

Culturally Responsive Practices in Coaching

Joyce Escorcia: ... Coaching Corner Webinar. We thank you for taking the time out of your busy, and maybe unexpected, day. And today, I'm joined in presenting by my colleague, Ashley Nemec, and we have our expert coach with us today, Denise Perez-Binder from the University of South Florida.

Now, this is a reminder that Coaching Corner Webinar Series occurs every other month, and we want to go ahead and invite you to mark your calendars for the next episode on May 27 at 3 p.m. Eastern. So go ahead and put that on your calendars. We look forward to seeing you in May.

So the goal of every episode is to support you as a coach by exploring topics that are relevant to you in your role, identifying resources and strategies specific to our topic, and then putting it into practice by giving you the opportunity to kind of have group discussions, ask questions, and also maybe through some scenario videos and then, like today, have an opportunity to learn from and interact with our—our special guest.

So again, thank you for joining us, and we know that we're kind of in uncharted waters right now, so we just want to acknowledge that. And we know that many of you that are out there in our Coaching Corner community might find yourself in a new place, whether you are at home, on leave, or supporting coaches virtually, or supporting your program virtually. We want to say thank you for your sacrifice and that we're here to support you, and our thoughts are with you and your families, and we're in this together.

And we just wanted to start off with just a little kind of mindfulness activity that you can try at home or throughout the day, and, you know, I've put this one into practice a little bit since I found it. And so, you know, when you're kind of just feeling a little bit stressed out or overwhelmed, or maybe just unsure about what's happening around you, then it might be a good moment to kind of find some peace and just some, like, a calm awareness, and just that mindfulness SNACK moment. And so I know that a lot of us are doing a lot of extra snacking these days, and so this is just a fun way to kind of take a moment for yourself.

And so, when we think about SNACK, the "S" could be for "stop," and that's just kind of stopping whatever we're doing, and, you know, when we think about stopping, it really requires us to begin again.

And so just to know that we can always take that moment to kind of start over. "All right. Let me have a do-over for this moment," and also notice, and that's really just notice about what's happening within you, what are you feeling, and also what's happening around you, just to acknowledge that, and then accept that ...

Now, this one can be a little tricky because it's whatever you're struggling with, you know, whether it's time, kids, you know, things related to quarantine, job, finances, just kind of acknowledge those things, those feelings that are happening and just note, you know, acknowledge it for what it is and just be OK with it. "OK. I'm not going to pass judgment. I'm just going to kind of accept this is what's happening around me," and then "C" in SNACK is for

"curious," and that's really just taking a moment to ground yourself with questions about, you know, your experience, and what's happening, and the environment around you, you know, just asking yourself, "What do I feel? What do I need right now? What do I need right now to kind of help me make my next decision, to do my next task, to move forward?" And then the "K" is for "kindness," and that's just to respond to yourself and others with kindness, and just to really observe that things, you know, can and will get back on track.

And so, I just wanted to kind of share that moment with you. Again, we know that this can be uncertain times for all of us, and we just wanted to give you just a quick little snack that can maybe help you through your day.

We are excited today to have Denise with us from the University of South Florida. Welcome, Denise. Thank you so much for taking the time out of your probably not-so-normal day right now. Could you please just introduce yourself to our Coaching Corner community and just let them know about who you are and where you come from?

Denise Perez-Binder: Thank you for having me, Joyce. I'm really excited to be here and to share with you guys today. I am Denise Binder; I am out of the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL. I work directly with Dr. Lise Fox, and I'm a member—a staff member of the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations, NCPMI, and also the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, ECTA, out of North Carolina. I have been working on pyramid model and with practice-based coaching for about 14 years now, so it's been a while, and I have lots of experience coaching in lots of different capacities and love to share those experiences with persons who are just starting out coaching or may be having some challenges in different areas of the PBC model. And so I think that's really how we learn best is really sharing our experiences and being able to take what somebody else is doing and expanding it or tweaking it and making it our own so that it fits your style and your practitioner's style of learning. So I'm excited to be here with you today and to be able to share some of my experiences.

Joyce: Well, thank you, and we are just as excited to kind of have you on and hear, kind of, just some stories from the field. All right. Let's get started a little bit here. So our desire is, by the end of this presentation, that those of you out in our Coaching Corner community, that you'll be able to—to define just culturally responsive practices and environments. You'll be able to have a discussion about common coaching cultural considerations and then also explore resources to support using those culturally responsive practices with coaches and coachees, so we're really looking forward to be able to give you some other tools and strategies that you can use throughout your day and year.

And so one ... In general, when we think about cultural responsiveness, it's a strengths-based approach to teaching and caregiving, really rooted in the respect and appreciation for the role of culture in children's learning and development. And so what you see here, the framework for early childhood systems really identifies important drivers for positive and goal-oriented relationships across the entire early childhood field. So equity, inclusiveness, and cultural linguistic responsiveness are important to integrate throughout the system, so this concept can be applied at multiple levels with the program through teaming and collaboration, and so in addition to that, applying those culturally responsive principles are important for a child's development, so the concept of culture impacts the child's identity, their ability to feel socially

connected and to really build the attachment skills necessary for social and emotional development and with positive learning outcomes.

And so this is why it's so important that, as coaches, that we become fluent using culturally responsive practices in our work as coaches, and our ability in guiding coaches to becoming fluent in using those culturally responsive practices with the children and families they work with. So we really kind of wanted to make that connection going in. And then another thing we kind of wanted to mention, we wanted to talk just a little bit to kind of lay the foundation for today about understanding equity. And so really, oftentimes when we think about equity, you know, we think about equality or giving everyone the same thing, but sometimes really making sure that everyone has the same thing or the same amount can really fail to give people what they actually need. And so I'm going to reference a story from Mariana Souto-Manning, and she's an early childhood and teacher education professor at the teacher's college at Columbia University, and in one of her classes with pre-service teachers, she conducts an activity that really helps shed a light on the difference between equity and equality. And so what she does is, she has all the students take off their shoes, and they put them in the middle of the room in a big pile, and then she makes her students—she makes everyone just take two shoes, and so everyone is equal, right? They have two shoes, and so once everybody has their two shoes, she asks the students to put the shoes on and kind of walk around the room. So some students have two left shoes. Some have mismatched shoes.

Some have shoes that don't fit them, and so ... But they all have two shoes, you know, in terms of, you know, kind of style and size. So as the students in her class kind of begin to move around the room, you know, they report that their feet hurt, that they're uncomfortable; some kind of move slowly, and then some people just don't participate in the activity at all.

So then she stops her students to engage in a discussion and connects this exercise with the concepts of equity and equality, and although each person has the same number of shoes, equality, some of them experience pain or discomfort. They discuss differences in the shoes: size, styles, and price, and then Professor Souto-Manning, she goes on to explain that while equality means same conditions, equity means an equality of the possible outcomes, which may demand really kind of different conditions supporting individuals, you know, differently, kind of just supporting the individuality of, you know, human beings and what they need. And so, kind of making that coaching connection as coaches, you know, when we work with coaches, we know that they come from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, and the same is true for the coaches in their work with children and families. So coaching, teaching, and learning, you know, are not just one-size-fits-all.

And so during our time together, we really want to discuss considerations and strategy to help you to be culturally responsive to coaches and to support their culturally responsive practices with children and families, and so ... And we just ... That's kind of where we want to focus on today for our time together. And we want to highlight NAEYC's new advancing equities position statement and look specifically to some of their recommendations that you see here. So first, you know, one of the recommendations is to build awareness and understanding of your culture, personal beliefs, values, and biases. And so that means they recognize that everyone holds some type of bias based on their personal background and experience, that even if we

think of ourselves as kind of being unbiased that we should really reflect on the impacts of things like racism, sexism, classism, and other system kind of oppression and how it affected us and the people kind of around us.

And then, the second kind of recommendation was to recognize the power and benefits of diversity and inclusivity—so to carefully observe and to listen to others—you know, children, families, colleagues, friends. Expand our knowledge by considering diverse experiences and perspectives without generalizing or even stereotyping. And then, the other recommendation was to take responsibility for biased actions, even if unintended, and actively work to repair the harm. So when we commit a biased action, just be ready and willing to be held accountable. So resist the urge to become defensive, especially kind of as a member of a privileged group, and before making a judgment, take responsibility for, you know, recognizing what we don't know and really understand and use the opportunity to learn and reflect.

And then also, NAEYC's new advantage equity position statement also outlines some of the following recommendations for everyone. We're just going to take a look at those quickly. Their first recommendation is that, you know, to acknowledge and seek to understand structural inequities and their impact over time. So really, just take action when outcomes vary significantly by social identity, you know, for example, lopsided achievement scores, achievement test scores, number, and frequency of suspensions or expulsions that are, you know, disproportionately targeted toward African-American or Latino boys, you know, to look deeper at how kind of our expectations, practices, and orthology may contribute to kind of some of those inequitable outcomes.

And then, to really view, kind of, our commitment to cultural responsiveness as an ongoing process. Now we have to know that this isn't a one-time matter of just kind of mastering something, but we have to know that it really is kind of our enduring responsibility to learn and reflect based on our direct experiences with children and families, and others. And then also recognize that the professional knowledge base is changing, you know, that there's a growing awareness that of the limitations of child development theories and research based on primarily on kind of a normative perspective of white, middle class children without disabilities, educated in primarily English language schools.

So to really kind of keep up with, you know, kind of up-to-date—up-to-date research and know, you know, that the things are that are coming out now are more strengths-based approaches to research and practice and articulated kind of in a new way and be able to recognize any of those things that come from a different place. And so, those are just, kind of, some of the thing we wanted to kind of just lay the foundation for our conversation today with Denise. And so now, I'm going to turn it over to Ashley, who is going to kind of start talking about, a little bit about culture and coaching.

Ashley Nemeč: Thank you, Joyce. So we can look at the use of culturally responsiveness and coaching at multiple levels, and so today, we're going to first talk about the use of culturally responsiveness practices at the coach and coachee level. It's important a coach is able to apply these practices with all the coachees that they work with. Many of these practices are

supportive through building trust and mutual respect within the collaborative partnership, and we'll talk about that, and if you're able to use practices that support a strong collaborative partnership, then most likely there will be those positive learning outcomes for the coachee. And then in the second part of this, we're going to look at how a coach can support a coachee to use culturally responsiveness practices when working with the children and families that they serve. So going back to that concept of equity that Joyce discussed, and creating an educational experience where the coachee is able to address the needs of his or her students and families so they feel safe and have access to learning in a way that supports their success and they can see themselves as an important part of the environment.

So what does it mean when we talk about being a culturally responsive coach? I like to think of a culturally responsive coach as exhibiting four qualities. It's beyond just going through the PBC cycle and using the strategies we discussed through each component but really being able to apply specific strategies within each component with intention. So the first quality is somewhat ... Is being self-aware. So someone who is self-aware of their own thoughts, beliefs, perspective, expectations, as Joyce said, you know, we all have our own implicit biases. We actually, in the resource, if you look, you have a look to the Harvard implicit bias test. If you're interested, you can choose from a variety of online quizzes to identify some personal biases or to share this as a research with coaches or coachees that you work with, and she also said it's not a one-and-done skill. This is an ongoing life skill. It's a lifelong process, and also being aware that the coachees that you work with have their own life experiences, their own ... Are going to shape their own perspectives and beliefs.

The next ... Sorry, there was a little ... The next quality is openness, so being open to hearing others' ideas, thoughts, perspectives, and listening to them with respect. So there's a difference between approaching our work as coaches as going in as the expert and saying, "This is what we have to get done," versus really listening to personal stories of our coachees and shaping our coaching around what works for them. And then, the ability to be responsive in your choice in the application of coaching strategies to meet the coachees where they are, acknowledging their strengths coming from that strengths-based perspective of what they already do well and building off of that.

And then, the fourth quality would be just taking the time to become knowledgeable of the unique characteristics of each individual you work with, the programs you're working in, the children and families being served in those programs. Some of us have the luxury of coaching in a program where we work and we already have that knowledge, but again, going back to really being intentional so that you can be responsive to individual needs will just help strengthen those connections and help you to be a more responsive coach by knowing the values of the community that you're serving.

So we wanted to take some time to hear from you. You can submit responses using the Q&A widget at the bottom of your screen. What are some ways that you apply these principles in your coaching interactions? And I know we are going to ask our expert, Denise. OK. So repeating the question, "The four qualities

we talked about: awareness, openness, ability to differentiate coaching strategies, and knowledge, what are some ways in your everyday coaching interactions that you apply these principles?" Maybe Denise, if you'd like to start as people are typing?

Denise: Sure. So I think it really comes down ... Well, I want to start with that awareness piece. For me, when I started to coach around culturally responsive practices, I was one of those people who thought, "I don't have any biases. I see everybody the same," and kind of the shoe story that Joyce was telling us about. I give all my kids the same amount of love, the same experience, but really sitting and doing some reflection and becoming aware of my own personal beliefs, my own perspective was such an eye-opening experience for me. I had such a huge a-ha moment, so I love to share those kinds of reflections before we even really start digging into what's going on in the classroom, what's happening with this family or this kid or this teacher. I really want to do some soft reflection exercises with my teachers, and that, in itself, has really opened us up—our coaching team has really opened us up to really being more able to apply strategies that will affect all kids and that will guide the strengths of all the children and families that we're serving.

So I really think it's so, so important to think about a reflection kind of—a self-reflection kind of piece when you're starting your ... Maybe not right when you start your coaching process, but as you're gaining that collaborative partnership that is an exercise that I like to do, and I think it's really, really helped enhance my coaching support.

Ashley: Yeah. Thank you, Denise, and it seems like a lot of the responses we're getting really reflect that ability to ask open-ended questions and to really, you know, use that self-reflection in the moment with their coaches before coaching even begins and building that collaborative partnership. So, let's see. Some other ...

Joyce: Ashley? No, I was just going to share I was kind of seeing some of the same things in the Q&A box as well. I was going to say, you know, just talking to the coachees and kind of seeing where they are and being open, you know, to listening and checking in with the coachees, being open-minded. I see that word coming up a lot in our Q&A box as well. "Never assume," Lakeisha says, "when it comes to working with our coachees."

Ashley: Yeah, and it seems like a lot of you are really already, you know, aware of implicit bias and being self-aware. That's something that keeps popping up, looking at nonverbal body language. We'll talk about that as well.

OK, thank you so much for sharing your responses. So again, that collaborative partnership keeps popping up here, and a lot of these culturally responsive practices have strong ties to the collaborative partnership. As we know already, a collaborative partnership refers to the working interactions between a coach and coachee with the intention that we want to provide a safe space for teachers to ask questions, discuss their problems, get support, and gather feedback and not be afraid to try new things, and again, coaching is neither a valiative or judgmental. We really want to stress that PBC is a supportive way to help adults grow professionally. So, in a lot of our past webinars and trainings, we talk about the collaborative partnership and some strategies for building that partnership, so if you're already doing those

well—many of you sound like you're already doing them ... Part of that is being culturally responsive.

On the other hand, being knowledgeable and applying culturally responsive practices during interactions with coachees are naturally going to support the collaborative partnership and building a strong one. So I think a lot of it really ties back to building our knowledge and awareness of these practices and applying them with intention. So, for example, during initial meetings with coaches, you might ask open-ended questions, as many of you shared, to gain insight on their knowledge, beliefs, and perspectives. Denise, do you have any, I'm sorry. I have a delay on my end, strategies that you are using to support a collaborative partnership using culturally responsive practices?

Denise: I think it is so important to strengths and durability of your implementation, whatever initiative you're implementing, that you work hard at this partnership, you pause your implementation as you need to—to ensure the stability of this partnership. Some of the strategies that I have used in the past is doing kind of reflections together.

So I would never ask a teacher to complete a software selection without completing one myself and sharing my own result so that it doesn't feel like the coachee is the one that's on display—it's both of us together, sharing our reflections and our work styles and our background experiences and where we want to go to, so it feels like we're just a team, and everything that I ask the coachee to do is something that I'm going to do, and I'm going to share my results with her. It's really—can be a really sticky kind of subject to talk about cultural bias and implicit bias and gender bias and things like this with people. So just really opening up yourself, I think is a really great way to start those kind of conversations, and that way, if we build those kind of partnerships, those foundations that are built on mutual trust, then when ... If we have to get into a more complicated or a sticky conversation, then we have those foundations in place, that they know that they're coming, those conversations are coming up from a place of pure professional growth, and that's it.

Ashley: Yeah, and it sounds like ... Hearing you talk, I'm hearing a lot about transparency and using communication skills in a way to build relationships, which is perfect, because that's what we wanted to talk about next.

Denise: Hmm. Sure thing.

Ashley: On this slide, we have created a hand-out for you that is in the widget, the resource widget, so we're going to kind of go through each little strategy on here, but just know that you do have a hand-out of this as well. So first of all, we heard a lot about self-reflection. I know many times we ask our coachees to self-reflect on their use of a practice on their own thoughts and beliefs, but it's really important as a coach to be able to do that as well. So whether you're taking notes during interactions with your coachees or using a journal to reflect on how to improve certain interactions with coachees or using reflective supervision or reaching out to our communities of practice to identify our own perspectives, beliefs, or problem solve around issues that might pop up. We've also talked about reflective questioning, so asking those open-ended questions to hear our coachee's perspective, and this might also inform us about their level of engagement with coaching, so perhaps if they've had a past experience with coaching

that didn't go so well, or it went really well, and they're really open to the experience, so those open-ended questions can really inform us.

Adult learning principles is extremely important, we know, as coaches. So, not only our ability to understand them, but apply the principles in a way that is responsive after we've had those conversations with our coachees to their individual needs. Even something as simple as asking, "How best do you take in new information? Are you a visual learner? Do you need to do it right away to really understand it?" can just help us know how we can be responsive and share information—new information in a way that works for them. I know in some of your responses there were some strategies tied to active listening, and I mean really listening, so not just listening to the words that our coachees are saying when they're sharing information with us but really taking time to process what's being said. I always find it's helpful to write notes during our conversation so I can go back and really reflect on what was said and to kind of plan my next strategies and steps in supporting them in a way that's responsive.

Also, some of you brought up reading those nonverbal cues. It's really important. You know, their words might be saying something, and their body is telling us something different, and not being afraid to ask some of those questions, you know, to see if we're meeting their needs and to be responsive to that as well. Affirmation of strengths, again, we're talking about coming from a strengths-based perspective, affirming each individual coachee's strengths and perspectives as well.

So they might have community ties within their program that has been there for awhile and have knowledge that we don't have, and, you know, the strength of a coach to be able to acknowledge that and realize that there's not always one way of doing things and to kind of work together to create strategies for them in their practices that will work in their classrooms, and then the ability to have problem-solving conversations, and we do this all the time, helping coachees solve their own problems, but, you know, I know we hear a lot of feedback. "Well, what if my coachee is not engaged in coaching?" and, "We're having a difficult time agreeing on which goal that we'd like to set or what strategy to use with this specific child."

So being able to, again, go back to those culturally responsive qualities we talked about and being able to understand our perspectives, why we think that way and feel that way, but then also being able to hearing others' perspectives and then being able to have the skill to come together to make a joint decision that ... Where we can create solutions that both parties are comfortable with. And then finally, data. I know Denise will agree with me how important data can be in informing and guiding our decision making as coaches, especially if you're new to coaching or if you're new to a relationship with a coachee, paying attention to that ... The information that's provided to you through the needs assessment or information that the coachee shares through conversation will help you to individualize your coaching approach for each coachee on your caseload. Do you have anything you wanted to add to that, Denise?

Denise: I just think that ... Well, I kind of wanted to emphasize that we're talking about the practice-based coaching model. Practice-based coaching model is not going to change because we are—we're talking about culturally responsive coaching. We're going to go through the same components. How we enter into those components, the strategies that we use may be a little bit different, so I think some of your ... Obviously the self-reflection that you impose on

both the coachee and yourself, those strategies may look a little different. The reflective questioning that you pose, those questions may have a little bit of a different content, but I just want to stress that it will still be important that we maintain the fidelity of the coaching model. We're just going to add a little bit of spice to make sure that we're including all different kinds of learners in the strategies that we put in.

Ashley: That's a great point.

Joyce: Hey, this is Joyce. I was just wondering, Denise. This feels like, maybe it would fit well here. We just had a question come up about ... Someone was just looking for maybe, like ... Do you have an example of, like, an interaction between a coach and a coachee maybe from your experiences and it kind of includes, like, a culturally appropriate response or maybe an interaction that can kind of help some of our community kind of see what that could look like? And it may help people relate to like, "OK. I've been in situations like that."

Denise: You want me to go, Ashley?

Ashley: Sure.

Denise: So I'm thinking of a specific situation where we had lots of—taken lots of data for a specific child who was struggling with challenging behavior in the classroom, and then there was another child that came up that was having lots of similar behavior, so we did some different kinds of assessments, collected some BIR data, behavior incident reports if you guys don't know BIR, and were noticing that a lot ... The children that were engaging or being or having BIRs written were all of the same ethnic group, so Hispanic boys.

And so as a coach, I go in and observe mainly to support these children, but then I'm realizing that a lot of the consequences that are being delivered or the reinforcements that are being delivered are not—are a little disproportionate to these guys, so I have a conversation with the teacher once I have a lot of data and support of my hypothesis. We have a sit-down, and we do just some basic reflections on her beliefs on consequencing certain behavior and how she thinks she is engaging of these students versus others, and I feel like just having the conversation, just opening up the dialogue was something that was really powerful for this teacher. She didn't understand what she was doing—and of course wasn't doing it on purpose—but once I had some concrete data to show her that this was happening in a disproportionate way. And so, it wasn't just me coming in and saying, "Well, I notice you doing blah, blah, blah," but I had some data that was showing what I was trying to talk about, that really opened her eyes to what was happening, and then we were able to talk about ways that we could intervene and maybe accommodate some of the language barriers or some of the cultural barriers that were happening toward these guys. So, I think it really ... It kind of goes back to that self-reflection and just having the relationship with the coachee that you can go in and you can talk about these hard conversations without feeling judgmental, without them shutting down or putting up a wall like you're evaluating them or you're calling them racist or something like that, but that you've laid that foundation, and I know it sounds like we're being repetitive, but I think it's really important to talk about and really important that, as you go through this process and you start having concerns like this, that before you address your concerns, you're really confident on the relationship that you've established with your coachee.

Ashley: I love that because you tied in the data piece. You had the data to really make the information that you're sharing objective so it didn't feel like you were judging, and then you were able to lead into that self-reflective conversation.

Denise: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I do think it's important, especially if you are coaching teachers or practitioners that feel maybe resistant to your information. They have lots of different sources that it's just not, "Oh, I observed you doing this." They have lots of different things to show that, "Yeah, this has happened, and it happened multiple times. Here's an instance where it happened. Here's what it looked like when it happened," so that we can really make transparent, your word again, Ashley.

Ashley: Yeah, exactly, and then I know I wanted to touch on—because you had touched on using communication for relationship building, and I know I've been in trainings with M.L. Hemmeter, where she said, "When you're feeling like your coachee is disengaged with coaching, go back to the collaborative partnership." So these are some really great conversation starters you shared with us that you can kind of start those discussions. Obviously the information you get with them, you'll have some follow-up questions and comments that you might use, but I just wanted to share some of those examples. So asking, "What part of the day is more challenging? What's going well?" We also have, you know, if there's time, this page has been created as a handout for you as well, of questions that you can ask coachees to get more information from them about their—to inform their knowledge and perspective that they might have so that you can be responsive in your coaching, but I just wanted to give us more time to kind of look at that second level of how coaches can support coachees to use culturally responsive practices with their children and families that they serve. So Joyce, did you want to get us started on that? OK. I'm not hearing Joyce so I'm ...

Joyce: I'm sorry. I was on ... I needed to hit unmute. That would be important. And so here, yeah, just some quick ... Ashley, you know, we've been talking about, you know, supporting our coaches in their kind of coaching practice, and now we want to talk about, you know, how can a coach support their coachees to support their children and families that they serve. And so, just as a quick reminder, we know that Head Start Performance Standards, they're kind of, like, our guide book. They provide us guidance on what to do and how to do, and so we know that in the Performance Standards in 1302.50, it states, you know, some things that a program must do, like, develop relationships with parents and structure services to encourage trust, respectful ongoing two-way communication, you know, between staff and parent, and then also we see kind of in 1302.30 that a program must deliver developmentally cultural and linguistically appropriate learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social-emotional functioning, and approaches to learning sciences with skills and creative words. And so for us as coaches, when we begin these coaching relationships with getting to know our coachees, our coachees must do the same thing with families and children in their care. So when we learn about children and families we work with, we can more kind of effectively support them and adapt the environment or how we interact with them, and it's also important to recognize that culture is really essential in kind of building kind of that sense of identity and, you know, for the children that we serve.

So we just kind of wanted to put that out there as just a reminder that, you know, all of these things tie back into Performance Standards. And so here, Denise, just to kind of bring you back in here to the conversation, how do you support coachees to learn about the cultural context of the children and families that they work with?

Denise: So again, I think that there's lots of ways that you want to talk with your coachees about the ... Just are they aware of the different cultures? Do they have questions? Do they have experience with specific families that they're working with? Do they have the background knowledge? So really kind of diving in, and doing that getting-to-know-you phase, and really doing it well, and really being purposeful in the way that we connect with our families and children that we are supporting.

And I think it's a component that we can easily pass by because our days are so busy in preschool, and we really want to get all our academics in and all of our social-emotional, and it's something that can get skipped over really, really quickly. So really having teachers take a step back and to make sure that they understand different family dynamics and ask questions if they're unsure of a cultural difference or a way that this family handles this versus that, so doing some of those getting-to-know-you kinds of assignments with families or if they don't face-to-face with their families, can they email, can they text? Can they send notes home?

And then making sure that they have different modes of communication and understanding that different families are going to be able to connect in different ways and making sure that they have different ways to connect with different kinds of families.

Ashley: That's a great point, Denise. I know that, you know, we have these three things that we talked about families, so thinking about they also have their own implicit biases, their own life experiences, whether it's an experience of them growing up in the school system or another education system that they've been, where their own preference styles for communication, like you said, they have their own educational values, so some things it's important to help our coachees understand, you know, our knowledge of early childhood development and education and views on values of things such as independence of disability can be very shaped by Westernized beliefs, and not all families might share those beliefs, or they might have different perspectives on the balance of power between the teacher and their role in supporting their child's education. So it's just important to kind of be mindful, like you were saying, of the cultural context of the family. So how do you support coaches using ... Nope. Let's go back to ... I think you may have answered this already actually, how you support using culturally responsive practices with families and children. Was there anything you wanted to add?

Denise: No, because I know we're getting close to time, but I want to make sure we talked about the coaching companion before we end, so I'll let you keep going.

Ashley: So these are just some ideas for communicating with families, again, keeping in mind they are adult learners, so a lot of those strategies we talked about in working with coachees can be applied to working with families as well, and then also thinking about the environments and the materials that you're using in your learning environment. So, if you're a home visitor, be mindful to use the materials from the home setting rather than bringing in your own materials, being mindful of the pictures and the print and making sure all the children and

families in your room are culturally represented in your learning environment. It's going too fast. So this is the last question we wanted to ask you was, "How do you approach those tough conversations with a coachee who is not currently using culturally responsive practices?" I know you wanted to share something about the equity guide.

Denise: I do. So one of the tools that we've developed from NCPMI, and it actually came out of a grant that we—an IES grant that we had called the Pyramid Equity Project, so we were really trying to implement pyramid models in preschools of ... That either had high immigrant populations or low SES, so we had a school in New Jersey who were comprised of mostly refugee families, and a center in Tennessee that was comprised of mostly also refugee families. And so, we developed the pyramid equity guide, which you can download from the NCPMI website, which is just "challengingbehavior," all squished together, dot-org. It's really simple. It's a four-step process that a coach and the coachee can go through together. It's not meant to be as rigorous as like, a teapot or a class. It starts off with 18 kind of reflection questions, and then you answer those questions with your background knowledge, through an observation, through discussion with the coachee, "Yes, you have concerns about that question," and "No, you don't," and so you answer all 18 of those questions. If any of those questions pop up, "Yes, I have a concern about that," then you take those, and you write them in Part 2. In Part 2, you have all the things that you were concerned about, and then you and the teacher together prioritize where you want to start.

So you make kind of a priority list on Section 2. In Part 3, which you are going to love, is all the resources that you will need to help the teacher implement that new practice around the area of concern, so all the questions are kind of grouped together, and then there's a list of resources underneath those first 18 questions. So there's little video in-services. There's tip sheets. There's journal articles, all things that you can download and reproduce easily as many times as you want, and they're meant to help you start some conversations about why this specific practice is a concern for you and why it's important to be engaging all the learners in her classroom. So then that's Section 3. The last section, if you feel like a teacher is a little bit resistant to the change and not understanding why they need to maybe change the way they're doing things, then there's some kinds of reflection questions to maybe help them—help teachers or practitioners to see the need for the change.

So again, you can download the equity guide in its entirety from the NCPMI website and take a look at it. I think you're really going to like it, and I think it gives you a really good place to start if you're having questions or concerns about equity in the classroom or equity in the program. Sorry, I know we're almost done.

Joyce: Thank you so much. No, that was really ... I'm so glad we got to get that in. That's a really great resource and kind of just ties in our next two slides are additional resources that we're not going to get into, but they're in your slide deck, and the links are all there for you to use, so please, feel free, dig into those additional resources, as well as the equity coaching guide that Denise was just talking about.

Some really great information there. We have some resources from the ECLKC, including the PFCE Relationship-based Competencies. We have some other really great resources there for you to kind of dig into. Denise, thank you so much for joining us today. I feel like we could have

had another hour just to keep on digging into the different resources and things. We just want to thank you for joining us, and, you know, we also want to keep the conversation going, so we invite all of you, if you have more questions, please just take it MyPeers. Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on MyPeers.

Denise: Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Joyce. Thank you, Ashley.

Ashley: Thank you.