

WHEN YOU FEEL INVISIBLE AT WORK

Finding your voice, value and belonging

Being unseen can make you question yourself. This booklet offers compassionate reflection and practical steps to help you understand what is happening, ask for what you need and protect your wellbeing.

What invisibility can look like

It is not always obvious. Sometimes it appears in the small, repeated moments that leave you wondering whether you matter.

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You might notice your ideas being ignored and later repeated by someone else; decisions being made without you; praise going elsewhere; interruptions; exclusion from informal conversations; or support only arriving when you are already overwhelmed.

A gentle next step

- Write down specific examples.
- Include dates, impact and what you needed.
- Separate facts from assumptions.

The quiet cost of being overlooked

Repeated exclusion can affect confidence, motivation, concentration and wellbeing. You might over-prepare, people-please, mask parts of yourself or become reluctant to contribute.

“ These responses can be attempts to stay safe. They do not mean you are weak or incapable. ”

A gentle next step

- Notice changes in sleep or mood.
- Take breaks before exhaustion takes over.
- Talk to someone you trust.

You deserve psychological safety

A healthy workplace allows people to ask questions, make respectful mistakes, offer ideas and raise concerns without fear of humiliation or punishment.

“Belonging is more than being invited into the room. It means your voice can influence what happens there.”

A gentle next step

- Who listens without dismissing you?
- Where do you feel able to be yourself?
- What would make participation safer?

Name what you need

Before a conversation, turn the vague feeling of “I am not valued” into a clear request. This makes it easier for another person to understand and respond.

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Try: “I contribute best when I receive the agenda beforehand and have space to finish my point. Could we build that into our meetings?”

A gentle next step

- Ask for a regular check-in.
- Request clear priorities and feedback.
- Agree how contributions will be credited.

Speak with calm, clear evidence

Choose a suitable time. Describe the situation, its impact and the change you would like. Keep the focus on behaviour rather than judging someone's character.

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Try: “In the last three meetings I was interrupted before finishing. I left feeling that my input was not being heard. Please can the chair make sure everyone has uninterrupted time to speak?”

A gentle next step

- Prepare two or three examples.
- Take notes into the meeting.
- Confirm agreed actions in writing.

When neurodivergence shapes the experience

Autistic, ADHD, dyslexic and otherwise neurodivergent employees may communicate, process information or show engagement differently. Masking can make distress invisible while using enormous energy.

“Support should respond to individual needs, not stereotypes. Clear communication and reasonable adjustments can help someone contribute without having to hide who they are.”

A gentle next step

- Ask for written instructions.
- Consider quieter or structured meetings.
- Use a preferred communication method.

Boundaries are information

A boundary is not a punishment. It explains what you can do, what you cannot sustain and what needs to change for work to remain healthy.

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Try: “I can complete this by Friday if we pause the other task. Which is the priority?” or “I am available during my agreed hours and will reply tomorrow.”

A gentle next step

- Do not promise from panic.
- Make workload trade-offs visible.
- Protect recovery time.

You do not have to handle it alone

If an informal conversation does not help, consider a manager, HR, occupational health, a union representative, employee assistance support or another trusted person. Follow your workplace policies when raising a concern.

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If the situation may involve bullying, harassment or discrimination, keep clear records and seek appropriate professional or workplace advice.

A gentle next step

- Save relevant messages.
- Ask someone to attend meetings with you.
- Request decisions and next steps in writing.

Find the place where you can be heard

Sometimes a workplace can learn and change. Sometimes the healthiest step is to explore a team, role or organisation where respect is part of everyday culture.

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Your value is not decided by who failed to notice it. Choose one small action today: record an example, ask for a conversation, request support or remind yourself of what you bring.

A gentle next step

- What do I contribute?
- What do I need to thrive?
- What is my next kind, courageous step?

Until next time, give yourself space to breathe.