

A comment in a meeting landed badly and nobody addressed it

Area of work: Workplace culture, intercultural practice, and trust

The situation

During a planning meeting, a comment about a community's habits went unchallenged. Afterward, two staff members said they felt the room had endorsed it. The person who made the comment did not realize it caused harm.

What to notice first

- Silence read as endorsement.
- Unfamiliarity, not intent, is the likely cause, and it still needs repair.
- Repair belongs to the person with more power in the room, not to the staff who were harmed.

Questions to ask before acting

1. Who will name what happened and take responsibility for repair?
2. What does the person who made the comment need in order to change, and who will offer it?
3. How will the team learn that this is not the norm?

Practical next moves

- **Psychological safety and repair** — program page </resources/lm-psychological-safety-and-repair>
- **Using community material as questions, not descriptions** — program page </resources/pn-cultural-humility-briefs-as-questions>

Who to involve

The meeting leader owns the repair. If the behavior continues or is intentional, use the confidential channel.