

Reflective Practice with Families

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Objectives

- Explore how Reflective Practice can be a tool to enhance your work and relationships with families
- Understand the connections between Resiliency and Reflective Practice
- Practice specific skills to enhance your own Reflective Practice as a professional

Personal Reflection

How do you already use reflection to guide your practice with children and families?

What is Reflective Practice?

- One Word
- "Thinks about and questions one's influences and actions before, during, or after consultation interactions. Considers the perspective and experience of others (e.g., child/family/staff) in the context of consultation, i.e., "What must this experience have been like for the child...staff...parent?" (Office of Head Start, National Center on Health Competencies: Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation)

What is Reflective Practice?

- Pause to explore and develop new ideas and ways of practicing
- Self-Reflection
- Assists Others to Reflect

What is Reflective Practice?

Time and Space to Notice and Consider

- Your own feelings about the work, and their impact on the work
- Curiosities and challenges you face with the children and families you work with
- Plans to move forward with relationships and resources

What is Reflective Practice?

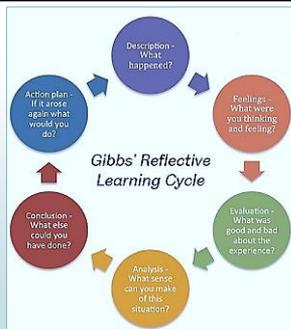
Self first, second, always – Using yourself as a point of information. Tune in to

- How you respond/react to different situations,
- Observing self while observing other – how do I be my “best self” (the person I want to be) as much as possible?

What is Reflective Practice?

Attuned observation of others (children and families) followed by intentional reflection based in a spirit of curiosity: (Gilkerson, L and Imberger, J.)

- What was their experience of this moment? What is their experience of me?
- How do they show resiliency, strength, and capability?
- What are areas where they struggle? What do they need from me to be the best they can be?



Why Reflective Practice?

- Expand and improve practice
- Focus future support
- Reflect on strengths, challenges, areas of growth (with a particular family and to identify professional patterns)
- Self-awareness – we learn through reflection about experiences; a way to pay attention to the experience when we're no longer "in it"

Why Reflective Practice?

- Self-care – having moments of reflection (solitary or with another) helps release stress, resolve feelings, and re-center
- Parallel Process
- Ultimate goal – Increasing reflective capacity of families!
- Ultimate goal #2 – Using Reflection to support families in finding and experiencing JOY

The Relationship is Everything

No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship.

–Dr. James Comer

The Relationship is Everything

Rupture and Repair



Practical Use of Reflective Practice

- **In Action** (In the moment): what do I need to pay attention to *right now*, in *this moment*? (D. Schon, 1983) Balance the needs of:
 - Self
 - Other (Child, Family)
 - Safety
 - Relationship with the family
 - Goals or tasks that need to be accomplished

Practical Use of Reflective Practice



Personal Reflection

Are there times when reflection is *not* useful in the moment?

When are you more likely to focus on *your* role in a situation – how your actions impacted the situation?

How do you support families in practicing reflection in the moment?

Practical Use of Reflective Practice

- **On Action** (After the moment): Reflect on the feelings events, and experiences of an earlier situation.
 - What happened – what did I feel, experience?
 - What did the other people feel, experience?
 - What went well?
 - What didn't go the way I wanted it to?
 - Was there anything I missed, or didn't give full attention to at the time?

Practical Use of Reflective Practice

- **For Action** (the future): What is important to keep in mind for the next time?
 - What questions and curiosities do I have?
 - What do I want to continue doing with this family/staff person?
 - What might I do differently next time?
 - Are there any repairs to make in the relationship?
 - Is there anything I might need to spotlight and address directly?
 - What is the plan for the next time I see this child/family?

Personal Reflection

When are you more likely to focus on *another's* role in a situation – how their actions impacted the situation?

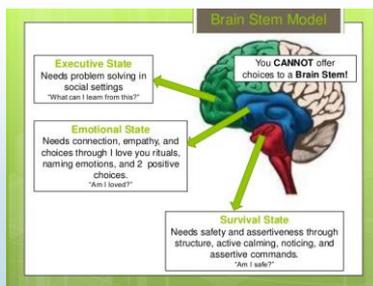
When is reflection On or For Action easier?
More challenging?

How have you supported a family in reflecting on or for their own actions? **Coaching!

How does Reflective Practice Connect to Resiliency?

- ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences Study)
- Resiliency is a skill that can be built
- Family Resiliency
- Personal Resiliency

Brain States



Stress and the brain/body

Think about a moment when you were upset, angry, frustrated...

Where do you notice tension, discomfort, or even pain in your body?

Personal Reflection

What is at least one "in-the-moment" tool you have to re-center yourself in a challenging situation?

How do you maintain a spirit of curiosity even in the most challenging situations?

How do you support self-regulation in others?

Brain States and Reflective Practice

Between stimulus and response
there is a space.

In that space is our power
to choose our response.

In our response lies our
growth and our freedom.

- Viktor Frankl
psychiatrist and
holocaust survivor

#MindState

Keeping In Mind...

- Self
 - What are my own triggers, uncertainties, areas of discomfort in working with children and families?
 - What successes do I keep in mind to learn from, and build on?
 - What values and beliefs underlie and inform my practice with children and families?

Keeping In Mind...

- Parents
 - What is the parent's current experience – thoughts, feelings, questions?
 - What have this parent's experiences of being *engaged* been like?
 - What have this parent's experiences of being *excluded* or *dismissed* been like?
 - What previous experiences might impact how the parent reacts/responds to this moment?
 - What successes and strengths have you witnessed or has the parent shared that can be built on?

Video Reflection ("You clean it up") - Personal

- What did you notice happening for you?
 - Emotions?
 - Tension in your body?
 - Instinct to "fix"?
 - Other?
- What would your first reaction be to support this family? How would you support reflection with this family?

Video Reflection ("You clean it up") - Partner

- What did this family do well (even briefly)?
- What do you wonder about this family? (How do you activate your spirit of curiosity?)
- Who do you have compassion for in this family? Is there anyone that is harder to have compassion for?
- What brain state was this dad in?

Video Reflection ("It's too heavy!") - Partner

- Children
 - What is the child's experience of this moment?
 - What brain state was this child in?
 - What experiences has the child had that might impact how they react or respond?
 - What successes and strengths can the family build on with this child?

Video Reflection ("It's too heavy!") - Partner

- Family as a Whole
 - How do the family's previous experiences impact their reaction/response in this moment?
 - Current experiences?
 - What are the family's strengths and successes?
 - What family beliefs, values, traditions, routines, and rituals support this family's survival, growth, and future possibilities?
 - How did this family negotiate different brain states?

Video Reflection - Personal

- Self – Do I notice I disagree or have discomfort around any of the beliefs, values, traditions, routines, or rituals of this family?
- How do I support reflection *with* this family?

Personal Resiliency

Self Care in the moment = Self Regulation (noticing and regulating body and brain)

- What did you do during the videos to take care of yourself?
- We work hard, and we **deserve** our moments of peace.

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.

– Etty Hillesum

TooMuchonHerPlate.com

Personal Resiliency

Self Care over time = Health and Well-Being

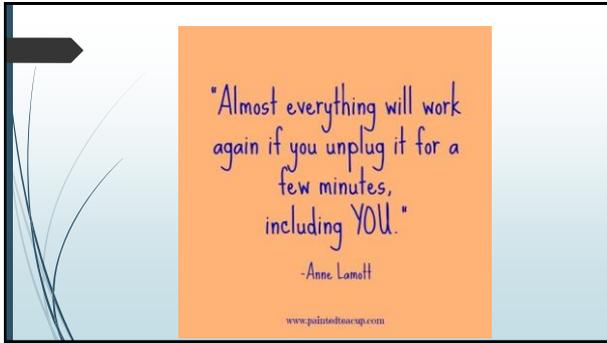
- What do you do each day to take care of yourself
- Who is in your support system – personal and professional?
- How do you/ could you practice brain state awareness?

**Be kind.
Be patient.
Be generous.
Be accepting.
Be all of these things
to yourself.
That is where
it begins.**

Seed & Song

Mindfulness

- What is it?
- How does it connect with Reflective Practice?
- Finding Stillness



Decompressing

- Laughter
- Music
- Walks/Physical Activity
- Creative Experiences
- Journaling
- Time with Family and Friends
- Time with yourself

Decompressing

- We tend to justify self-care as a way to take care of others better. While this is true, Self-care is important for you as an individual person! You deserve to take care of you... just for you!

Creating a reflective space

- Physical Space
- Emotional/Mental Space (ready mind)
- Solitary space (space to think through something on my own)
- Relational space (support to think through something)

Thank YOU!!!

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Complete the Breakout Session Evaluation on the Mobile App

The image shows three screenshots of a mobile app interface. The first screenshot shows a 'Schedule' screen with a list of sessions, with a red arrow pointing to a session titled 'HD121 Girl Brain, Boy Brain'. The second screenshot shows the 'Session Details' for this session, with a red arrow pointing to the 'EVALUATION' link. The third screenshot shows the evaluation form, with red arrows pointing to the 'Rate' button and the 'Next' button.