

To create safe and brave spaces of belonging, we need to commit to doing *our work* before we do *the work* and to working within our scope and skill.



Integration Idea **Permission Slips**

Key concepts:

- Permission slips give us a practical and familiar way to think about what might get in the way of us talking about how we feel, asking for what we need, or trying something new. Their primary function is to serve as explicit intention setting.
- Most students are familiar with caregivers signing permission slips, but they have never been asked to think about what they may want to give themselves permission to do.
- Permission slips can be useful tools for teaching us to give thought to what we might need from ourselves and others in terms of support, and they can even help increase accountability.
- If the classroom is a safe space to share what we wrote on our permission slips, the sharing process can build connection and trust.
- Permission slips can help build a safe container in the classroom before discussions, presentations, or quizzes—whenever there is a situation in class where students might feel worried or apprehensive.

Be mindful:

- Permission slips aren't promissory notes; they are for stating and writing down intentions only, so there are no repercussions if you fail to deliver.
- Permission slips are personal—there should be no forced sharing. Always give people the option to pass.
- Sometimes we see adults give themselves permission to sleep in trainings or play on their phones (yes, adults). This tool shouldn't be used to move us away from engagement or connection, only toward it.

Examples:

- I give myself permission to ask questions even if it feels awkward.
- I give myself permission to collect my thoughts before speaking.
- I give myself permission to tell others that I am feeling nervous.
- I give myself permission to ask the teacher to let someone else go ahead of me so that I can have a few extra minutes to think of my answer.

Classroom Discussion Ideas:

- When you listened to other students' permissions, were there some that you could relate to? Were there some that you would like to add to your permission slips?
- What are some situations where it might be helpful to use permission slips? These might include classroom situations and situations in other areas of life.

In addition to reading *Dare to Lead*, you can learn more here:

Books:

Braving the Wilderness

