

# Psychologically Safe Reliability Management



Lesley Cordero, @clesleycode

*The New York Times, Staff Software Engineer (On Leave)*

Hi! I'm **Lesley Cordero**.

Fan of boba, dogs, and strong engineering cultures.

My experience leading teams has me thinking about how **healthy, excellent engineering teams are built.**



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# Trauma-Informed Reliability Management

# Principles for trauma-informed psychological safety

## Trust, Respect & Transparency

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Teams perform better  
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Chronic problems are  
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# Characteristics of a **chronic** issue

## Repetitive and/or long-lasting

Chronic issues happen repetitively, over the course of an unspecified time period.



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# Characteristics of a **chronic** issue

## Repetitive and/or long-lasting

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## Difficult to solve

Chronic issues are difficult to solve, usually because they're indicators of complexity and/or dysfunction.



## **Trust, Respect & Transparency**

Chronic issues are usually indicators that some mutual value is being violated.



## **Empowerment, Voice, & Choice**



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Over time, chronic issues impact our ability to feel heard or take action.



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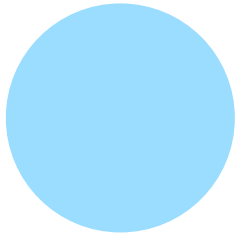
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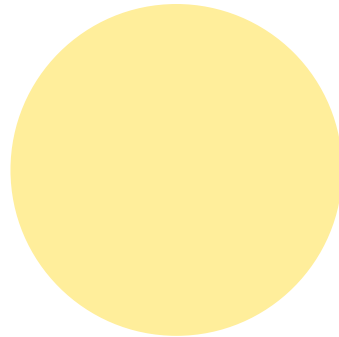
## Three Points of Intervention

### Preventative

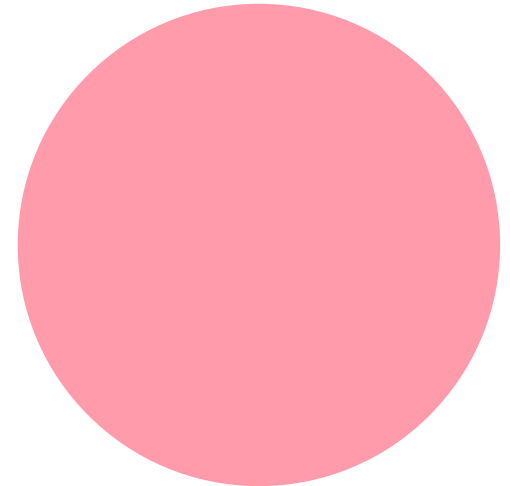
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### Proactive



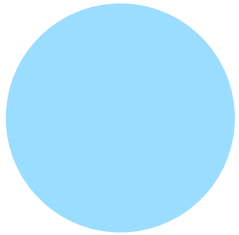
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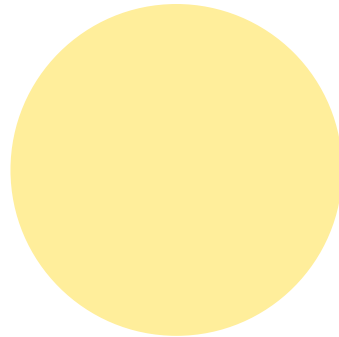
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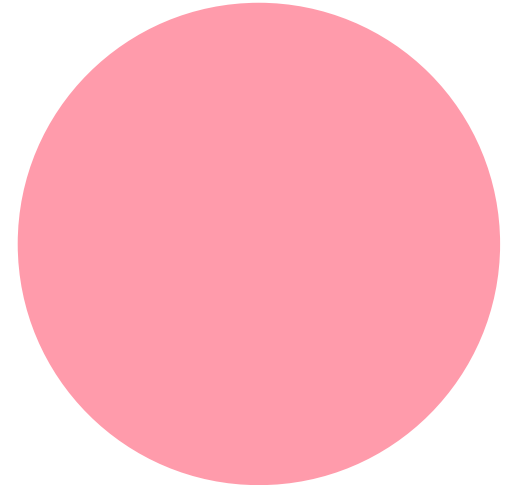
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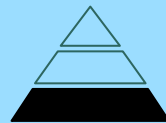
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# Preventative Measures

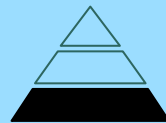


Reactive  
Proactive  
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## 1. Build robust feedback loops

Feedback loops serve the function of communicating pain points throughout the team.

# Preventative Measures

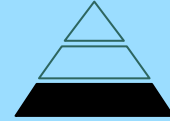


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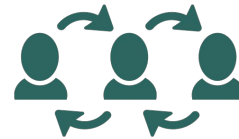
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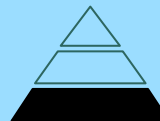
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***Feedback loops***

# Preventative Measures



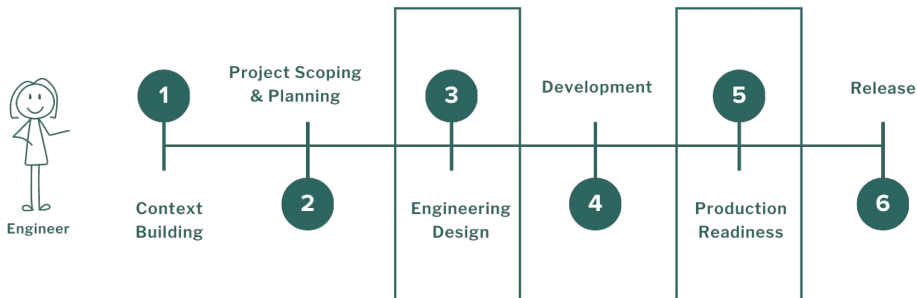
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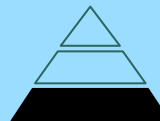
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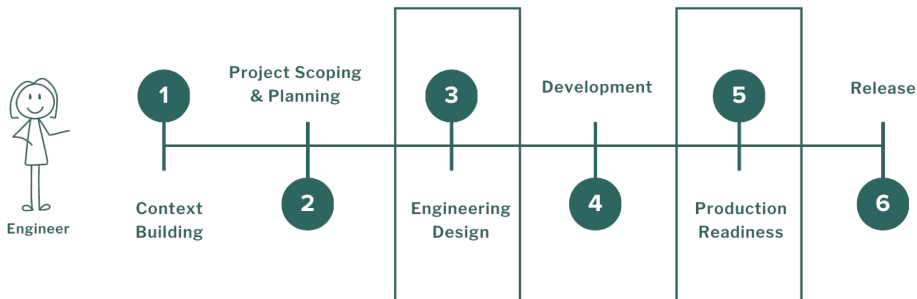
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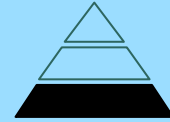
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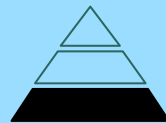
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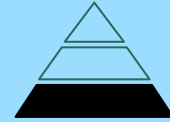
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 **SLOs &**  
**Error Budget Policies** 

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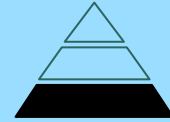
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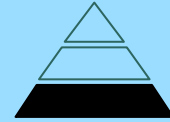
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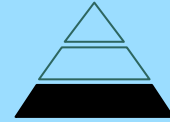
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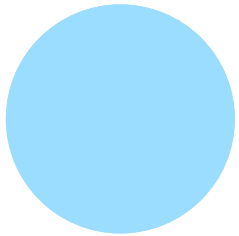
## 4. Have a strong leadership core

The privilege of leadership should be distributed across a strong team.

## Three Points of Intervention

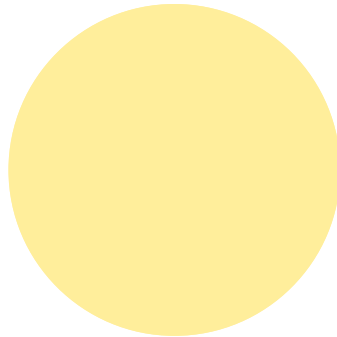
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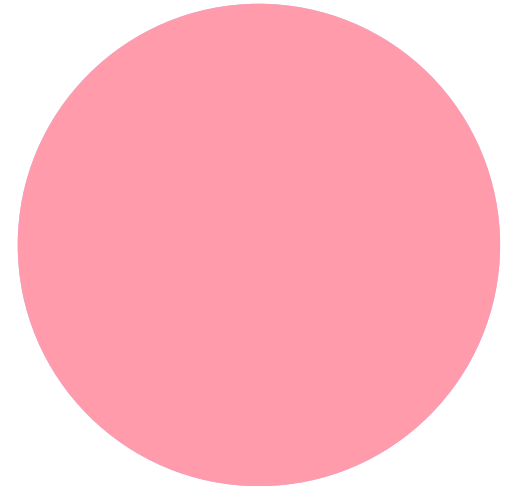


### Proactive

Address potential problems early by monitoring for early indicators.



### Reactive





# Proactive Measures



Reactive  
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Use your feedback loops to figure out what's not working for your team.

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Understand that your initial solutions might not always work & build trust by implementing learnings.

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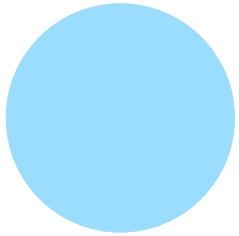
## 3. Verify & celebrate your solution

Acknowledge & celebrate when success does happen!

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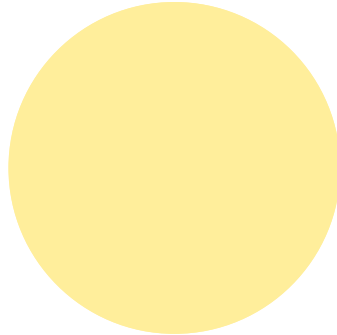
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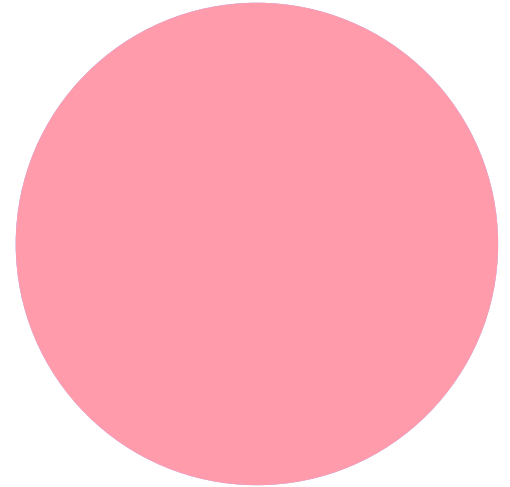
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### Reactive

Addressing the issue when it's become chronic and/or acute.



## Final Stages of Chronic Issues

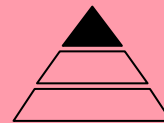
**Heroism**

**&**

**Burnout**

Heroism & burnout are **not** effective strategies for organizational failures.

# Heroism downsides

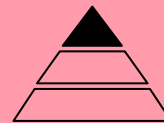


**Reactive**  
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Heroism is an ineffective long-term strategy for sustainability & progress.

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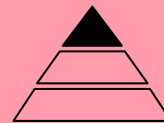
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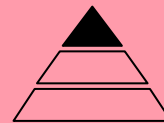
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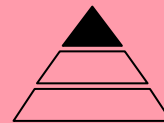
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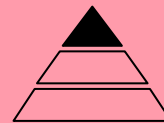
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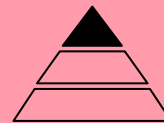
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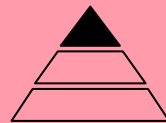
**Reactive**  
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# What does responsibility look like?



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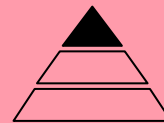
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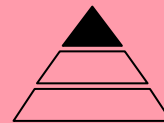
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*The New York Times, Staff Software Engineer (On Leave)*

## References

### Books

*Site Reliability Engineering, Niall Murphy*

*Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools, Jen Alexander*

*Conflict Is Not Abuse, Sarah Schulman*

### Talks

*"Harassers are Nice to Me", Sarah Milstein*

### People

*Kara Levy, Angela Kuriacose, David Yee, Max Englander, Lalitha Madduri,*

*Joshua Burton, Robert Coker*

*Most importantly, Glorinet Arroyo, aka Lesley's Mom 🌸*

### Communities

*LeadDev*