

Creating safe spaces and building trust



Amina Razak, Research Associate,
Inclusive Knowledge Newcastle Centre (INKC)

From Newcastle. For the world.

Research Approach

- Dialogic interactions are key to driving social justice, greater equity and inclusion (Freire 1972)
- Cycles of dialogue and reflection (Freire 1972, Burke and Lumb 2018)
- Participatory action research - active involvement, develops agency and voice (Bovill et al 2016, Cook-Sather 2020, Pain et al 2013, Seale 2010)

citizens uk

Tyne & Wear

citizens

*A people powered alliance dedicated to challenging injustice
and
building stronger communities*

“Training was useful as it opened my eyes about power and that I can do stuff and I was holding myself back. The training didn’t seem relevant at first but I only realised [the benefits] when I started working on the project [. . .] I was a quiet person and it helped me step out of my comfort zone so this year I applied to be student rep . I wouldn’t have done that maybe if I didn’t do that training . ”

(SAB member)

Creating safe spaces and building trust:

- Ground rules
- Anonymity
- Embed Citizens UK principles and approaches
- 1-1s
- Time and space
- Build relational power

"positive is that I want to be here [SAB] it doesn't feel like pressurised . I genuinely don't feel like I have to come but I'm doing this because I feel like it has value but if I felt that it wasn't going anywhere I would say I don't want to take part"

"People feel empowered if they feel like they are being heard . SAB our voice is being heard"

"it feels like a safe space, I feel like I belong and I can say anything [. . .] it felt like I mattered"

"Over the 9 months I've been here at NU I've seen preferential treatment of white students [. . .] the student advisory board gave me a space to share this, express this and unburden [. . .] a space to express myself safely in an environment where I could share ideas and I felt listened to. The best part of meetings was being given a fair chance to talk, it wasn't intimidating"

LISTEN UP!



- *Visibility of the work*

"It promotes people coming up from the south to the north . people of colour . if I'm sat in a lecture and I'm the only brown person but the School acknowledges that this is a problem and says they are doing something about it . would make me feel better . assurances. message is to reassure people especially undergraduates that there is something being done and not being overlooked"

(SAB member)

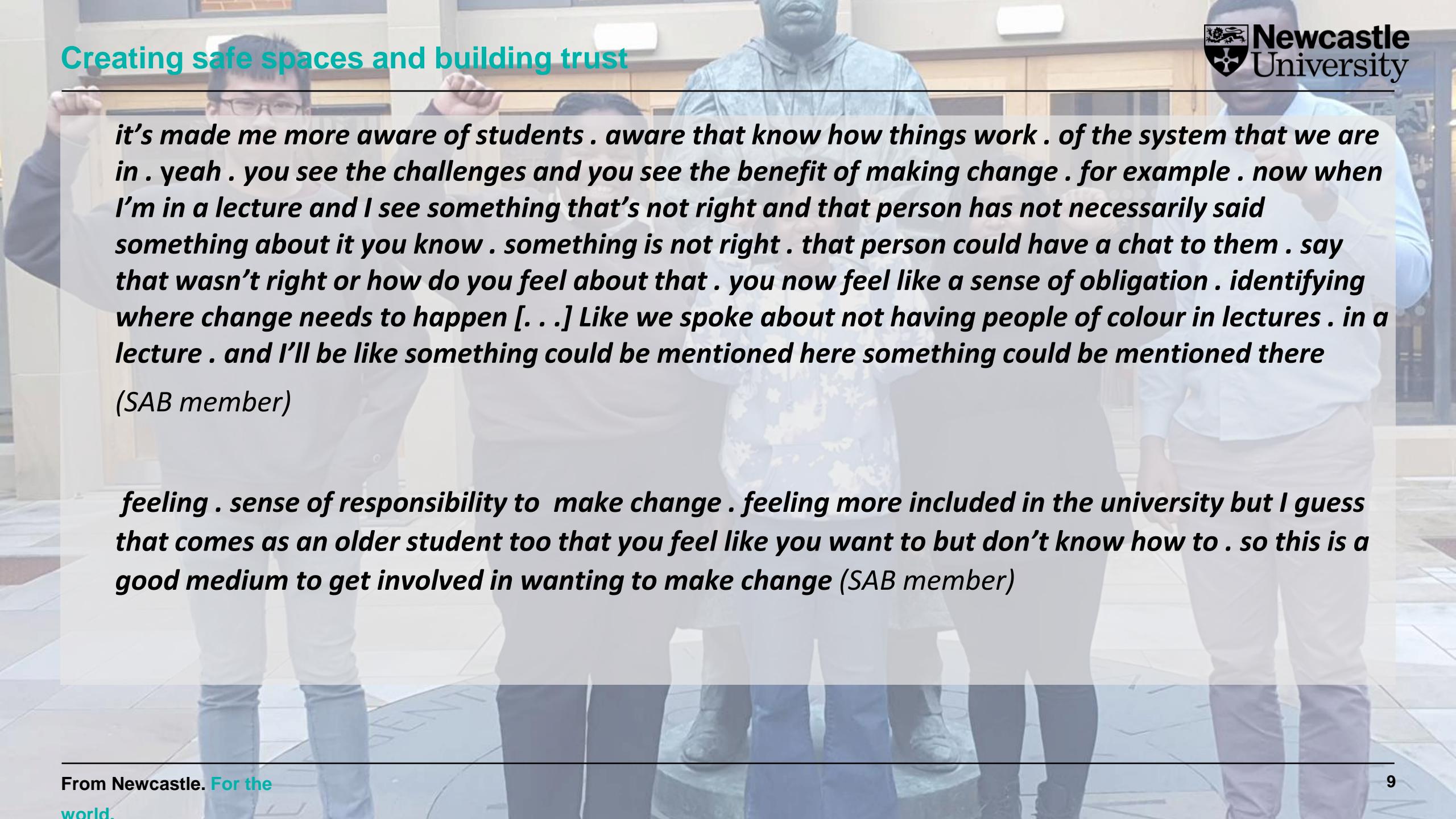
CONTACT US
Dr Amina Razak
Research Associate, Inclusive Newcastle
Knowledge Centre
amina.razak@ncl.ac.uk



- *Support for students working on sensitive projects*

“being involved in a project like this need to consider that we will need resources that others might not be exposed to or need . need a support person if not Amina . as a team we’ve gelled quite well but not everyone in a team might not . [. . .] yeah I’ve worked in other projects where that hasn’t been done and it has been equally as sensitive if not more . it’s like we are going to casually get on with our lives after the project”

(SAB member)



it's made me more aware of students . aware that know how things work . of the system that we are in . yeah . you see the challenges and you see the benefit of making change . for example . now when I'm in a lecture and I see something that's not right and that person has not necessarily said something about it you know . something is not right . that person could have a chat to them . say that wasn't right or how do you feel about that . you now feel like a sense of obligation . identifying where change needs to happen [. . .] Like we spoke about not having people of colour in lectures . in a lecture . and I'll be like something could be mentioned here something could be mentioned there

(SAB member)

feeling . sense of responsibility to make change . feeling more included in the university but I guess that comes as an older student too that you feel like you want to but don't know how to . so this is a good medium to get involved in wanting to make change (SAB member)

Thank you for listening!