeholders come together to define project goals and collaborate, challenges frequently arise—

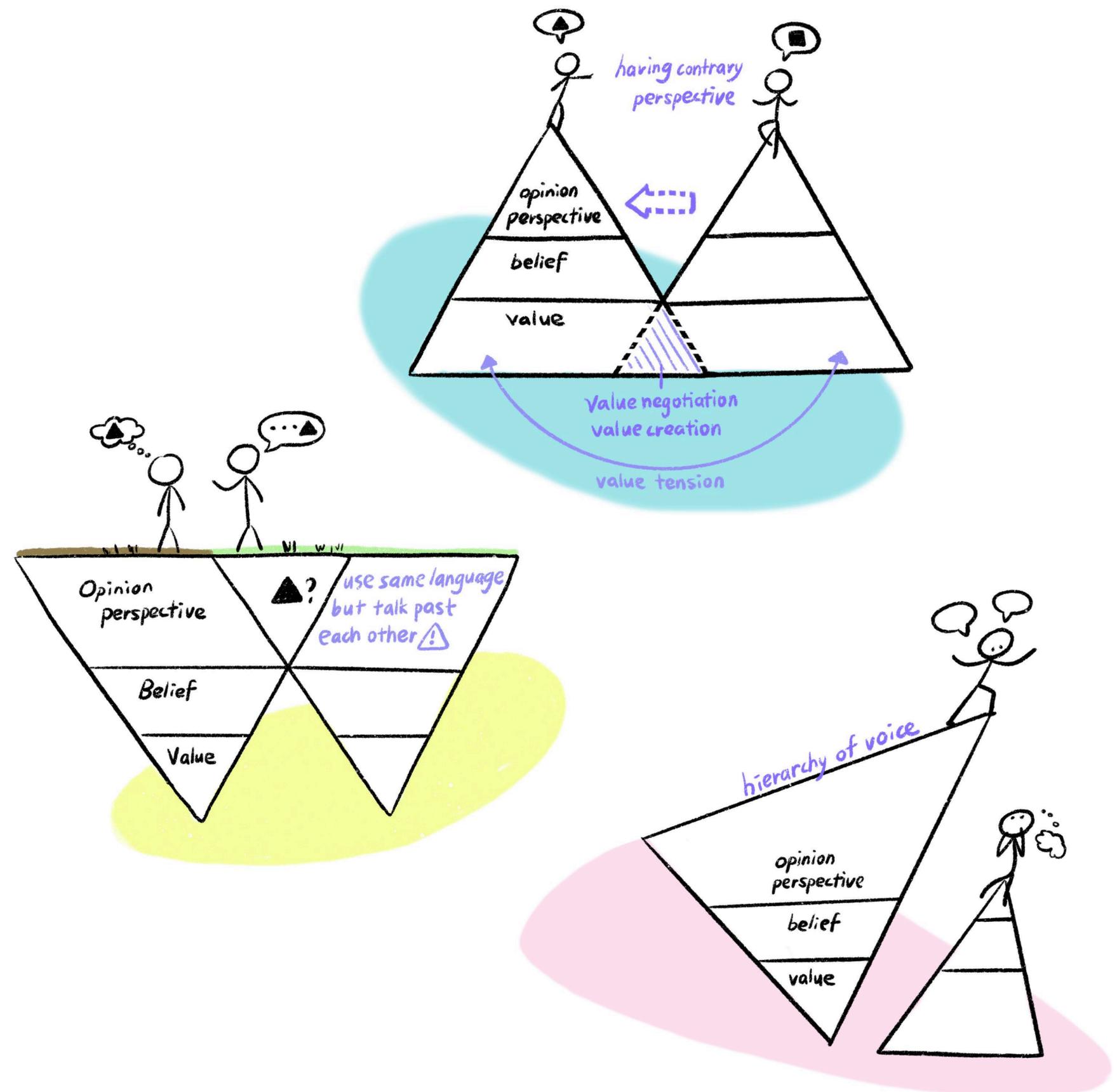
(1) Agreement stays at high level, people “talk past each other,” having divergent interpretations of what “value” means resulting in a lack of shared understanding.

(2) Shaped by cultural, institutional, and ideological backgrounds, people may avoid expressing opposing views, stay within limiting beliefs, or hold back to avoid conflict and loss.

(3) Some participants naturally speak more, while others stay quiet. Power dynamics, social roles, or missing stakeholders outside the room can make the conversation feel one-sided, and important perspectives are left out.

Why do you need to invite people to step into Brave Space?

The values behind people’s goals and decisions are often hidden—like the base of an iceberg. They’re emotional, identity-related, and rarely stated out loud. If value stays implicit, then we miss the chance to foster shared understanding and alignment.



FOSTER OPEN COMMUNICATION

PSYCHOSOCIAL SPACE

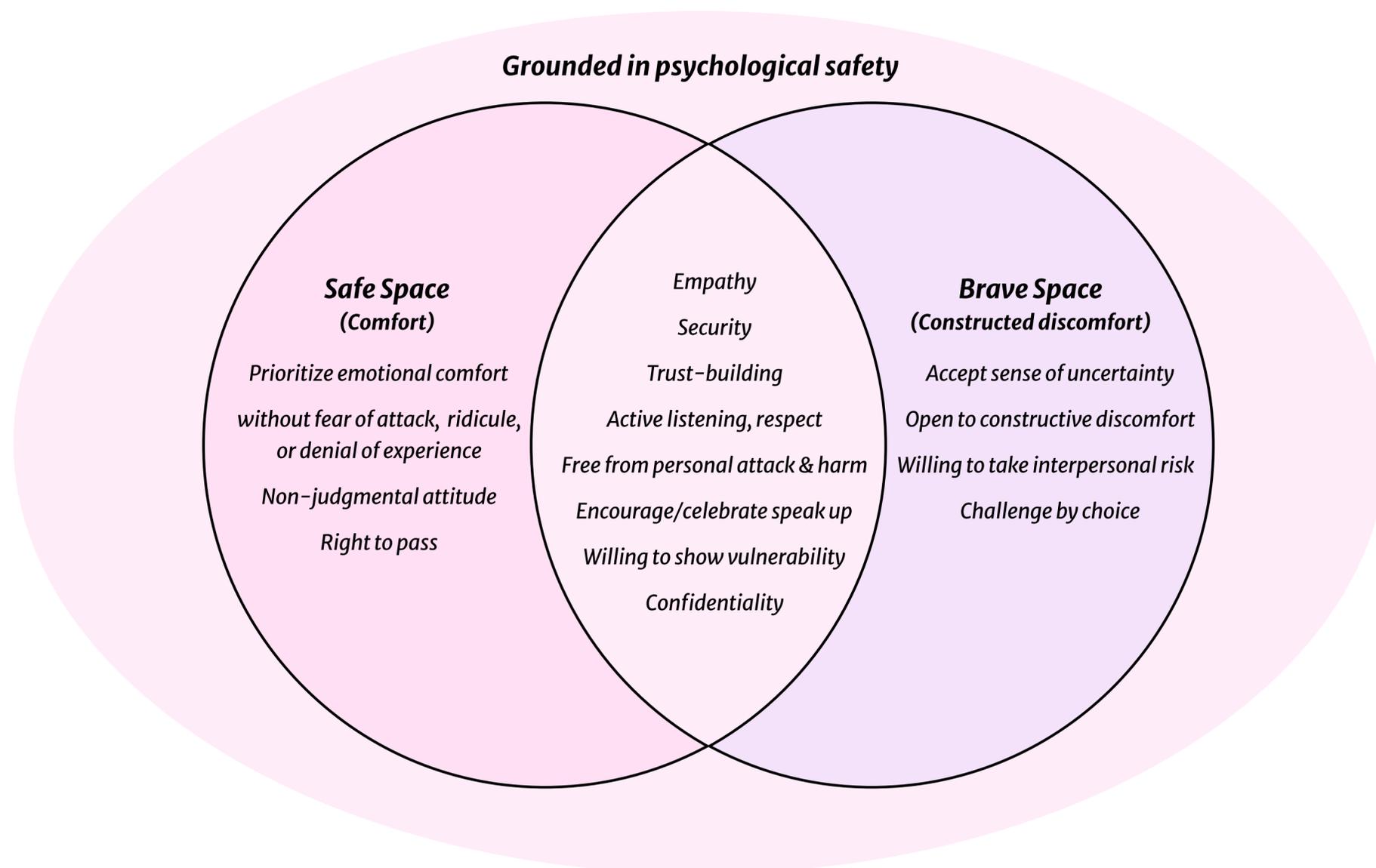
Brave Space and Safe Space are not just about the physical environment, but psychosocial spaces where an individual's emotions and group dynamics can be held. With thoughtful facilitation, both spaces help participants feel secure enough to speak up. However, they serve different purposes:

safe space

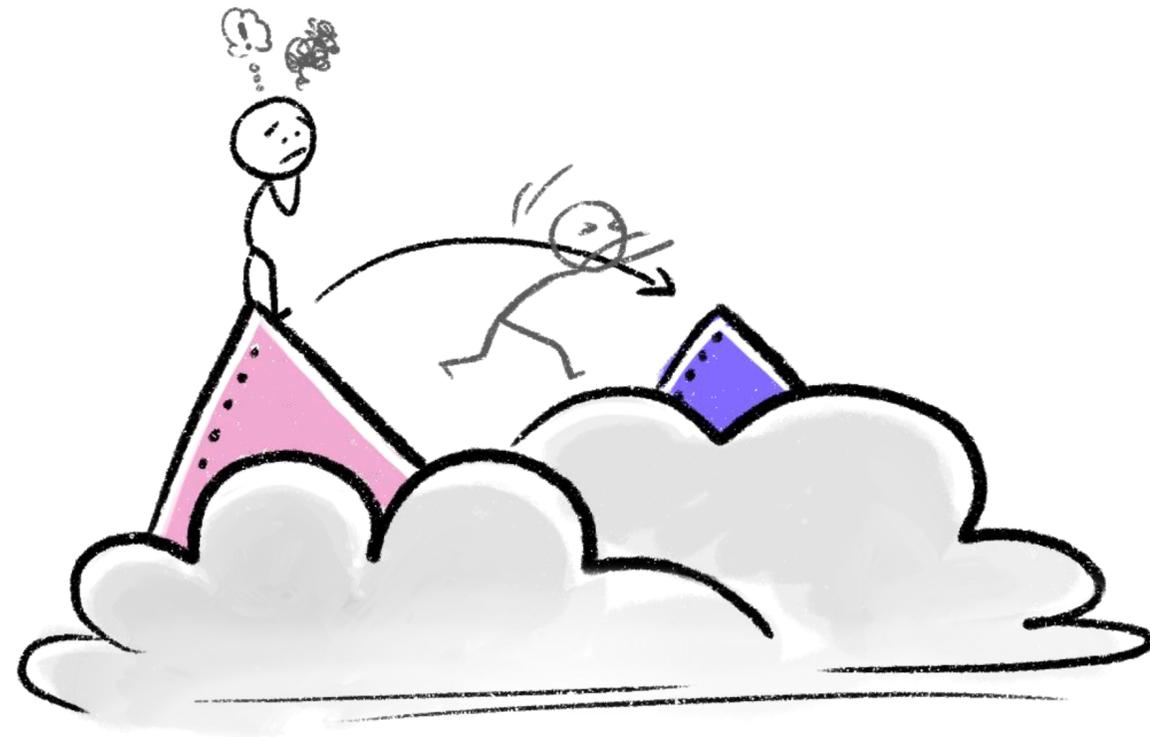
Environments where individuals feel **emotionally secure, accepted, and unthreatened**. This space allows people to **express themselves without fear of judgment, rejection, or harm**. It is essential for **building trust and encouraging initial engagement**. However, if overemphasized, it can become excessive comfort — participants may remain polite but disengaged from deeper tensions, avoiding the emotional risks necessary for growth or value confrontation.

brave space

Learning environments that encourage individuals to **engage with controversial issues directly, emphasizing honesty, sensitivity, and respect**. It encourages **respectful disagreement and equal participation, without personal attacks**. Participants are invited to stretch beyond their comfort zones, like **taking risks and engaging with challenges, vulnerability, or uncertainty**.



A GRADUAL TRANSITION TO **BRAVE SPACE**



*What you originally imagine about
stepping into Brave Space*



*In reality, this is your steps to invite
participants into Brave Space*

Participants experienced bravery as a “gradual process,” starting with initial uncertainty and hesitation, giving way to increased comfort as discussions progressed and trust grew within the group.

– Brave Space is not static but evolving with how individual engage with it –

As designers, we often ask ourselves: Was the journey enjoyable? Did we create something positive for the user? These questions are valid and often necessary. However, they also reveal a default assumption embedded in many design processes, that positive emotions are always desirable, while negative ones are to be minimized or avoided. Recent design research has begun to challenge this binary perspective.

I argue that the nature of Brave Space, a constructed discomfort established on the basis of psychological safety, can also deepen the quality and uniqueness of experience. From thrill-seeking activities like horror films and roller coasters to long-distance marathons or mountain hikes, many meaningful human experiences are not smooth or easy. They are demanding, even painful, but often remembered as powerful, transformative, and worthwhile. In these cases, the end goal is not constant positivity, but a kind of emotional resolution through challenge.

*The same principle applies when we design for value-based collaboration. **The aim is not to keep participants comfortable at all times, but to create the right conditions for them to stretch cognitively, emotionally, and socially, in a way that supports the group to identify and navigate value tension, finding a way to work together.***

A GRADUAL TRANSITION TO BRAVE SPACE

Embodying a Brave Space is not about imposing a dramatic leap on participants. Rather, it should be cultivated through deliberate, well-designed moments of gentle provocations, emotional invitations, and the gradual building of familiarity and trust, supporting participants to go a step further every time they engage in Brave Space. The strategies listed below were synthesized through real workshop interactions and validated through post-session interviews with participants. To make them easier to apply in practice, these strategies are organized into three themes. Some of them will be referred to later and explained with practical examples and tips from real sessions.

Individual Pathways

Perceiving individual distinctiveness

Considering strategic time manipulation and stress response

Creating equal stage for quiet people to be heard

Different needs of individuals: “inviting” and “stretching” into Brave Space

Common brave feelings

Freedom of expression

Taking risks under uncertainty and unfamiliarity

Emboldened and liberating

Co-ownership and partnership of facing challenges

Group Dynamics

A space to be heard: support healthy group dynamic

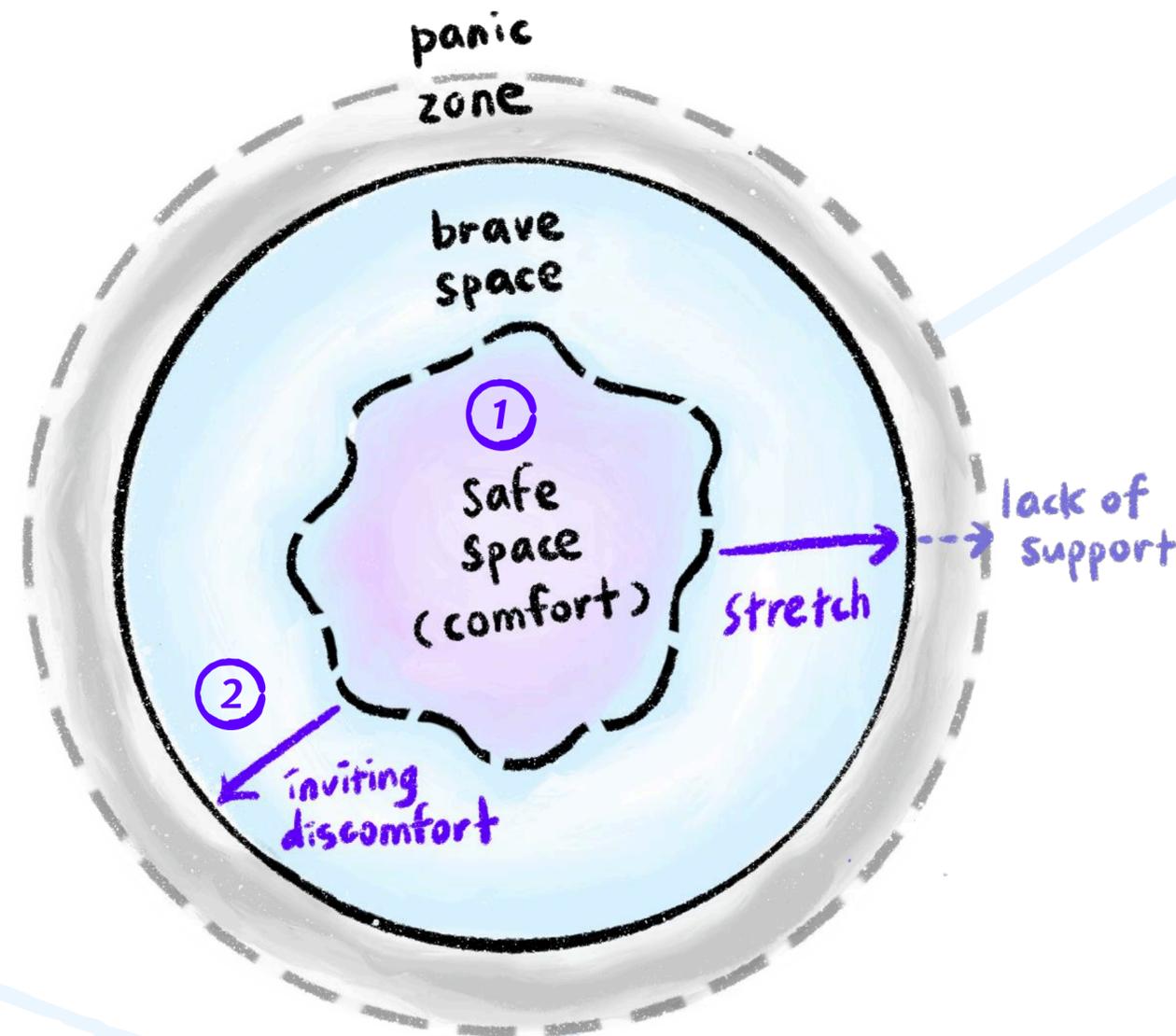
Feeling empowered by being listened to and accepted

Growing psychological safety with group openness despite unfamiliarity

Mingling diversity and building trust

Fostering familiarity and collective understanding among participants

Finding underlying commonality in differences



Cognitive Model of Brave Space Liminality Experience: The fluidity nature of Safe, Brave Space

“Some participants described entering Brave Space early on, when asked to speak about a controversial topic or share a personal opinion. In these moments, they often felt a mix of hesitation, risk-taking, and vulnerability. Others were more at ease stepping into Brave Space deliberately and only needed to be invited or a gentle nudge to take a small step toward challenges. What I saw most often was people moving back and forth between feeling safe and feeling brave, which is normal. The evolving nature of Brave Space emphasizes the importance of timing, pacing, and supportive facilitation really matter. By breaking things down into smaller steps and providing emotional scaffolding, facilitators can help participants stay engaged.”

TOOL

LIMINALITY FRAMEWORK

You may ask how to create a gradual transition for your participants into Brave Space, The Safe–Brave–Panic Liminality Framework offers a concrete way to visualize and design for that journey. This framework helps you recognize and respond to the psychological and relational thresholds participants cross during a session. Brave Space sits right in the middle, between safety and panic. It’s the zone where people stretch, reflect, and take interpersonal risks without retreat or flee.

The model maps a continuum of three zones. It highlights what to watch for in each zone—how people feel, how they behave, and what kind of facilitation and ground rules will support the space to be created. The next page introduces the tool in more detail, showing how to use it during preparation, facilitation, and reflection.

Facilitation and Intervention

Establishing psychological safety

Preparing supportive environment from the start

Moving into dialogue: opens conversation with bodily engagement

Stretching from Safe Space to Brave Space

Encouraging collaboration & respectful confrontation

Facilitator’s role and responsive guidance

Prompting & gentle provocation

Giving freedom & room for trial and error

Managing the subtle hierarchy of voice

Designing activities and interventions

Preparing simple interactive and playable tools



HOW TO USE LIMINALITY FRAMEWORK

The Safe–Brave–Panic Framework helps you understand how participants feel during a workshop—not just what they say or do. It’s designed as a practical tool to support you in evaluating group dynamics and adjusting your facilitation in real time.

What It Is

This tool maps participant experience across three emotional zones:

- *Safe: Comfort and security, but possibly low challenge.*
- *Brave: Constructive discomfort—participants step out of their comfort zone, but still feel supported.*
- *Panic: Overwhelmed or emotionally withdrawn—engagement drops, defensiveness, or stress responses.*

What It Is For

Use the framework as a design compass to:

- *Plan exercises that gently stretch participants into Brave Space.*
- *Sense emotional shifts and group dynamics during group discussion.*
- *Adjust your tone, time management, way of guiding, and decide whether to step in more or step out when participants appear stuck in safety or slipping into panic.*
- *Reflect after the session: Which moments triggered real engagement? Which activities pushed too far—or not far enough?*

How to Apply It

- *Before a workshop: Map out which moments might be safe, brave, or panic-inducing. Design supporting structures (ground rules, prompts, pacing of activities).*
- *During a workshop: Observe body language, energy levels, and group tension. Ask yourself: Are we stay too comfort now? Do they need more provocative prompting? Did someone in the room seem too dominant or not engaged, and how can I balance this?*
- *After a workshop: Reflect with participants using the zone model—ask them to locate their emotional state during key moments. This helps you validate and improve your facilitation design.*

EMBODY BRAVE SPACE IN PRACTICE

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

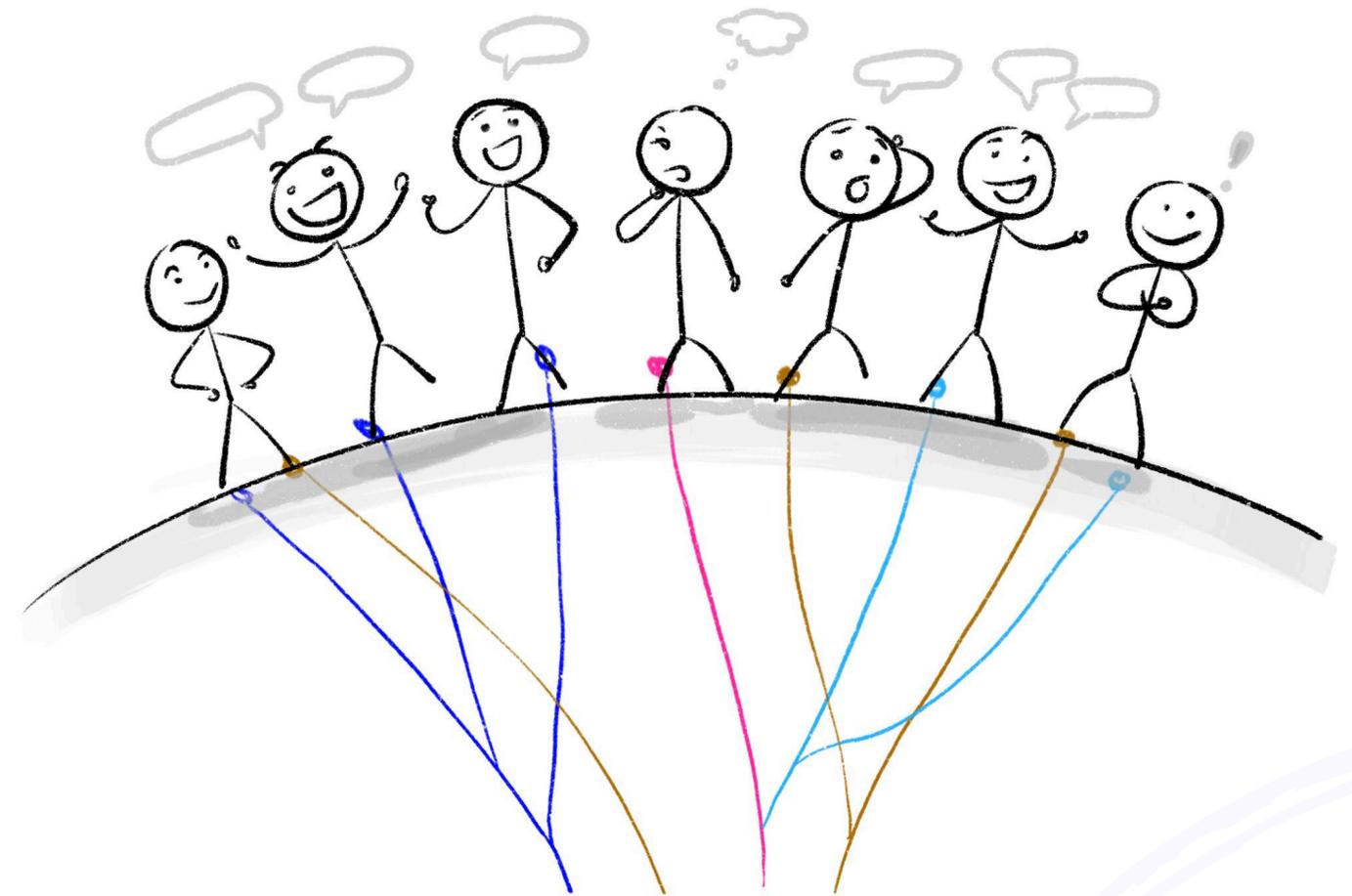
This section offers a concrete example of how Brave Space can be designed into action. Rather than staying in abstract theory, it invites you to engage with the living world—where multi-stakeholder conversations are shaped by real tensions, diverse values, and complex group dynamics.

Let's begin with three guiding questions, drawn from common challenges observed in the field during value-centered discussions. These often occur when diverse stakeholders come together to collaborate—but struggle to find common ground, speak across differences, or balance voices equally. Each question was translated into key design goals, with supporting criteria to help you address these challenges more intentionally in your own practice. (page 10–12)

The design goals fall into two categories:

- **Intangible goals** focus on **the way you set up the environment, facilitate conversations, and nurture group dynamics.** Design parameters are mapped with the Safe–Brave–Panic liminality framework.
- **Tangible goals** are realized through specific workshop interventions—workshop activities that directly **target a challenge / moment of transition.**

From field observations, I identified three critical moments where facilitator actions and Brave Space were essential to sustaining value-centered dialogue. In this field guide, a workshop with three interventions is provided to give you concrete ideas of how Brave Space can be gradually embodied through deliberate design approaches.



Constructive discomfort and conflict are not threats to collaboration; they can be tools for deeper dialogue. Constructive conflict is advocated for its benefits in organizations, and using conflict to integrate different perspectives and find solutions that benefit all parties involved. As designers and facilitators, we have the ability to reframe moments of tension or emotional unease—not as problems to avoid, but as design opportunities.

GUIDING QUESTIONS TO EMBODY BRAVE SPACE

01. How to create a space where participants from diverse backgrounds *feel secure enough to express their authentic (even contrasting) perspectives without fear of clashes/disagreements*, allowing *these differences to be respectfully recognized*, even sparking interest in the values beneath them?

Design goal & participant needs

Intangible

- **Main criteria:** Participants feel brave to express their perspectives without fear of clashes/disagreements

Invites participants deliberately step into Brave Space or stretching them into Brave Space with facilitating support.

Who benefits from it?

Everyone in the room

Tangible

- **Main criteria:** allow differences to be respectfully acknowledged & spark interest in the values beneath the opinions

Recognizes the core values behind different perspectives fosters a shared/collective understanding among individuals.

Who benefits from it?

Everyone in the room

Design Parameters

Facilitation & Structure:

(considering individual distinctiveness & group interaction)

- Responsive guidance
- Alternative challenging & provocative prompting
- Encourage speaking up & reflection
- Information prioritization / step-by-step guidance (depends on level of ambiguity)

Ground setting:

- Own your intention and impact
- Challenge by choice

Focusing moment:

This happened when the group started to talk about and identified values. Many participants initially stayed at the surface, agreeing on familiar words like “sustainability” or “community” without probing what those values truly meant to them. It was only when challenged by a facilitator’s prompt, a peer’s story, or a reflective pause that they began to move from shared terminology toward personal interpretation. This shift—from comfort to Brave Space—is where deeper honesty begins: Why do I think this matters? Why do you see it differently? This moment requires the psychological readiness to be questioned and to question others with care.

02. How to create a *psychologically secure* environment that *invites diverse voices in the collaborative process*, with an *equal stage* for all stakeholders to be heard?

Design goal & participant needs

Intangible

Main criteria: a psychologically secure environment

Encourages team interdependence, which naturally opens the door to communication (Dusenberry & Robinson, 2020; Devathasan & Damian, 2025).

Who benefits from it?

People might have different levels of mental readiness. Creating a psychologically secure environment can support people in expressing themselves, and prepare the ground for stepping out of their comfort zone (with higher openness to challenges, vulnerability, sense of uncertainty and taking interpersonal risk).

Secondary criteria: an equal stage

Who benefits from it?

Prevents some participants from being marginalized and not feeling like expressing themselves or speaking up. No matter their expression types, personalities, and knowledge base.

Tangible

• **Main criteria: invites diverse voices**

Creates “boyish playfulness” “non-serious” role-playing exercise to promote perspective-changing. Includes perspectives of stakeholders who are originally outside the room.

Who benefits from it?

direct/indirect stakeholders whose values might not easily be heard and discussed.

Design Parameters

Ground Setting:

- Clarity of workshop flow / goals
- Clarity of ground rules (feel safe to share everything, no judgement, challenge by choice...)

Facilitation & Structure:

(considering individual distinctiveness & group interaction)

- Responsive guidance
- Encourage speaking up and/or introduce silence response...
- Room for trial and error / allow mistakes (Less structure, more flexibility)

Group dynamics:

- Group acceptance & openness
- Individual's openness & readiness to challenge/risk-taking/uncertainty/vulnerability

Focusing moment:

When differing perspectives are introduced into the conversation. This can happen through contrasting stakeholder interests or divergent worldviews. While participants often recognize these differences on an intellectual level, they rarely engage with them on a relational level. Brave Space becomes critical here. It creates a container for perspective clashes to unfold without immediate resolution, allowing participants to stay with disagreement long enough to see what new understanding might emerge.

03. How to support participants in *identifying tensions explicitly*? And instead of resolving them as conflicts, guide participants to *see tensions as meaningful signals that deserve to be held and worked with*?

Design goal & participant needs

Tangible

- *Main criteria: surface value tensions explicitly & navigate tensions*

Supports all stakeholders in engaging in constructive conflict, prioritizing values, and then identifying value tensions. (Tension consists of two values that are both considered essential, but might create conflict with each other.)

Who benefits from it?

It can help all stakeholders to understand the value tension, and clarify the next-step action to work with the tension.

Design Parameters

Focusing moment:

The final moment is when tension becomes visible. The instinctive action for most will be to try to resolve or smooth over the conflict, and might originally take it negatively. But by making tension explicit and naming it, there's room to think about how to work with it, instead of ignoring or solving it. Brave Space reframes value tension not as a threat, but as a neutral signal, helping people recognize its nature, which consists of two important values that people collectively acknowledge, though it may contradict each other in some situations. The question becomes not how do we fix this? but how do we flip the situation as the signal shows up?

DESIGN A WORKSHOP

SHOWCASE

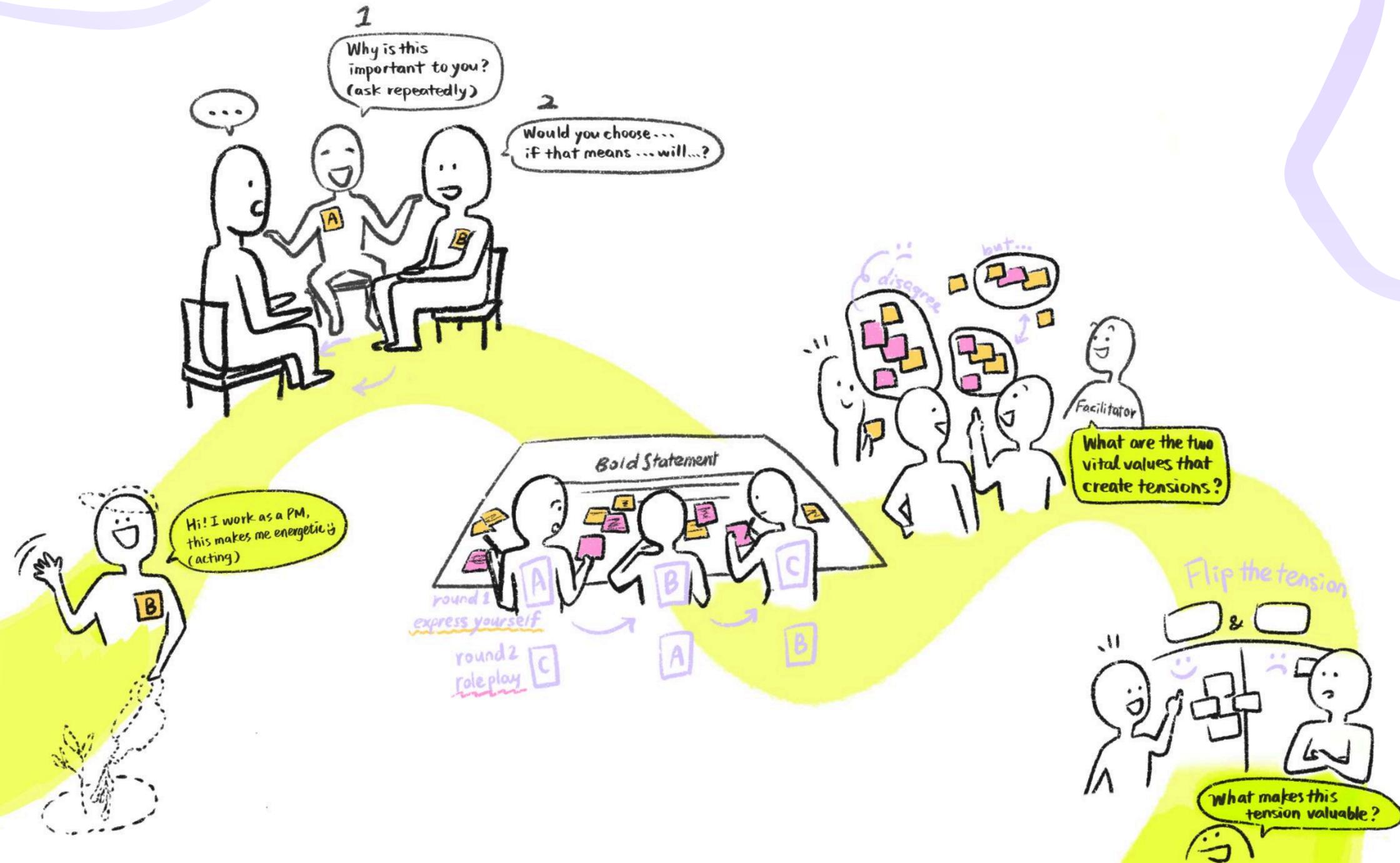
In this section, you'll find a micro-experiment designed to support value-centered discussion in a multi-stakeholder collaboration setting. This experiment is intentionally modular and positioned as a Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP), meaning it can be adapted and reused in different contexts, with flexibility in how it's facilitated or embedded into other interventions.

In my project, the workshop was later embedded into a collaborative session with Climate Fresk, a workshop created by a French NGO that introduces climate science and motivates participants to take collective action. (You can find them on [their website](#))

But back to the MVP structure, this micro-experiment includes three core modules:

1. Deep Dive into Values
2. Clash of Perspectives
3. Flipping the Tension

In the next sections, I'll first describe the design context of these exercises, and then walk you through how to facilitate them—along with practical strategies you can use in the field (page 16–19).



EXPLANATION OF DESIGN CONTEXT

MICRO-EXPERIMENT

The micro-experiment consisted of **three exercise modules, each designed to target a specific pivotal moment** (refer to previous pages).

These modules were grounded in the Safe-Brave-Panic liminality framework, which highlights transitions—from comfort (Safe Space) to constructive discomfort (Brave Space). Each activity was intentionally designed to trigger this stretch: a psychological threshold where participants are invited to step into Brave Space.

The design focuses followed deliberate sequence:

1. Reflecting on personal / organizational values:

Sensitizing participants to reflect and talk about value authentically, articulating what matters to them in project collaboration.

2. Confronting contrasting views:

Inviting participants to engage with bold or divisive statements that surface disagreement.

3. Surfacing value tensions:

Moving from the diverse and conflicting views to building shared understanding through collaboration, recognizing deeper value tension, and working with it.

This structure was shaped by insights from field research, which revealed that **people cannot effectively navigate value tensions without first being aware of the most essential values.** Brave Space supports this journey by holding space for discomfort, enabling participants to engage with conflict and uncover the diverse perspectives that lie beneath.

The table below summarizes each focus, its corresponding transition along the Safe-Brave continuum, and how it connects to the three pivotal design moments.

Exercise	Design Focus	Target Transition	Anchor Moment
1. Deep Dive into Values (Start with reflection)	Helping participants connect with their values and speak authentically. Testing participants' ability to question their own assumptions and articulate layered reasoning.	From Safe/Comfort → Brave (from "what I believe" to "why I believe it")	When the group started to talk about authentically and identified values: Why do I think this matters? Why do you see it differently? This moment requires the psychological readiness to be questioned and to question others with care.
2. Clash of Perspectives (Introduce contrast)	Creating space for disagreement & perspective clashes. Testing how participants handle contrasting values and how they react to purposeful conflict/discomfort when stepping into opposing roles.	From Safe/Comfort → Brave (holding multiple realities in tension. stepping outside my own role, realizing "where I stand depends on where I sit".)	When differing perspectives are introduced into the conversation. This can happen through contrasting stakeholder interests or divergent worldviews.
3. Flipping the Tension (Navigate value tension)	Guiding participants to recognize deeper value tensions from the diverse and conflicting views, and work with the tension. Test participants' ability to stay with tension, reframe it, and find constructive insight from it.	Brave Space (reframing conflict and discomfort into insight)	The instinctive action for most will be to try to resolve or smooth over the conflict, and might originally take it negatively. But by making tension explicit and naming it, there's room to think about how to work with it, rather than ignore or solve it.

DURING A WORKSHOP FACILITATION OVERVIEW



Example Design: A set of playable value tokens for inspiration in the workshop

Before session started

Ice-breaker (energizing & community building activity)
Role claiming (clarity of the role throughout the session)

Tool suggestion

value inspiration cards, post-it, pens,
flipchart paper (A1), agenda

Environment (designing for power balance)

small private room, casual room setting, sitting close but able to move: easily looking at each other while talking, (optional) provide some snacks

1

DEEP DIVE INTO VALUES

Guide

1. Write down a value that you believe is most essential for project collaboration, based on your role (3-5 mins)

2. In pairs, challenge each other by asking:

- Why is this truly important to you? (ask the same question repeatedly)
- Under what conditions would this NOT be the most important value?

→(talk 2 mins) Take turns and ask the same questions to another person.

3. Ask each other one **provocative** question based on his/her proposed value (1 min each), e.g.,
“If transparency slows down decision-making, do you still prioritize it?”

“Would you choose speed over inclusivity(or user experience) if it meant saving a project?”

Ground rules

1. Respect and honesty
2. No judgement, feel comfortable to share
3. Active listening

2

CLASH OF PERSPECTIVES

Guide

(Facilitator introduce a bold statement)

1. Round 1 – Silent writing from current role: (3 mins)
Everyone grabs a marker/**yellow sticky notes**, responds silently to the bold statement on a shared board/poster.

What you can do:

- Agree/disagree
- Add a new thought
- Build on / challenge other responses

2. Round 2 – Switch roles, write again: (4 mins)

(Participants take off the role sticky note from their chest, and swap it with a neighbor, or the role that is different)

Everyone grabs **pink sticky notes**, responds silently to the bold statement on a shared board/poster from the new perspective.

3. Round 3– Pair & discuss (6 mins)

Pair up and revisit what’s been written. Cluster ideas.

Ground Rules

1. Hitchhike on other’s ideas
2. Be brave to challenge the ideas
3. Take the risks to express your thoughts & feelings

3

FLIPPING THE TENSION

Guide

1. Take ownership & speak up what to prioritize:
Now, everyone returns to your own perspective, what do you see? (5 min)

*Prompt: Are they opinions, values, or beliefs?

What are the essential values that we see here? Can you identify the tension between two values?

2. Name a tension that emerged in the last discussion. Which one do you think is most important and we couldn't ignore? (5 mins)

3. Quickfire Reflection– share with group (5 mins)

- What makes this tension **frustrating**?
- What makes this tension **valuable**?

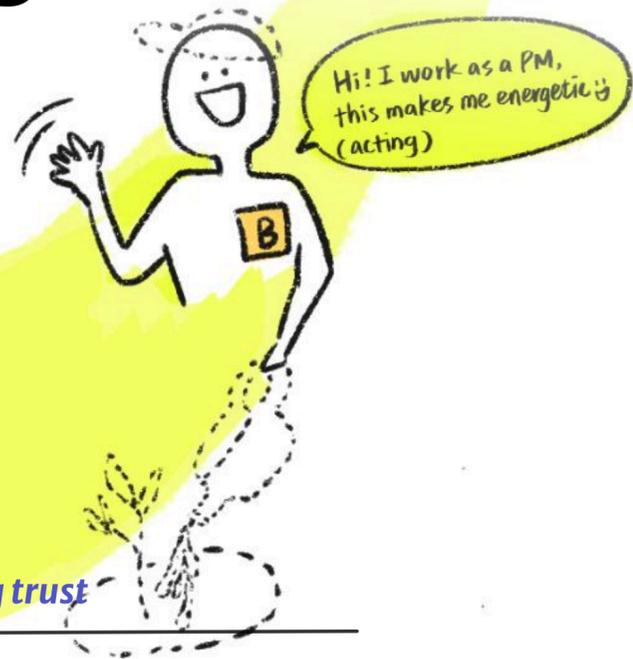
Ground Rules

1. It’s ok to speak up
2. Respect and honesty
3. Co-create our understanding
4. Make tension visible

FACILITATOR GUIDE

ICE BREAKER & PREPARE

THE GROUND



Mingling diversity and building trust

- **Fostering familiarity and shared understanding among participants**

Familiarity with certain individuals or shared background knowledge can encourage people to feel safe enough to express themselves and take initiative. It's normal that participants don't all start from the same level of comfort or security. Building familiarity, whether through personal connection, group dynamics, or shared tools, helps participants feel safe enough to express themselves. This is especially important in the early stages of a workshop, when uncertainty may hold people back. Facilitators can create conditions that nurture group trust, such as using icebreakers, encouraging openness, and activities that build up each other's understanding with people in the room.

#keywords: ice-breaker, openness, activity for building mutual understanding

Establishing psychological safety

- **Preparing supportive environment from the start**

A supportive environment begins before the first word is spoken. Both the physical and psychological layout of a space sends signals to participants about how safe, open, and inclusive the experience will be. Light, music, seating, and how people move in the space all shape their comfort. Just as importantly, psychological cues—like a clear agenda, visible ground rules, and the facilitator's tone—set expectations for participation. When these elements are thoughtfully prepared, they offer a warm invitation into dialogue. Participants described feeling braver and more at ease when they sensed that the space was intentionally designed to welcome all perspectives and encourage open expression.

#keywords: small-group intimacy, no chairs open space, visible agenda & ground rules, warm facilitator welcome, casual set-up

- **Moving into dialogue: opens conversation with bodily engagement**

When participants move and build things together, it creates a sense of shared purpose and lowers the barrier to participation—especially for those with lower psychological safety. Simple physical activities help participants build rapport, feel more at ease in the group, and begin opening up without pressure. By encouraging movement and playful interaction early on, facilitators can create a more inclusive atmosphere that invites everyone into dialogue, even before the "deep thinking" begins.

#keywords: low-key, playful, physical interaction, joint activities

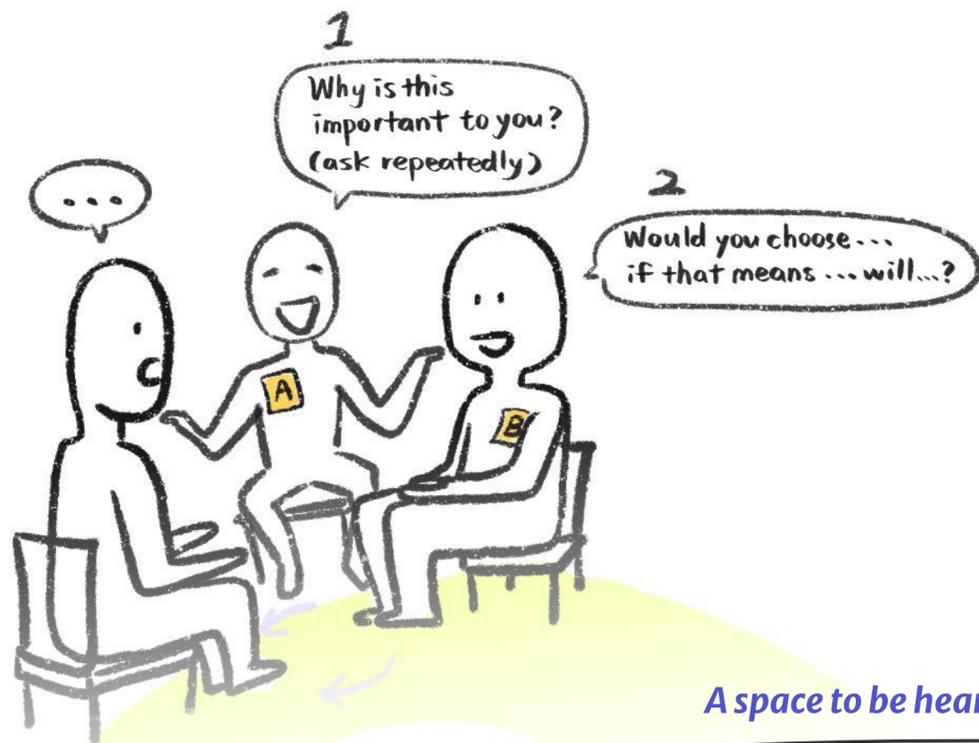
Facilitator Script

“Before we dive into the first activity, I'd like to invite you into a shared scenario. Imagine that you're all part of the same organization, working on a joint project. Each of you comes from a different department or sector, and you're here together collaborating towards a common goal. In this setting, you don't just bring your official job title—you can bring your perspective, your values, your experiences.”

“Now, take a moment to think about the role you want to represent in this project. This doesn't have to be your current job title—it could be a role that resonates more with how you see yourself with past experiences or the contribution you want to bring. Write this role on a sticky note, and when you're ready, introduce it to the group. Tell us about your role: why do you feel connected to it, what kind of things you take care of, and what makes you feel energized in this role.”

FACILITATOR GUIDE

DEEP DIVE INTO VALUES



A space to be heard: support healthy group dynamics

- **Feeling empowered by being listened to & accepted**
Giving participants a space where their voices are heard and respected is foundational to Brave Space. This strategy focuses on nurturing a group atmosphere where open dialogue empowers people to speak up. Early in the session, establish that every voice matters. This strategy fosters psychological safety and agency. It helps participants own their perspectives, feel empowered, and be willing to challenge ideas and engage more boldly.

#keywords: open participants, clarify ground rules, no judgement, acceptance

Facilitator's role and responsive guidance

- **Prompting & gentle provocation**
Another way to empower expression involves presenting challenges. Gentle provocation is a facilitation technique that encourages participants to think more critically.

Facilitators play a crucial role by not only providing hints but also by provocatively prompting them. For instance, facilitators can gently nudge participants by asking thought-provoking questions that challenge or expand their assumptions, such as, “What if this value conflicts with another goal?” or “Why does this matter to you more than X?” It’s equally important to establish clear ground rules at the beginning, emphasizing that everyone is encouraged to ask questions and that challenges are intended to foster discussion, not confrontations.

#keywords: dig deeper & unpack meaning, challenge assumptions, prompt

Facilitator Script

“In this activity, we’re going to explore our personal values, not just by naming them, but by challenging them together.” “First, take a moment to identify one value of project collaboration that really matters to you based on your experience. For example, transparency, fairness, or responsibility... You can play with the value tokens on the table.”

Round 1- “Now, pair up. You’ll take turns asking each other two key questions:

‘Why is it important to you? (repeat)’
‘In what situation might this value not be the most important one?’

Go back and forth a few times—dig deeper each round. **Remember, this isn't about convincing others or here to judge. We're here to help each other think.**”

Round 2- “Now, we’ll add some spiciness in the questions. Try to ask each other provocatively.

e.g. ‘Can you think of a time when this value conflicted with another value?’
‘If transparency slows down decision-making, do you still prioritize it?’”

FACILITATOR GUIDE

CLASH OF PERSPECTIVES

Stretching from Safe Space to Brave Space

- **Encouraging collaboration & respectful confrontation**

This exercise is designed to provoke authentic and contrasting viewpoints while also encouraging everyone to consider others' perspectives through role-playing and switching activities. There are clear ground rules that everyone can be honest to give reactions, disagree, and build upon each other's ideas.

By making conflicts and differing opinions explicit, the goal is to foster collective understanding, shared ownership of ideas, and stronger group cohesion. In this process, facilitator is stretching participants to Brave Space, and needs to ensure both a sense of security to express themselves and the opportunity to respectfully explore opposing views.

After individual thinking and writing a response, participants are asked to work together to pair up and discuss the ideas. This process is crucial since facilitator guides participants to transition from safe agreement into brave inquiry by fostering structured collaboration and gentle confrontation. Since different perspectives naturally surface and people are working together to navigate the values behind them, it allows participants to reflect all ideas critically, not defensively.

#keywords: perspective taking, collaboration, transparency, sense of security



Mingling diversity and building trust

- **Finding underlying commonality in differences**

When participants are invited to speak honestly and feel respected, it becomes possible to uncover shared intentions hidden beneath differing perspectives. In the session I facilitated, one participant reflected that despite contrasting emotional reactions and views, the group was still striving toward the same future. Another noted, he experienced conflicting perspectives when being a designer and a product manager. While they managed to find the common ground when they all thought from the role of an employee in the organization. This realization sparked curiosity rather than conflict, leading to more empathetic dialogue and a more integrated understanding of the topic.

#keywords: collective understanding, create shared vision

Facilitator Script

"I'll introduce a bold, possibly controversial statement. It's about seeing how different roles might respond to the same issue, and how that makes us think differently. (bring out big flip paper on table)"

Round 1- "You'll each take a yellow sticky note. In silence, respond to the statement based on the role you currently hold. You can agree, disagree, build on someone else's thought, or challenge it. No need to explain or justify, just react. Keep it short and honest."

Round 2- "Now, take off your current role sticker and swap with your neighbor—or pick one that's different from your own view. Now, using a pink sticky note, respond again—but this time from the new perspective. Try to really think like someone else. How would this new role see the issue? What values or priorities might they care about?"

Round 3- "Pair up & revisit what's been written. Group or cluster similar ideas and discuss with group." ***Prompt: Can you see any similarity or differences between all these ideas?**

FACILITATOR GUIDE

FLIPPING THE TENSION

Perceiving individual distinctiveness

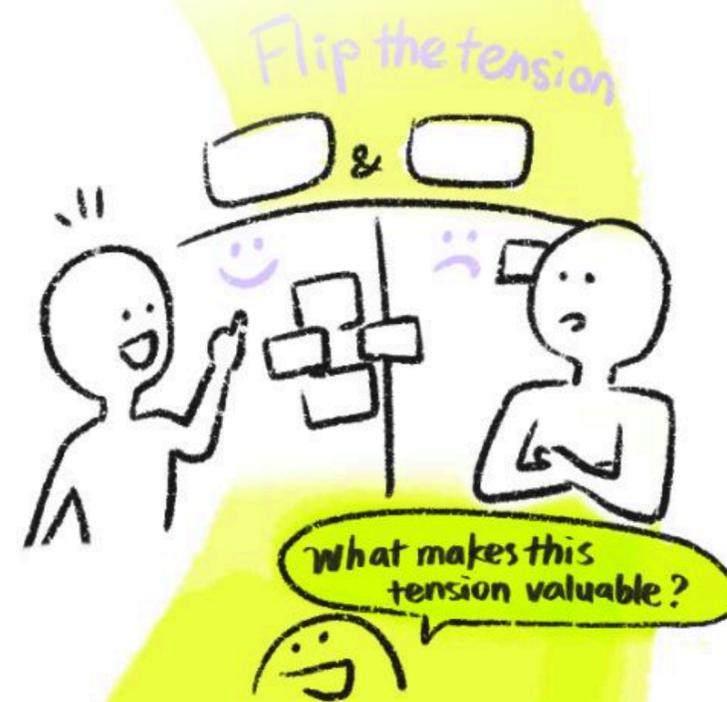
- **Considering strategic time manipulation and stress response**

As participants enter Brave Space, facilitators also need to ensure it's not a false fall into the panic zone. One challenge I encountered while facilitating sessions is that individuals react differently to time pressure. It's the facilitator's role to manage time effectively and may use techniques like time manipulation to encourage participants to generate ideas. For instance, phrases such as "You have one more minute to write down two additional ideas," or "Please finish your final thoughts, and we will move on," can be helpful. It's essential to discuss the "timing and pacing strategy" as part of this process.

In the three-hour workshop I conducted with the collaborator with Climate Fresk, some participants described their "feeling of stress" as arising just before the "brave moments", such as when they have limited time to contribute or make a decision. The participant mentioned that it felt like needing to "take a big leap" before the opportunity passed. While another stated that time pressure helped her to "just say it," embracing the ambiguity of the topic and acknowledging that there may never be a perfect answer, just a moment to take action and think boldly.

Facilitators can design with time strategically by:

1. Creating time-boxed moments that gently push for action
2. Framing short time limits not as tests, but as opportunities to contribute boldly
3. But also allowing flexibility where emotional & thinking processing or group pacing varies



Facilitator Script

Own your stance- "Let's hear a few reflections. Anyone want to speak up and take ownership of something they felt, challenged, or discovered in this process? You don't have to represent a new role now, just speak as yourself"

***Prompt participants:**

- **Are we seeing opinions, values, or beliefs?**
- **What are the essential values that we see here? Can you identify the tension between two values?**

Identify & Name a key tension- "Pick one value tension you believe we can't ignore. Say it aloud or jot it down."

Quickfire reflection- "Now we'll do a two-part reflection together. You can write your answers or share them out loud: (1)What makes this tension frustrating? (2)What makes this tension valuable?"

"After we explore what this tension offers, could anyone share how you see this tension leads to better questions or new directions?"

RECOMMENDATION & LIMITATION

SUGGESTION ON CONTEXTUAL ADAPTATION

Identify the right entry point for value reflection

Before embedding Brave Space or adapting micro-experiments into a new context, designers should observe and ask: Where are values staying implicit and being overlooked? Is there any value tension in this context that has been ignored?

For instances, in my project, I integrated micro-experiment but redesigned exercise for Climate Fresh workshop. Before I designed, I noticed a few resonance

Premature Action Bias: People often unconsciously jump straight into solution mode, saying things like “we should do this and that...” before engaging in emotional reflection or value clarification.

Hidden Values Beneath Opinions: Even when participants seem outspoken and share many opinions, they may not recognize the deeper values or emotions behind their statements.

The Triangle of Inaction: A common dynamic where key stakeholders blaming each other are responsible for the lack of progress on climate action.

These insights strongly resonated with my aim: to help participants see the full value landscape and understand the roadblocks and driving forces different stakeholders might have.

In different settings, the entry point for meaningful value discussion varies. I recommend to first start by identifying **critical moments** where values are shaping decisions, underneath the surface but remain implicit —these are potential points that trigger value reflection where you can embody Brave Space and embed the activities to deep dive into values. Then you can design subsequent discussions and guidance from these moments.

Additional suggestions

Prepare some flexibility for intervention and bring ownership to the actors: Find a starting point for participants to think together and “own resonance to the problem”. For example, where disagreements arise, discussing future agreements, or redefining a seemingly consistent goal statement, is a good opportunity to enter a value discussion. These touchpoints can initiate deeper reflection and become the key moment to invite Brave Space.

Design gradual progression—from individual to collective vision

“Dear helmsman, don’t forget to prepare your participants to engage in a smooth journey.” Brave Space is not something participants leap into on command. It unfolds as a step-by-step journey, moving from comfort to constructive discomfort, and back again.

The experience begins with provocative personal reflection, moving into sharing and diverse group engagement, and ends by helping each person define how they might act on their roles & values. This “mental ladder” helps participants build psychological readiness and clarity before addressing complex value tensions. From gentle prompts to constructive provocations, the key is to scaffold engagement step-by-step. Think of it as an emotional temperature ladder, each phase needs its own facilitation support and structural design.

Additional suggestions

Expect & design for individual differences in psychological readiness



individual reflection

(constructive conflict)
respectful acknowledgement
problem/solution ownership

individual action
collective vision
navigate tension

RECOMMENDATION & LIMITATION

SUGGESTION ON CONTEXTUAL ADAPTATION

Build bridges of trust among stakeholders

Even though Brave Space encourages challenging each other's views, its essence is not strengthening opposing views, but rather promoting better collective understanding by respectfully acknowledging diverse values and perspectives. I recommended establishing a clear agreement at the beginning of the workshop, emphasizing: this is a space for equal dialogue. No matter who you are, everyone can challenge ideas (not judge people) and propose questions, but remember everyone "owns both their intention and impact" to ensure that this is secure to hear different voices and be authentic.

Discussion: Designing for power balance

In the common challenges in value-centered discussion, one critical aspect of the hierarchy of voices also comes from the power dynamics between participants, as described on the previous page: "Some participants naturally speak more, while others stay quiet. Power dynamics, social roles, or missing stakeholders outside the room can make the conversation feel one-sided, and important perspectives are left out."

The limitation of my research is that it did not directly design and evaluate Brave Space under conditions where group members had clear interpersonal or institutional hierarchies. In the future, researchers and design practitioners who work with multi-stakeholders could explore how Brave Space functions when some participants have more authority or visibility, and how to foster equitable expression in those settings.

Just as individual distinctiveness in personality and expression style, I believe, power dynamics don't disappear when people walk into a workshop. However, designers can soften their impact and design with awareness.

How to enable equal voices and equal stage is one of the essential design criteria for embodying Brave Space. Apart from the intervention design and the 4 dimensions discussed in the liminality framework, another tangible factor, the physical environment, can also play a role. Below is my reflection on this and considering the context when the group includes a mix of citizens and stakeholders with higher institutional authority (e.g., government officials, professionals, or corporate actors), choosing a neighborhood-based venue can be a strategic move. For example:

When discussing locally related topics, hosting the workshop in a neutral, community-oriented venue, not a government office or corporate building may symbolically shift the space toward inclusion.

- Reduce psychological pressure on citizens, making them feel more at ease and willing to speak up.*
- Signal to higher-power participants that the session is rooted in the community context, not institutional hierarchy.*
- Emphasize shared ownership of the discussion space, shifting the focus from "reporting up" to "co-creating with."*



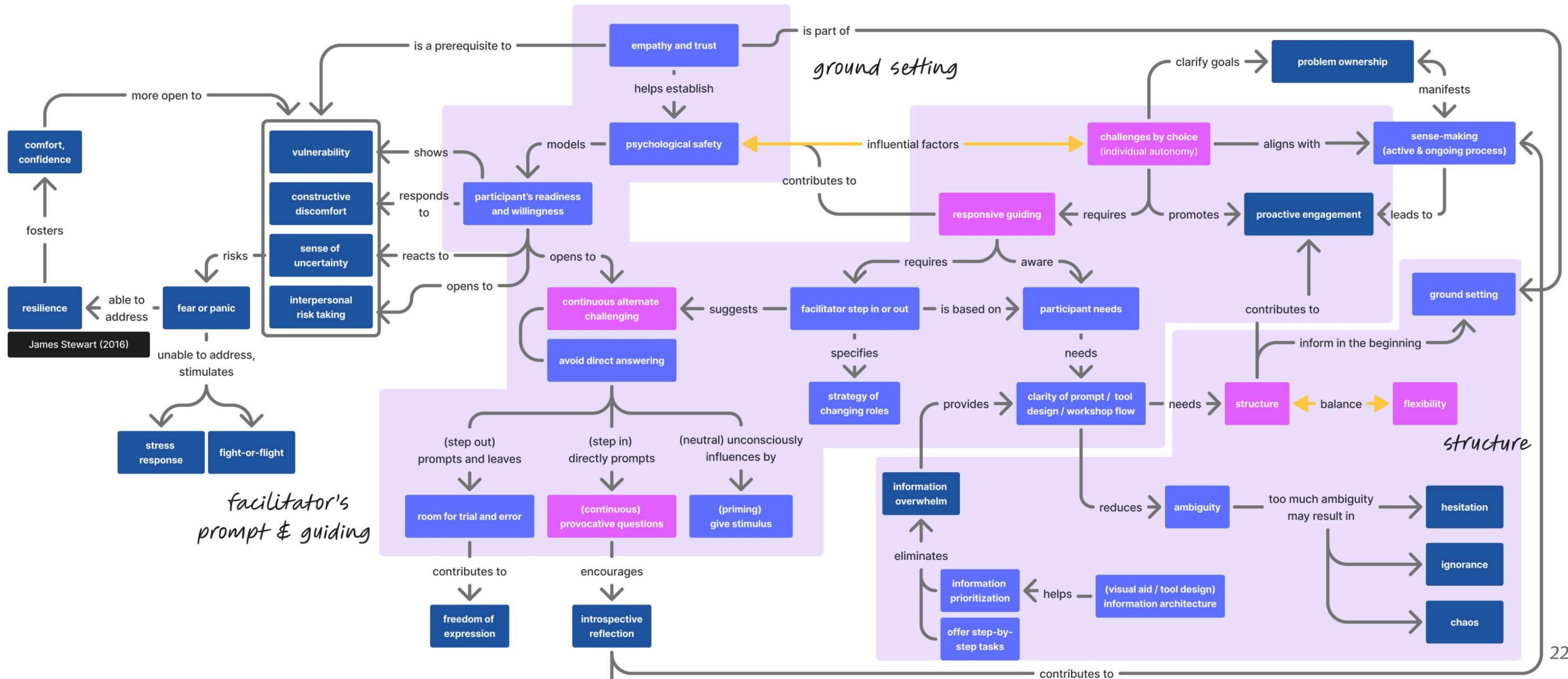
APPENDIX

EXAMPLE OF USING CONCEPT MAP

LANDSCAPE EXAMPLE 1

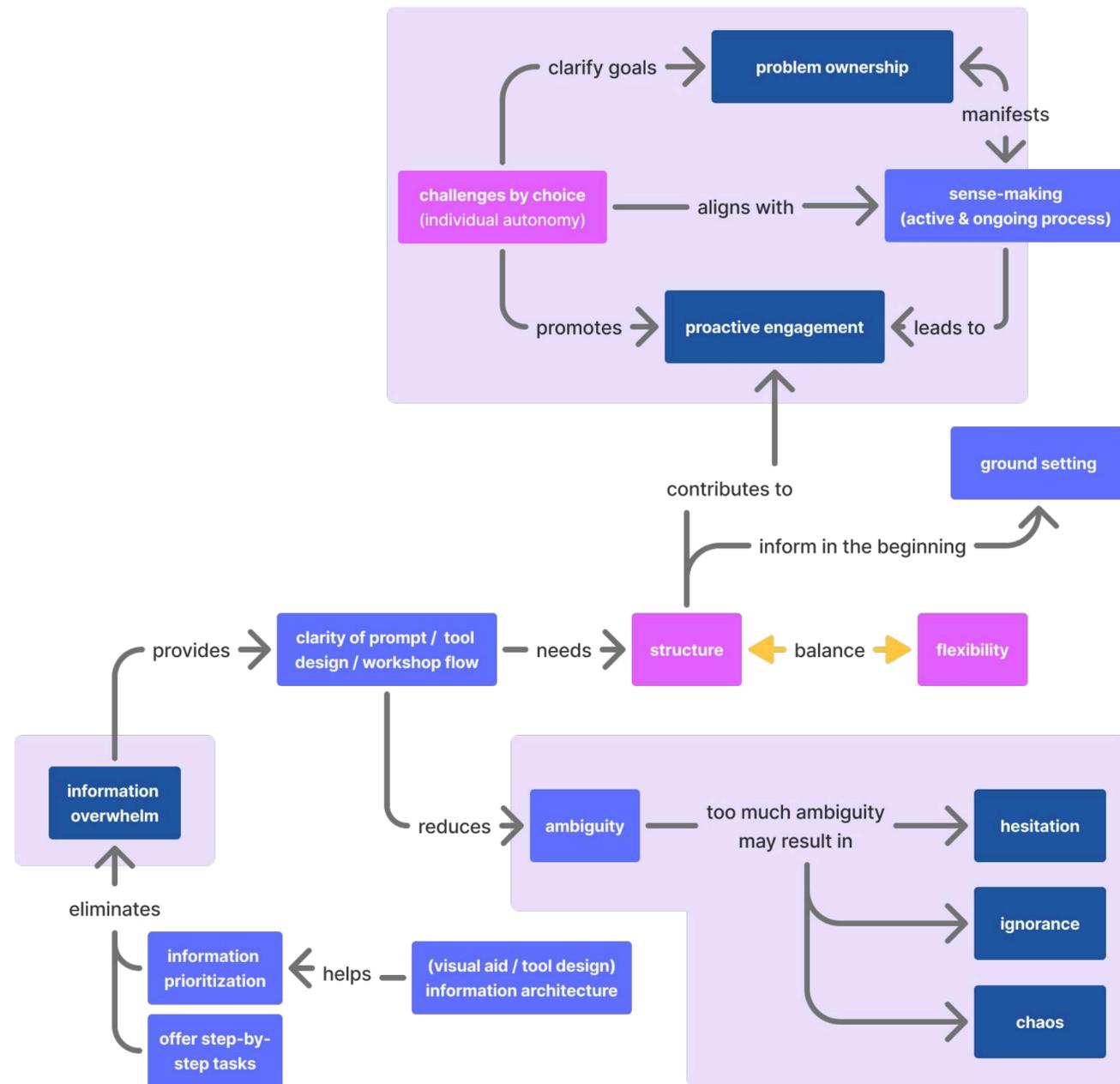
FACILITATION & STRUCTURE

This landscape showcases two sets of concepts, as indicated in the diagram. The facilitator's guidance and the structure provided are interconnected. However, the structure goes beyond the pre-designed workshop flow; for instance, it also represents a variable that the facilitator must balance it with flexibility based on the participants' needs for clarity.

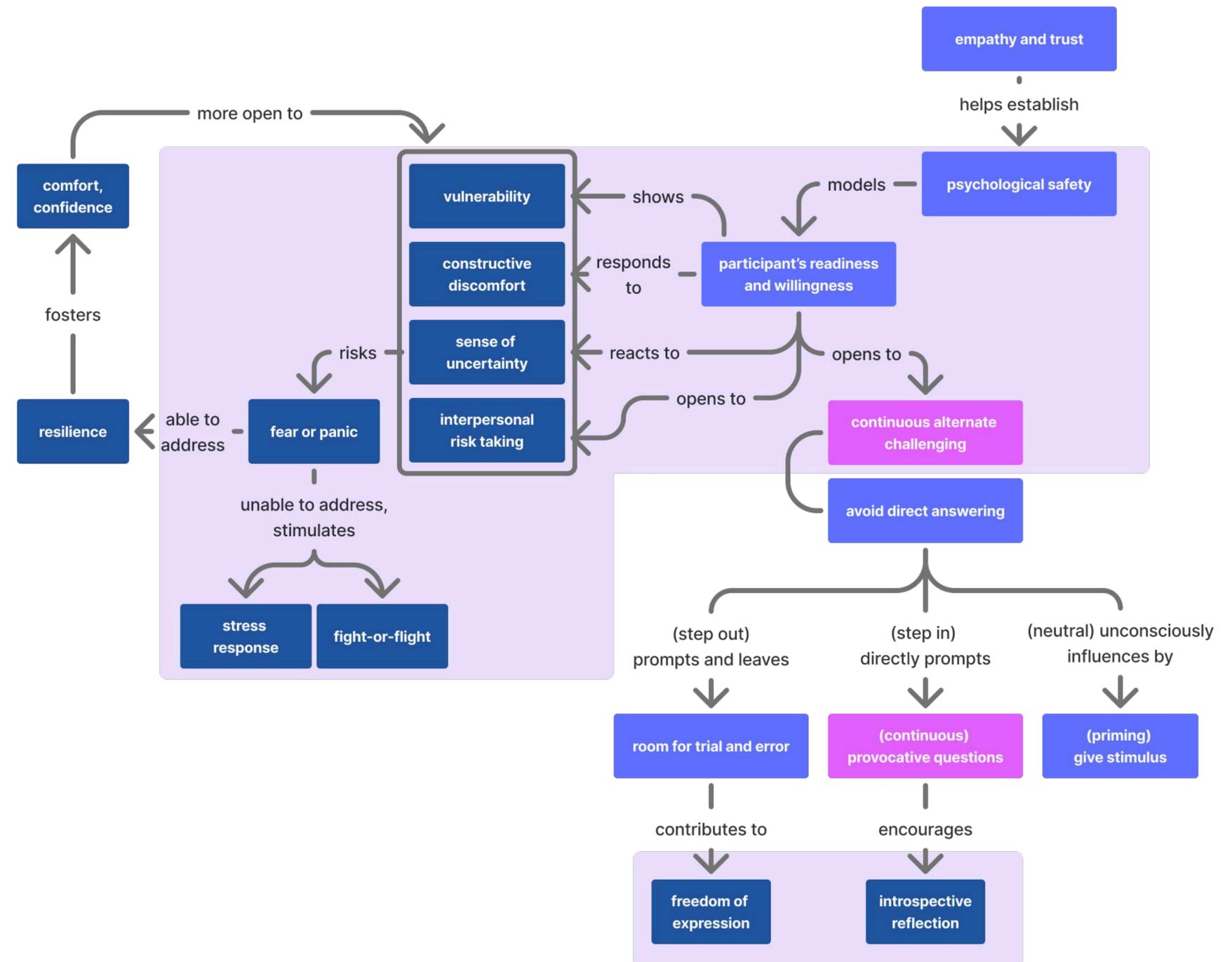


LANDSCAPE EXAMPLE 4.1

FEELINGS & EMOTIONAL CUES



A safe space prioritizes emotional comfort, allowing people to share authentically without fear of harm. Similarly, a brave space depends on establishing psychological safety. Therefore, reading the room and picking up on emotional cues is essential for effective facilitation. This awareness also provides the facilitator with the opportunity to respond and guide participants according to their reactions and needs.



LANDSCAPE EXAMPLE 4.2

FEELINGS & EMOTIONAL CUES

