

Basic Psychological Need Supportive Activities

Need	Strategy	Description/ Examples
Autonomy	Use guided reflections	After an observed encounter, ask: “What would you like to work on next?” or “What stood out to you today?” This primes ownership of learning goals.
	Scaffold feedback through routines	Normalize feedback by embedding it into daily workflows (e.g., “feedback huddles”, shift-end check-ins). This removes pressure from the learner to ask and reinforces feedback as expected, not exceptional.
	Use autonomy-supportive language and offer choices	Avoid controlling language (“ <i>You must</i> ”). Instead, offer options: “ <i>Here are a few ways you could approach this...</i> ” Provide meaningful rationales for feedback and ask learners what areas they’d like to explore.
	Avoid rewards-based motivation	Do not compare learners or tie feedback to praise contingent on performance. Instead, adopt an unconditional positive regard that affirms the learner's intrinsic worth.

Need	Strategy	Description/ Examples
Competence	Give clear, specific, actionable feedback	After an observed encounter, ask: “What would you like to work on next?” or “What stood out to you today?” This primes ownership of learning goals.
	Normalize recognition of strengths and progress	Normalize feedback by embedding it into daily workflows (e.g., “feedback huddles”, shift-end check-ins). This removes pressure from the learner to ask and reinforces feedback as expected, not exceptional.
	Train faculty in narrative, developmental feedback	Avoid controlling language (“ <i>You must</i> ”). Instead, offer options: “ <i>Here are a few ways you could approach this...</i> ” Provide meaningful rationales for feedback and ask learners what areas they’d like to explore.
	Do not withhold positive feedback	Do not compare learners or tie feedback to praise contingent on performance. Instead, adopt an unconditional positive regard that affirms the learner's intrinsic worth.

Need	Strategy	Description/ Examples
Relatedness	Foster longitudinal relationships	Pair residents with consistent faculty over time. These relationships bring trust, personalized feedback, and support the formation of shared goals and professional identity.
	Build trust and mutual respect in conversations	Begin feedback by asking the learner’s perspective. Express genuine interest and empathy. Feedback is better received when delivered through caring, respectful exchanges.
	Encourage individualized learning plans	Use ILPs in structured coaching conversations. Mentors can help track progress over time and serve as sounding boards for both successes and challenges.
	Create psychologically safety environments	Cultivate a space where learners feel valued regardless of performance (unconditional positive regard). Avoid punitive or threatening feedback; instead, affirm the learner’s dignity and capacity for growth.

Sourced from Neufeld, Smith, Guldner; From Compliance to Commitment: Supporting Autonomous Growth in Competence by Design, in preparation, 2025