PHOENIX RISING · OXYTOCIN-LEARNING



Would you have noticed?

A short workbook on seeing what institutions train us not to see.

Fifteen to twenty minutes. Private. No right answers.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to use this workbook

You have just watched Ava, a ward manager, describe a corridor she walked every day for two years before she really saw it, and two triage records for the same symptoms, coded very differently.

This workbook takes you a little further, in four short steps: notice, separate what you saw from what you assumed, look at the evidence, and decide one thing you will do differently.

- It is private. Nothing here is collected or shared.
- There are no right answers, and no score. It is not a test of whether you are a good person.
- You never need to write about a personal experience of harm. Use your work, a place you know, or the fictional examples here.
- Ava and Marcus are fictional composites, written for learning. The figures are real, and each one is sourced.

> **"The point isn't to catch you out. It's to help you look again."**
>
> Ava, Phoenix Rising



STEP ONE · NOTICE

The architecture of absence

"There's a corridor in the hospital where I trained. Portraits line both walls: thirty years of leaders. I walked that corridor every day for two years before I really saw it. None of the faces looked like mine. I mentioned it once to a colleague. She said, 'I've never noticed that.' And I believed her."

Ava came to call it the architecture of absence: a pattern so built into a place that people walk past it every day without seeing it. Her colleague was not lying. That is the point.

Think of a corridor, a website, a board photograph or a leadership team you know. Who is there? Who is missing?

STEP ONE · NOTICE

The Room Read

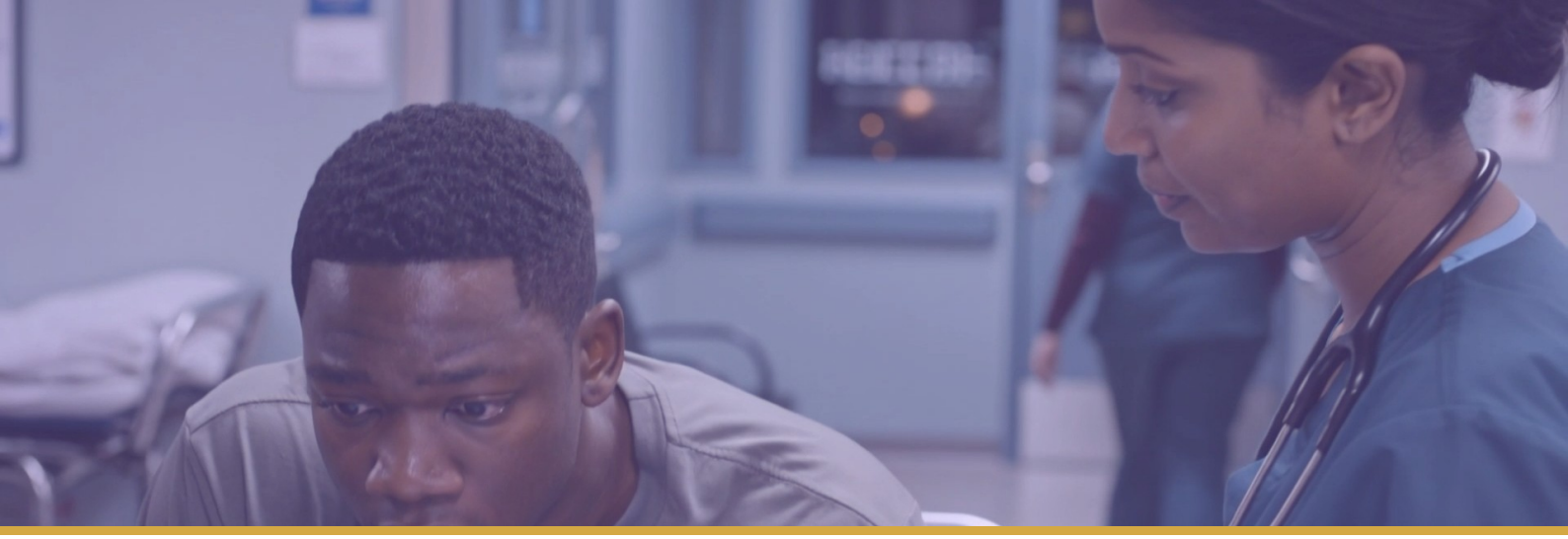
Every Phoenix Rising lesson begins with a pause. In Lesson One it is the Room Read, four words to slow down how you arrive anywhere:

1 Arrive	Notice how you are arriving: rushed, settled, guarded, open.
2 Scan	Look around. Who is here, where, and in what role?
3 Sense	What is the feeling in the room? Who speaks, and who does not?
4 Name	Put what you noticed into words, without judging it yet.

Then finish two sentences, and keep what you saw apart from the meaning you begin to make of it.

I notice ...

I wonder ...



STEP TWO · SEPARATE

Two records, the same symptoms

Marcus is twenty-eight, Black British. He arrives at A&E with acute anxiety, chest tightness and racing thoughts. His triage record says: anxiety, low priority. Twenty minutes earlier, a white woman of a similar age came in with the same recorded symptoms. Her record says: query cardiac, urgent review.

You can see both records. You don't yet know what led to the difference. What do you do?

What I observed	What I might be assuming	What I would need to know

The records give you a reason to examine the difference. They do not, on their own, establish its cause. The skill is to look again, ask how each decision was made, and raise it through the right route.

STEP THREE · LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE

None of this is hidden

Marcus is fictional. The pattern is not. These are the official figures for England.

2.72×

Black women in England are nearly three times as likely as white women to die in pregnancy or the six weeks after it.

Source: MBRRACE-UK, Maternal mortality 2022–2024 data brief, NPEU, University of Oxford (September 2026). England, 2022–24: relative risk 2.72.

3.99×

Black people are detained under the Mental Health Act at nearly four times the rate of white people.

Source: NHS England, Mental Health Act Statistics, Annual Figures 2024–25 (18 September 2025): 262.4 and 65.8 detentions per 100,000.

1.62

White applicants are 1.62 times as likely as Black and minority ethnic applicants to be appointed from a shortlist. In 2016 it was 1.57.

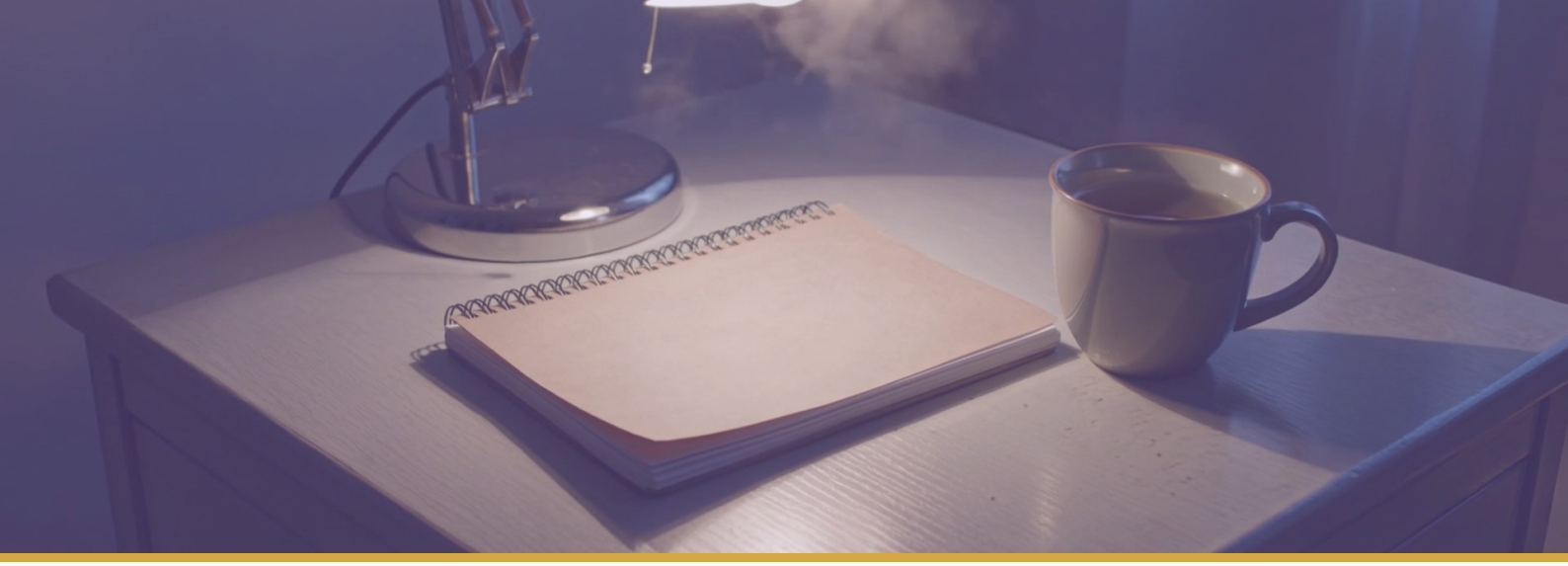
Source: NHS England, Workforce Race Equality Standard 2024 data analysis report (25 June 2025), indicator 2, all posts.

15.5%

of Black and minority ethnic NHS staff say they have experienced discrimination from colleagues. For white staff: 6.7%.

Source: NHS England, Workforce Race Equality Standard 2024 data analysis report (25 June 2025), indicator 8, from the 2023 NHS Staff Survey.

The data exists. What keeps the pattern in place is the silence around it.



STEP THREE · LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE

Why good people miss it

Most training changes minds. But an institution can take in the learning and stay exactly as it was.

Noticing is not automatic. Ava's colleague walked the same corridor. Two clinicians can read the same symptoms and reach different priorities without either of them meaning to treat anyone differently. Patterns like these live in habits, thresholds and decisions that no one has looked at again, which is why they can be learned, and unlearned.

And voice without an institutional response becomes another form of harm. When people speak up and nothing changes, they learn that speaking was the risk.

Where in your work might a pattern be hiding in plain sight?

STEP FOUR · ACT

What you can do on Monday

1

Read a real room

In your next meeting, use the Room Read: arrive, scan, sense, name. Notice who speaks, who decides, and who is missing.

2

Look again at one decision

Pick one routine decision: a triage, a referral, a shortlist, a rota. Ask how it is made, and whether the same information leads to the same outcome for everyone.

3

Find your own figures

Every NHS trust publishes its Workforce Race Equality Standard data. Find your organisation's, and read it with a colleague.

4

Carry one question

Choose one question to carry with you this week, and notice where it leads.

STEP FOUR · ACT

The question you carry home

In Phoenix Rising, every lesson ends with a mirror moment: on your way home, the question you carry with you. Write yours here.

My question

One thing I will do differently, and when

Who I could talk to about it

Go further, at your own pace

Noticing is the first step. Here is where to practise it next.

YOUR NEXT CASE · FREE TO PLAY

The Investigation



You have practised noticing in one corridor and two records. The Investigation asks you to notice across a whole night shift.

Ward 9, a Tuesday night: three registered nurses where four were planned. Grace, a nurse recruited from Ghana, had already reported the night as unsafe. By morning a patient has come to harm, and Grace is under investigation. You sit in the chairs of the people involved, and the truth holds only when the pieces are put side by side.

Play the first night free, about 25 minutes:
oxytocin-house-of-learning.com/scenarios/the-investigation-1-night

A fictional composite: every person, ward and event in it is invented. It touches a patient coming to harm, racism, and fear for a job. You can stop at any point.

Phoenix Rising

Anti-racism leadership for health and care. 36 lessons, accredited by The CPD Standards Office for 60 CPD hours, with Ava as your guide. £399, paid once: the founding price until 31 December 2026; from 1 January 2027, £899. 14-day refund.

The Oxytocin House of Learning

Seven courses, each with its own guide and room. 168 lessons. £165 a month; founding members pay £82.50 a month with the code FOUNDING50, until 31 December 2026. 14-day refund.

For organisations

Start with an Executive Discovery Meeting: 90 minutes, confidential, no pitch.

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Oxytocin-Learning Ltd was co-founded by Dr Jacqui Dyer MBE and Edward Neequaye MSc. Oxytocin-Learning Ltd is a CPD-accredited training provider, accredited by The CPD Standards Office, an independent CPD accreditation body. Provider No. 51109. Phoenix Rising is accredited by The CPD Standards Office for 60 CPD hours. Accreditation for all other Oxytocin-Learning courses is pending. Ava, Marcus and Grace are fictional composites, written for learning. This workbook is free to use and share in full.