Trainee quadrant: Where we all start. Our goal is to get to the golden quadrant by acquiring knowledge of clinically sound treatment and learning how to form excellent relationships.

Blind quadrant: Understands clinical care exceptionally well and can provide great recommendations on the best course of treatment; may lack the interpersonal skills necessary to connect with both patients and peers.

Hidden quadrant: Well-liked and collaborative but may not be able to determine the best treatment due to lack of skill and knowledge.

Golden quadrant: This is the ideal balance; you have the right skills to identify proper care for a patient, as well as the ability to build collaboration and consensus among team members.

Unfortunately, there are barriers that can prevent a team or individual from getting to the golden quadrant. These include:

Psychological distress—an environment where team members do not feel safe to take risks, speak up, or ask questions.

Incivility and intimidation—behaviors that lead to power differentials and make it impossible to build consensus and collaborate effectively.

Vulnerability—at the extreme, vulnerability can lead to fear that brings out uncertainty in team members and increases the perceived emotional risk of speaking out or taking action.

Abuse—the most extreme barrier that will destroy a team. Abuse can take many forms: physical, emotional, psychological, financial, bullying, and harassment.

Not to be overlooked, there are catalysts that help people develop the right balance of clinical skills and knowledge. By developing team psychological safety, obtaining feedback, learning to disagree without being disagreeable, improving teamwork culture, and even showing appropriate vulnerability, individuals and teams can promote golden quadrant tendencies.