Webinar Transcript - Developing Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Skills: Practical Ways to Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Welcome to the National Criminal Justice Training Center webinar, Developing Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Skills-- Practical Ways to Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. My name is Greg Brown, and I will be moderating for you today. Today's presentation is part of a webinar series funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, focused on supporting tribal comprehensive opiate, stimulants, and substance abuse programs and the Coordinated Tribal Solicitation Purpose Area 3 grantees and other tribal communities focused on responses to alcohol and substance use.

Let's begin with our first poll question. Our first poll question is, which of the following best describes your role? Today's audience, 12% are victims services or victim advocates; 28% from probation or community corrections; 9% law enforcement; 34% social workers, mental health workers; or child advocacy workers; and 17% are other.

I'd like to welcome today's presenter, Dr. Anjali Nandi. Dr. Nandi is an associate with the National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College. She's also the chief probation officer for the 20th Judicial District for the State of Colorado. Additionally, Dr. Nandi is a published author, having co-authored nine books.

Kevin Mariano and Justine Souto are joining as panelists, as well, today. Kevin is a project coordinator at the National Criminal Justice Training Center, providing technical assistance related to community policing, sex offender management, law enforcement, victim advocacy, and multidisciplinary or multi-jurisdictional team development. Kevin has over 20 years of law enforcement experience and served as the chief of police with the Pueblo of Isleta Police Department for over seven years.

Justine is a program manager at NCJTC. Justine oversees the Tribal Justice Planning Program, which helps grantees plan and develop responses to address justice-related issues. She has expertise working with tribal justice systems, grant management, and interpersonal communications.

My name is Greg Brown, and I will be moderating for you today. I'm a project manager with NCJTC, and prior to being with NCJTC, I worked in probation for a little over 30 years. Anjali, the time is now yours.

Thank you so much, Greg. So folks, I'm really excited to have this conversation with you. We're going to try and cover a whole host of different things, but what I'm hoping that you walk away with is really a deeper understanding related to cognitive skills, social-emotional skills, and how we can just really strategically, but also quietly and subtly, weave skill-building into just everything that we do.

So my hope is that you're able to walk away with some really concrete skills. And then we will also talk about some of the traps that we fall into. So that is my goal for today. So here we go. So there's this beautiful quote that I think just summarizes what paying attention to cognitive thinking, paying attention to social-emotional skills development-- it sort of encompasses what that means. And it's a really empowering quote that you will see on your screen here.

And what it really says is that between when something happens to us and our response, there's a gap. And it's in that gap that we get to choose what our response is. Now, a lot of us struggle with that gap, right? For some of us, it doesn't even feel like there is a gap. It feels like something happens, and we just respond.

So it's in that gap that we have our power, and it's in that gap that we really have our freedom, our freedom of choice and our freedom of determining what happens next to us. So we really need to focus on minding that gap, paying attention to what is happening in that moment. And that's not just a cognitive thing. It's also paying attention to the emotions that are happening for me right then, so what is happening with my thinking, but also, what am I feeling?

So if something happens, yes, I have immediate thoughts, but I also have some emotions. And so how do I pay attention to that? And that is the basis of cognitive skill building and social-emotional development.

So when we talk about social-emotional development, it's a process of learning certain skills that we go through as we grow, but that we can also acquire as adults, as well. It's part of what we can teach on a regular basis, what we can focus on, and it's something that we need to support throughout our life course. And social-emotional development, what it is is a process of learning these skills where we learn self-awareness, we learn awareness of others, and we learn decision making that helps us move forward towards whatever goals that we have.

So it's awareness of self, awareness of other, and then decision making. So those are the three pieces we think about when we think about social and emotional development-- awareness of self, also called self-awareness; improving relationships with others, so social skills, empathy skills, those kinds of things; and then decision making. And what we're going to do is we're going to go through a whole host of these skills. We'll break them down, talk about what they are.

But it's really important to agree on why this is important. Why is it important for us to understand and support these cognitive skills and these social-emotional skills? Having strong social-emotional skills are related to a whole host of really positive and long-term outcomes. They're related to successes in family, with school, with work. In kids, they're related to fewer conduct problems at school. less involvement with the criminal justice system, overall lower emotional distress and positive well-being.

And as you know right now, our levels of emotional distress and well-being are pretty problematic across all age groups, but particularly our youth. And so it's really important for us to know, what are these skills that will support them, and how do we support this, not just with our youth, but also with our adult population? And then they're also linked to improved academic outcomes. So we see a lot of really positive stuff when we focus on some of these skills.

The other piece is a buffer towards increased involvement in the system. So whether that's criminal justice involvement or addiction or access to public assistance, stronger social-emotional skills serve as a buffer. And it's able to mitigate some of the impact that people might be experiencing as they grow up, whether it's through adverse childhood events or trauma or substance use in the household or even their own substance use. So social emotional skills offer a buffer to prevent people from getting further into the system.

So I'm hoping that sells you a little bit on why you're here and why this conversation is so important. We often shy away from building these skills with the people that we work with. Now, I know we have probation officers here, we have therapists here, we have caseworkers, we have law enforcement. And so I know for our law enforcement folks you're probably wondering, wait, I don't build skills or build skills with the people that we serve. And yet, there are such amazing opportunities for skill building, no matter what your role is.

So we have a poll question for you all. And this is really about, why is it that we shy away from skill building in our interactions with people? Is it because it feels weird, or because the client's pushing back, or you're just not sure how, or you feel like it doesn't help, or is it some other reason?

All right, feels weird, about 15% of you; clients resist, 36%; unsure how to do it is 42%; 1% doesn't think that it really helps; and 6% other, Anjali.

That's awesome. Thank you so much, Greg, and thank you all for your honest responses. Yeah, we're all unsure how to do it. And it requires a lot of attention sometimes, because we have to attend to, wait, what is the skill that we're trying to build? And then, how do we engage the person in a very quick 30-second skill-building conversation? And my hope is that after this conversation, you'll feel a little more comfortable with that very thing.

So let's start by breaking it down. What are the steps to skill building? What do we do? So the first step is to identify what the gap is. What is the skill that we're talking about? Usually skills fall into three different buckets, but usually skills fall into thinking skills, emotional skills, and social skills. And then depending on your role, there might be another piece around life skills, like managing finances or getting organized or those kinds of very important skills, but they're very practical.

So again, cognitive, so thinking skills, social skills and emotional skills, and then maybe you have life skills, depending on your role, so under each of those there are a variety of different skills that you need to focus on. So the first step is identifying what is the gap, what's the issue going on, and then naming the skill, clearly naming the skill. Because once we name the skill, skill building itself becomes easier.

So an example is problem solving-- that's a skill. Naming the skill-- client, I just noticed you have problem solved this issue. Great job. So you've named the skill. Or, I'm noticing that you're tripping over yourself a little bit as you're trying to problem-solve this. So let's slow it down for a second.

Again, I've named the skill, so that's the first step. And we name the skills so that we can reference back to it at a different time. At a different time, when the client engages in the skill and does it well, we want to be able to name it. If they do it poorly, we want to name it, again. So just having common names for these skills are really helpful.

So we identify the gap, and then we name the skill-- what is a skill? We provide opportunities to practice. Now, opportunities to practice don't have to sound like, wait, stop, let's do a role play, because immediately, everybody wants to vomit a little bit. So we do it in kind of a sneaky fashion, right?

Maybe Greg, I notice, is struggling with problem solving. And so I say, Greg, let's slow it down for a second. So what would be the first step?

Greg says, well, I don't know. I mean, it's really not my fault. I think somebody else should be solving this problem. And we say, OK, so let's slow it down. How would you define the problem, which really is the first step in problem solving?

So we're slowing it down, and then Greg says, OK, well, I think the problem is blabbity-blah. The problem is that they should have done it differently. And I say, OK, so we're saying the problem is them. What is in your control in terms of the problem? And Greg says, well, I suppose I could have done this differently, so maybe that's the problem.

And so in a very sneaky fashion, we're essentially teaching the person how to support that particular skill, and in this case, it's problem solving. So it happens in a conversation. It's not like we have to stop the whole conversation and say, OK, client, let's do this. It's really using the conversation, the active conversation that's happening, and saying, let's slow down, and let's do it step by step.

So we're providing opportunities to practice, and as the client is going forward, we're providing some feedback. And once we practice the skill, once we've gone through whatever the steps are, we say things like, where else can you use these skills? And that's called transferable. What are scenarios where you can transfer, you can take this particular skill and transfer it to a different area?

So those are essentially the steps. And if it sounds a bit complicated, the acronym that I think about in my head is the acronym SOFT, skill, opportunity to practice feedback, and transferability. How can I transfer the skill to something else? So that's the process that goes in my head.

Those are the steps to skill building. And like I said, most often, these skills fall into a few buckets. We have social skills, emotional skills, and thinking skills or cognitive skills. You can talk about them in any of those ways.

So why-- before we kind of delve into this, why is social-emotional skill development so important with tribal populations? Why are we talking about this right now? And so there's several different reasons, and I'm going to bring Justine in on this, as well. But there are several different reasons why it becomes even more important with tribal populations to be talking about these skills.

Part of it is that when we-- if we, when we have experienced trauma, or we have historical trauma-- so we haven't experienced the trauma, but it's changed our genetics, it's changed the way our genes express themselves, which is this, hit the impact of historical trauma. And one of the impacts of historical trauma is having a greater stress response, meaning when something happens, it's harder for me to manage the level of stress. And I tend to be more reactive, more emotionally reactive to something, one of the examples of one of the outcomes of historical trauma.

And so if that is the case, these social-emotional skills are really key to help somebody regain whatever that emotional sort of control is, right? So it's really important that skills support people in their functioning. If there's psychological distress, if there is social and economic disparities, these social-emotional skills or these cognitive skills have been found to really support people who are struggling in a variety of different ways to be able to have improved outcomes.

So Justine, as you're listening to that, and you are thinking about these skills, whether they're social skills or thinking skills or emotional skills, in what way do you think that this is really important, this is an important topic for us to be talking about?

That's a really great question, Dr. Nandi. When I was growing up, I didn't understand about historical trauma or how it impacted people's lives or even my own family and my own life. And it's so important to be able to recognize that and name it, so that we can recognize then, how do we rebuild ourselves as a community and as families?

And we always say in Indian country that we're all related. So everybody has a story about where their tribal community or tribal nation has come from, where they got removed to, and how we ended up to be on these reservations that I call refugee camps. And it's amazing, I think, the impact that it has had.

And because of the loss of traditional ways of life, the loss of language to be able to effectively express ourselves, and a loss of roles and responsibilities that we historically had, that leaves somebody feeling very lost. And then you compound that with the effect of the boarding school situation. You have, I think, a lot of very confused people in our entire population across all of the tribes.

And if you can't learn to identify that and express yourselves in those terms of the cognitive and social and emotional skills, then we're constantly raising our children with the same dysfunction and lack of ability to be able to just have this level of emotional intelligence. It's very difficult to get our needs met, I think, when we can't identify these things, and we can't learn how to think through. And of course, we can learn these things. But when you have generation of generation who are still in that trauma mode, it becomes very challenging, right?

I love that you said emotional intelligence, because there's such an overlap here. When we think about emotional intelligence, the way they categorize it is by awareness of self and then self-management, awareness of others and relational management. And that's really such a mirror here, because that's what we're talking about. We're talking about self-awareness, relational skills, which is social skills, as well. So I really appreciated that you brought up if we don't start to practice these skills, we're continuing to perpetuate unhelpful, perhaps, ways of managing.

Yeah, great. Thank you so much, Justine. OK so let's get started with some of these skills. What are these skills, and how do we develop them? So let's start with skills about ourselves. So the first self-skill about ourselves is increasing self awareness.

And the way we do that, is by paying attention to what's going on for us, starting with me versus paying attention to what's going on outside. I'm really starting with me. What's going on internally? What's going on internally might be sensations, so a clutching in my chest or my fists are clenching, or am I tightening in my jaw, whatever that is.

So that's increasing awareness of my sensations. Increasing awareness of my emotion-- what is it that I'm feeling? And that's complex, because sometimes, I don't know about you, but for me, I know I'm feeling something. It's hard to name, and so I have to talk out loud sometimes.

I say, OK, what am I feeling? Am I angry? No, that's not quite it. Or what is it, right? And once we can name the emotion, the skill is name it to tame it. As soon as we're able to name the emotion, immediately-- you may have experienced this as well-- as soon as you name your skill it or name your emotion, the emotion itself kind of calms down. So it's really kind of helpful to be able to articulate, what is the emotion that I'm experiencing?

All right, so naming our emotion-- unfortunately, with a lot of the individuals that we work with and perhaps some of us on this call too, we have a very limited emotional vocabulary. By that I mean that for a lot of the people I work with, when I ask them what the emotion is or what they're feeling, they'll say, fine. And that's the extent.

Or they'll say, I'm pissed off. And so there we have it. Am I fine or pissed off? And there's nothing else in there. There's nothing more in terms of their emotion that they're offering. So it's really helpful to start to develop what we call an emotional vocabulary.

So examples of ways to develop an emotional vocabulary is to provide people with emotion words that they then get to choose from. So I don't know if some of you have seen this list of faces with emotions written on the bottom right underneath the faces. So there will be some facial expression and then an emotion. That's some of the ways to build people's emotional vocabulary. Because it's very helpful, not only to be able to know what I'm feeling, but then to be able to express it.

So there's a big difference for if, let's say, I'm struggling with something that Justine did. There's a big difference if I say, Justine, I'm pissed off, when I'm actually hurt. So it's really important to be able to articulate what the emotion is, because it's not only helpful to me to manage my emotion, it also starts to become helpful when I am checking in with somebody else or managing a relationship with somebody else, to be able to articulate a list of emotions.

And somebody just asked, where can you find the list of emotions? Google is my friend. If you type in "list of emotion words," you can find all kinds of things. And since you asked, there are also these emotion cards, where there are different kinds of cards, and there's an emotion word on each different card. And sometimes I will shuffle up the cards and put a few in front of somebody that I'm talking with and say, OK, so looking at these emotions, where are you at today? So it's just a way of practicing, a way of developing emotional vocabulary and emotional awareness.

So we are trying to help people increase their self-awareness, body sensations, emotion, but also increasing awareness of thoughts. What are some thoughts that we are having, and how do I identify those thoughts, which is very often, as soon as we think something, we believe it. Here's something silly. Justine went off camera. My thought could be, something happened in Justine's house. Or my thought could be, Justine got pissed off at us, and that's why she turned off the camera.

But if we believe those, we now act upon them. And yet it could be a variety of different reasons why Justine may have gone off camera. It could be bandwidth. It could be that Justine's not talking, so she went off camera, a variety of different things. So it's really important to identify our thoughts, but not always believe them or act on them.

So thought identification is one thing, "what am I thinking", and then starting to work with those thoughts, and we'll talk about this in depth, but challenging those thoughts so that we don't believe that every thought is fact. I saw a bumper sticker a little while ago that I thought just encompassed this. It said, don't believe everything you think.

So if you walk away with something, walk away with that. So identifying our thoughts and differentiating between thoughts and emotions, we manage thoughts and emotions very, very differently, so being able to separate those two, and then starting to manage ourselves, meaning slowing our thinking down, but also managing our emotions, tolerating the discomfort of the emotion or whatever it is.

So many of you are practicing emotional regulation right now or distress tolerance. Maybe some of you are bored, or maybe you're distracted, or something else is going on, or you're uncomfortable. And yet you're staying there, you're tolerating it, and you're paying attention to what we're talking about. So those are some examples of skills regarding managing ourselves.

And then also another thing that shows up in the research so strongly is having a growth mindset. And by that, we mean believing that skills are not something that's inherent, but something that's learned. So we don't come into this world with all of these skills in place. We actually have to practice them and grow them.

So let's kind of delve into thinking a little bit more. And we call this process restructuring our thinking. We talked about this a little bit, but we're going to delve into it further. So the first step is to help people identify their thoughts and be able to differentiate between what's a thought and what's a feeling.

Once we've identified the thought, the next skill is how to stop my thought versus having the thoughts sort of bring its friends. I don't know if you've experienced this, but sometimes my head, I get so busy in my thoughts that I have a thought, it brings a friend, more friends show up. They have a family, they build houses, and suddenly there's a whole village of nonsense in my brain.

I've gone way far down the tracks with all of these thoughts. And it all started with something that perhaps was untrue, something that was inaccurate. And yet if I don't stop thinking, it's very easy for the thoughts to become huge mountains in our brains.

Greg or Justine or Kevin, anyone, does that make sense? Do you have examples of that? Does that ever happen to you where you have a thought, and then a friend comes, and then suddenly there's this whole thing that's happening in your brain, and it's actually completely untrue? Do you have any examples of that? Does that happen to you?

I think every day I watch the news, all those things are going on in my head, like what to believe, what not to believe. And I think what's so interesting-- and maybe we'll talk about this-- is fake news. And we have so many different pieces of information coming at is that seem credible, it's hard to sort out. So I think it happens to me every day after all the news, actually.

Nice, thanks, Greg. Justine?

For me, it reminds me of what people say about being offended. You have a choice to feel offended or to be offended or not to be. And it just seems like a fine line to me, but it's true in the sense that if you give me feedback, and I feel offended by that, is that a thought that I'm offended, or is it that my feelings are hurt? And the truth hurts, and I don't want to hear that, because I thought I worked really hard, and I tried to do the best job I could. And now you're giving me feedback saying, oh, there's always room for improvement, and here are some suggestions. Well, my thought then might be that you're disregarding all of the work that I'm doing, and I am not good enough, or my work is not good enough, whatever, and then I feel offended.

Great example.

I love that Justine said that. I think when we're giving feedback, a lot of our clients say, just give it to me. Give me direct feedback, I don't ever take it personally, and all of that. And then they do, and so then you've clearly got something to work on. But that's what went off in my head almost immediately when Justine started talking about how we interpret things and feedback, when it's meant to be-- hopefully, it's meant to be helpful, but where people go with that often, especially the clients that we deal with.

This is such a great example. It's awesome. Yes, our thoughts are driven by our assumptions, and our assumptions are not always accurate. They're not always right on, they're not always facts. And unfortunately, we don't always stop check it out.

So we don't say things like, hey, Justine, the thing that you said, it didn't quite sit right with me. Tell me what your intention was. We just assume Justine meant to hurt me, and I'm off and running in that direction. So there's a lot of kind of assumptions that get thrown in there. And if we don't pause and stop our thoughts, we can get into a really tough spot.

And then another comment that came up, which is so great, would you also say that whatever your current mood, it will filter the information that you're receiving? Yes, yes. So the emotion that we're experiencing absolutely filters what's happening. Go for it, Justine.

I love that comment, and it makes me go back to your original slide about the different things like trauma, historical trauma that impact our way of thinking. So if you think that we collectively as a society have that in common, then could you also maybe determine that collectively then? We might have some challenges with how we filter those thoughts and feelings, because they're all going through that lens of the historical trauma and microaggressors and things of that nature.

Yeah, yeah, because it is a collective experience, right? Yeah, great, awesome. And yes, Corinne, that's just so, so important. The current emotion that we're experiencing or the mood that we're in has a huge influence on how we experience the world. So when we are in a positive space, we are more likely to assume positive intent.

When we are struggling, or more importantly, when we are fearful or feel unsafe, we immediately make assumptions about the negative. And it's not because we're bad people, it's because we want to keep ourselves safe. It's a safety mechanism.

And so think about our clients. We have several folks from law enforcement on this webinar. And unfortunately, when you as a law enforcement officer approach somebody, they already have some negative assumptions, right? There's fear, there's this feeling of lack of safety, and immediately their approach to you is filtered through that.

So you are having to work through, not just whatever the situation is, but some filters that exist for a variety of different reasons. It's true about any of us who work in the system. As soon as the client comes in, they immediately think, well, you are just a part of the system. You are not going to help me, because all of that has happened in the past.

So when we are fearful, several things change in the brain. It's very hard to see positive. It's also hard to have any positive memory of anything that's happened. So that's part of what I think the point is here, which is when our current mood influences what we're able to take in.

So thought stopping is a really important skill, and then working on challenging my thinking. And by challenging my thinking I mean, what is the evidence for my thinking, and what's the evidence against it? So using any of the examples, like the feedback example that Justine and Greg used, the challenging could be, what's the evidence for Justine just being mean to me by giving me that feedback? And then what's the evidence against it? Maybe what are some ways in which there are times where Justine really wants the best for me, so kind of challenging our thinking a little bit.

And what we're doing here is we are creating flexibility in our thinking. And that is the ultimate goal of cognitive development, is to really create flexibility in the ways that we think. So an example of that in terms of flexibility is moving away from rigidity, moving away from only thinking that things happen in a particular way, but being a little bit more flexible. And flexibility supports creativity and a whole bunch of other things. Yes, Greg.

I'm just going to say, Anjali, one of the things that pops up for me is it seems like a lot of the people that we interact with are pretty black and white and view the world in pretty black and white ways. And it sounds like that's what you're talking about, that inability to be flexible. It may even be a mechanism to protect yourself.

Good, bad, I mean, the limbic system-- I'm thinking about all of that as you talk about these skills and why they may not be fully developed, particularly in the clients that we have. And then if the world is this way, black and white and so challenging, perhaps it's one of the reasons that we want to numb ourselves.

Yes, yes. So when I talk about flexibility and thinking, that's exactly what I'm talking about, Greg, that moving away from this black and white kind of rigid thinking. But again, like you said, I don't want to give the impression that this is anyone's fault. It's not that there's something wrong with the individual.

The reason we develop rigid thinking is for safety, like you said. It's for protection. That's a protection mechanism. It's because perhaps that I grew up in a household that there was always chaos, and so I learned to respond through my limbic system on a regular basis. So a lot of this is learned behavior, a lot of this is a coping mechanism.

So again, no shame or blame or any of that, and we have to support our clients moving forward and changing and learning these skills. And that's, I think, where it's so important, regardless of our role, to be able to do some of this. So thought stopping or thought replacing or any of these things we can do, regardless of whether we're the therapist or the caseworker or the probation officer or even the law enforcement officer. Yes, Greg?

That's what I was just thinking, too, around law enforcement. If a person's got pretty limited abilities for all the reasons that you've talked about, and they're encountering law enforcement, that limbic system is where they go almost immediately, right, and that fight, flight, freeze-- what am I going to do? So it makes a lot of sense when that's all you have access to. Those are the behaviors that are presented to law enforcement all the time. I wonder if there's some quick tricks to do something with that. And I'm sure you're going to probably get into that.

Yes, we'll definitely get there. Awesome. So we talked about thought challenging. Thought replacing is replacing it with a different thought or distraction sometimes is a good thought replacement, and then being able to tolerate whatever the emotion is that's coming up. We call it emotional tolerance. Sometimes we call it distress tolerance. And we'll go into that a little bit further after we've finished some of these cognitive thinking techniques.

So thought stopping, I would say, is probably one of the most important skills. I don't know about you, but when something has happened, like I got in a fight with somebody or something didn't go well, I go perseverate about it. I will do it again and again in my head. And I'll think, oh, I should have said this, and I should have said that, and when they did this, I should have then-- all of these galleries that I expend in my brain, it's such an intense waste of energy.

And so I work really hard to stop my thinking. And so there are different thought-stopping techniques or thought-pausing techniques, but here are some examples. You could visualize a stop sign. Saying "stop" out loud-- I do that a lot.

I talk to myself sometimes out loud. And I know there's medication for that, thank you. But I will say to myself, stop. Change your thought. You could also use a rubber band on your wrist to kind of distract yourself.

You can move around. There's a saying, move a muscle, change a thought. So moving around or changing a position will help you change your thinking. Standing up, sitting down, or even just blowing air out sometimes will help you change your thoughts. So those are some examples of thought-stopping techniques that we can help people manage or utilize.

So we've talked about the thinking part. We talked about restructuring thinking. Let's talk about the emotional piece. I know I shared a little bit about emotional vocabulary and developing emotional vocabulary. We can do that with these emotional cards or emotion lists.

Let's say you are having a conversation. You can check in using some of those emotion cards perhaps. And really helping people sort between thought and feeling-- very often when I ask people, what are you feeling, they give me a thought, right? Tell me what you're feeling. Well, I feel like they're being stupid.

That's a thought, right? Usually a feeling is one word. I feel mad, I feel sad, I feel hurt, I feel blamed, I feel vulnerable, I feel scared, whatever it is. So if it goes on for several words, you know that you're getting a thought.

And the reason to separate thoughts and feelings-- oh my gosh, Justine, I just loved all those emojis. That's just hysterical. Yes, happy, sad, mad, yeah, exactly. So that could be a more updated way, I suppose, of playing with emotion is to use emojis to express ourselves. Super cool.

We have someone who's sharing really great techniques here, so I'm going to bring those in. Bryson says, I've used visualization in a couple of different ways. Sometimes it's reflecting on something I've seen recently, yeah, or a movie or closing your eyes or imagining walking away and walking into another room. That's awesome, yeah.

And then I've used music as a distraction for clients, which is great. Music is wonderful. And you can ask what their favorite song is and play it. That's awesome, these are awesome ideas.

And then Alex asks, what about the idea to not name the feeling? So Alex, I'm going to ask you to say more about that, and then I'll definitely come back to it to say more. I'm not sure-- oh, that's what you mean, OK. So Alex says, what about the idea to not name the feelings, so that naming the feeling is bringing form to an experience, and then it starts to create thoughts?

So this is really important. So what Alex is talking about is that at times, we'll name the emotion, and then we'll justify the emotion. And that's not what we need to do, because that just gets us into trouble. So for example, Justine just gave me feedback, I'm feeling hurt. I name the emotion. And then we go down this real rabbit hole.

Well, I'm feeling hurt, because Justine's mean, Justine wanted to blah, blah, blah. And now I'm creating thoughts related to that feeling. So really important not to go down that rabbit hole. So Alex, really good point. Awesome, I love these examples that you all are writing in. This is so cool.

Ruth says sometimes doing some coloring. Yes, any mindful activity or any activity that helps us focus on one thing at a time is extremely helpful. So coloring is an extremely calming thing.

Maria shares that you sing "Let it Go" from*Frozen* in your head. That is brilliant, I love it. And then Nicola is giving us another term for some of these thoughts, and I love this term. So a lot of these thoughts are negative thoughts. And they're automatic, you're absolutely right. And so the term for it is automatic negative thoughts, or ANTs as the acronym.

And so Nicola is saying you'd ask the client, what would you do if you had ants invading your countertops and pantry? And the person would usually say, well, I'll try to get rid of them. And so you identify the process that you use to start to get rid of-- right? You first have to see, oh, I have ants. So you're naming the thoughts.

And now you have to-- I suppose at least for me, sometimes I'm not very kind to the ANTs. So maybe I have to be a little more kind to my thoughts. But we work on letting them go, we work on letting the ANTs go or our thinking go.

And yes, the thoughts are much easier to change than feelings. So Alex is saying, it's easier to move the change of thought than it is to shift a feeling. Feelings are chemical, and so it takes a little while for the feeling to shift. Yeah, awesome.

And then there's a question, would it be OK to ask the client how they want to feel after they identify the feeling? So the focus is to shift where they want to be. Yeah, so there are lots of techniques to shift our emotion. But it starts with identifying what the emotion is-- name it to tame it-- and then shifting it and working really hard to not associate all of these thoughts with it.

Because here's the thing-- whether you name it or not, you're experiencing the emotion. If you're experiencing something, the emotion's there. As soon as you name it, you allow it to dissipate, and you work on not attaching any thoughts to it. You named it, and now you want to shift it.

So sometimes thinking about a happy place, giving ourselves permission to feel it-- someone else shared working on a puzzle sometimes will help you shift it, yes, focusing on something else. Sometimes when I'm feeling really down or sad about myself or sorry for myself and throwing myself a little pity party, one of the ways that I get out of it is I distract myself by helping somebody else. So I go and check in on somebody else, how are you doing? And then I get completely distracted in their stuff, and I've moved, I've shifted through my emotion.

Danielle, yes, you said, I give myself permission to feel it and think it. And then I say, what do I want to do with it? So what Danielle is saying are actual steps that people identify, and they're really simple.

The first step is name it, the second step is sit with it, and the next step is, what do I want to do with it? So shift it, so name it, sit with it, shift it. And the sitting with it is just asking myself, OK, what is this about? Where do I want it to go?

And then Cynthia says, I like to do crosswords. That helps me. That's awesome, makes you feel accomplished. Interestingly enough, doing puzzles and doing crosswords or any puzzles, they release dopamine in the brain. And so what happens with dopamine is it allows ourselves to feel a little better motivated, accomplished, et cetera.

Yes, so Jody says, in CBT we are teaching that we can control our thoughts. We can't always control how we feel, but we can control how we react. We can control what we do, what our response is.

So there's no judgment with my emotion, meaning, Justine gave me feedback, I felt hurt. That's no judgment, I feel hurt. It's OK, it is 100% OK to feel hurt. What's not OK is to then attack Justine because I feel hurt, right? So it's really about managing my reaction and sitting with, why do I feel hurt? I feel hurt because I don't think that Justine really-- I really want Justine to acknowledge all the work that I put in.

And now it becomes clear, hey, Justine, I really put in a lot of work. Could you just notice that? And Justine says, oh my gosh, yes, absolutely. I should have started with that. You put in so much work, and I so appreciate what you did. So in that way, we get to have a little bit of, in quotes, "control" over our reaction.

So Rosemary, the goal? So no, the goal is not to have-- let me try that again. So Rosemary's saying, is the goal not to have emotional reactions? No, no, no, we are emotional beings, and our emotion is information. In fact, our emotions are our power. They give us so much information about what's happening.

The worry is, we get attached to the emotion. We get kind of wrapped up in it, and then we start to act out based on the emotion. So yes, the goal is to identify, what is the emotion, what's the thought, and what's real and what's not.

And what is my need? What do I need here? Do I need Justine to acknowledge my hard work? Do I need to feel better about myself? What is the need?

And yes, Alex, sometimes people will say they cannot control their thoughts. And there are clinical reasons why people perseverate in terms of their thinking or they have really problematic thoughts. Anxiety is one example of these perseverations, these thoughts that people cannot control.

And they feel so, so difficult, so yeah. And if you do have folks who really struggle with that, they might need more support than just skills. They might need really practical stuff, or they might need some medication just to support them for a while.

And so Chad says, I try to get out of my head and focus on what is real. With clients, I have them describe the situation they see, and then they describe what it is and write it down. So essentially, Chad, what you're doing, which is a really, really important process, is separating fact from fiction when you see what is real.

So Chad says, this process generates a focal or anchor point and then a physical activity to keep them in the real world, as opposed to spiraling in your head. Yes, we all do this, right? We get so lost sometimes in our heads, very, very true.

And then Terry says, there seems to me to be a natural friction between validating the clients where they are, and then redirecting the client. Yes, so we always say, oh, meet the client where they are. And that's true, but there's another part to it. It's meet the client where they are and then get curious about where they need to be.

We don't just stop with meeting the client way where they are, Terry, you're absolutely right. We don't stop there. We meet the client where they are, and then we get curious about what's next. Where do they need to go? What's the next, like you say, the healthy pattern of thought and the healthy pattern of action?

Beautiful. You guys are amazing. And I'm so sorry I'm a little-- I haven't caught up with all of your messages. So hang in there. I'm just going through them. Ruth says, learning how to positively react takes us back to learning skills on how to manage emotions, yes, and how to de-escalate our own emotion.

So Ruth brings up a really important skill, which is the skill or the ability to be able to put my emotion on a ladder and know the difference between annoyed and irate or enraged. And it's really important for me to know what this sort of continuum is, that I have a continuum of emotion. So I can de-escalate, like Ruth is saying, de-escalate my emotion. That's beautifully put.

All right, Cassidy says, I work with teens, and sometimes I tell them to envision that their mouth is full of marshmallows. Oh my gosh, that is brilliant. So instead of using a stop sign, Cassidy uses a mouthful of marshmallows so they cannot talk, and then they have to think. They're forced to think, because their mouth is full of marshmallows.

This is great. They're forced to think about what's going on. And then they had to feel it, they have to sit with the emotion, and they have to get the marshmallows out before they can react or say something that they'll regret. I'm walking away with that, Cassidy, this marshmallows in my mouth. Beautiful.

Amber says, when I have a negative thought in my mind, I try to put them in a pile in my mind and use the breathing technique where you breathe in, and that the wave is coming in, and then the out-breath, you're washing them out to sea. It doesn't always work, but it helps you calm down in the moment. That's great. So look at all these visualizations. Greg, this is so cool. These visualizations are just amazing.

And Caroline says, our brain seems to imagine different scenarios, and then it can get out of control. Very true. Our brain is doing this not because we're crazy, but because we're trying to stay safe. Ultimately, we're just trying to stay safe. So be gentle with ourselves and each other. We're really trying to do the best, and we have a lot to learn.

And so Bryson says, I work with unhoused individuals, and I don't have access to paper or a desk or office space. So I validated their emotions and trying to understand the why behind their behavior. So example, they're angry, or is it because of X and not Y? I'm wondering if there are any on-the-spot low-resource ways of helping identify emotions.

Yes. One low-resource, on-the-spot way is to use reflections and try and name the emotion for the person. So with Bryson, it would sound something like, gosh, it sounds like you're feeling really upset about this. And then the person says, well, I'm not really upset. I'm kind of really annoyed, because it was supposed to help, and they didn't.

So we're just in that process. We're helping name the emotion. But we're taking a stab at whatever the emotion is, and it's OK to get it wrong. The client will correct us. So Bryson, I'm sure you already knew that, but that's really one of the primary ways of building emotional vocabulary, is through expressing empathy and expressing what we're noticing their emotion is.

And then Jenny says, I try to ask myself, how much of a situation can I control? Yeah, it brings the serenity prayer to mind, right? And then focus on how I will respond or react to the things that I can change.

The thing I was thinking about, Anjali-- and you're putting a context to why I believe so much in the four agreements and using that with clients-- it's lovely how they align so well when you talk about the four agreements, and this is how we're going to interact with each other, and these are the things we're going to work on. And clients, my experience is they love the four agreements. It makes sense to them, and it really gives you a context to start talking about what's working in their lives, what's not working. When they get jammed up on something, have an issue, being able to use that language and have the same language is really helpful. So it resonated for me, because it worked with people, the four agreements, and now to understand the science behind it's really helpful. Thank you.

That was awesome, Greg, but I'm not letting you off the hook, because I'm worried that I won't remember all of the four. The four agreements, folks, if you're not familiar, one of them is to assume positive intent. So it goes back into managing our own thinking, assume positive intent.

Another is to not take things personally, which is so hard. I find that so difficult. I have to work on that on a regular basis. So that's a second one. A third one is to-- I think it's always do your best.

I love the way that Don Miguel talks about that, which is, we're not always going to be 100%, right? We're going to have good days, we're going to have bad days. We're going to be sick, we're going to have distractions. But he really does a nice job of saying, in that moment, in that day, do your best.

That's really helpful to me in working with clients, for sure. Because I may have made a mistake or not done it exactly the way I wanted to or reacted in the way I wanted to, but that day it was the best I had. And I think even having that discussion with people-- last time you were here I think I was a little short with you. But admitting to it and then kind of processing what happened for you with them opens it up in a way that it's safe territory.

Yes, yes. So those were three that we mentioned, and then the fourth is, be impeccable with your word. It's definitely one of my favorites. I have a 16-year-old, and I say this to her all the time-- our word is our life. That's what we have. It sort of represents us, so be impeccable with your word.

So Katrina, thank you for saving us there. I really, really appreciate it. And Angela says, not taking things personally is very hard. I fully agree with you. I find it quite difficult, and I work on a regular basis.

And then Katrina says, yes, be impeccable with your word, both outward and inward. Oh, yeah, there are times where I will slow clients down when they are talking negatively about themselves. And I say something like, would you say this about other people? Would you say this about your kid or your friend if your friend came to help, so those kinds of things.

And then a reminder that our best can change from day to day. The example that Katrina used was, can a record-breaking marathon runner run the same with a sore ankle? So every day our best will change. That's awesome. Thank you so much. And thank for that link that Katrina posted in the question and answer section to Miguel Ruiz's four agreements. Yes, Justine.

I just love these two, because it gives you a very humanistic way to share your own humanity. I'm only human, and I make mistakes too. And you don't have to be mad at me. I can own it, and I don't have to feel defensive. I can just own it and move on.

Yeah.

Good way to model that behavior.

It is, it's great modeling. It's great modeling for our clients, but it's also great modeling for everybody around us. It's not just our clients who need these skills, it's us, it's all of us human beings. So it's really, really helpful modeling for our clients, our coworkers, our kids, our partners, whoever, and all the people who are around us.

So let's finish up this piece around techniques for emotional management. We talked a little bit about emotional awareness. We talked about naming it, tolerating it, and then really valuing the emotion. Sometimes I'll say to myself, thank you. Thank you for that emotion, because it was information. It was helpful. It may not be accurate, but it's still helpful information. I don't have to react to it. I don't have to necessarily respond from that emotion, but it's just information.

And then learning self-regulating techniques, which you all provided such beautiful examples of, right? One of the examples is the marshmallows in your mouth. That's a great self-regulating technique. Somebody else gave us the wave, the breathing in and then breathing out all of whatever the emotion is, so lots of different self-regulating techniques that you all shared. Super awesome.

All right, we've talked about cognitive skills or thinking skills. We've talked about emotional skills or regulation of emotion. And then we have the next section, which is managing social skills or using social skills.

And social skills have to do with both awareness of other and then also managing our interaction with others. So we separated it into two parts. Even though social skills is kind of one bucket, we separated into recognizing what's happening with other people and then engaging with other people.

So relational awareness is around empathy. Empathy is understanding, fundamentally understanding what the other person might be going through. And there are two different kinds of empathy. We call it cognitive empathy and affective empathy. Cognitive empathy is having a cognitive understanding about what might be happening for the other human being in front of me. Affective empathy is having an emotional response, noticing the emotion, noticing the emotion that rises up within me.

And this is important, because when people pick up-- we have these things called mirror neurons. And mirror neurons pick up the emotion of what's happening in front of the other person. And when we give off affective empathy, it helps the other person feel safe.

So I'll give you an example of this. If cognitive empathy would be repeating back what I'm hearing-- Justine, it sounds like you're really upset about the situation-- even a computer could do that. A computer could come up with some statement like that. But if I don't express the emotion underneath, meaning the music behind the words, Justine's neural pathways, her mirror neurons, will not be able to pick up the empathy that I'm expressing.

I bring this up, because you might have people who you work with, perhaps they are your frequent flyers, or perhaps they are the people who you just have compassion fatigue around-- you know what I mean, right? You're all out of compassion for them. Your give-a-crap for them has gotten up and left, and you have nothing left.

And yet you're talking with them, so you give them this cognitive empathy. They say something, you respond. But you're missing the emotional quality, and unfortunately, it doesn't convey to their neural system that you are actually getting it, that you're a safe human being. So I know that it's a tall order. It's a big ask that we have, that we express affective empathy, and yet it seems to be the thing that really helps the most.

And so relational awareness is just being aware when we've got it and when we don't have it. There are times when we are all tapped out, and it's important to recognize that it's absolutely OK, and then what do I need to do about it? So that's relational awareness.

Relational management is about, how do I engage in these conversations with people? So conversation skills or social skills related to starting a conversation; giving and receiving feedback; managing conflict, these are all incredibly important social skills that we may have missed as we went through our development. Or we may even have learned some unhelpful habits or unhelpful behaviors related to conflict management, for example.

So one of the helpful techniques to think about in terms of this communication is thinking, am I expressing a need, or am I taking a position? So expressing a need might sound like, I have a need to go on vacation. Taking a position is, I want to go to this place. I want to go to the beach. So that's a position.

So if I'm talking with my partner, it's really important to start with, what are my needs? My needs help clarify what exactly it is that I'm looking for. So I know that was kind of a silly example. With clients sometimes it might be some really core needs, a need for safety, the need to be seen-- this is a very common human need-- so just making sure that we're separating need versus position. When we take positions, we end up getting into power struggles.

Another relational management skill is clear boundaries. So helping people understand how to say no, when to say no, how to manage peer pressure or social pressure, refusal skills sometimes we call them. So those are some examples of social skills.

So how do we support skill development on an ongoing basis? We name the skill, we model it, we explore it, we practice it. We do that over and over. Every time we do it, we provide feedback, we provide reinforcement.

And then Amber says, seems that would be one of the hardest skills to fake, affective empathy. Yes, it is very difficult to fake affective empathy. We can fake cognitive empathy all day long, but it's very difficult to fake affective empathy, you're absolutely right.

And then Amber says, humans are very perceptive and can actually feel the difference between genuine and forced. Yes, and when it's forced, we actually get a little worried, right? It triggers alarm bells. I work as a peer and have a unique position where I am able to be more open and real with clients. Yeah, that's awesome, always professional and ethical, but the affective empathy is a hard one. Yeah, it is. Yes, Greg.

I was just going to say, I was looking, I think, at Amber's comment. And sometimes having that affective empathy for our clients, I think hearing their journey, into your -- whatever your interaction with them, helps identify that, understanding historical trauma, understanding ACEs. Because you will not find a moderate or high risk person that does not have those things in their history. And so not blaming them for it, but understanding that these have been the things that have impacted them helps me with the empathy piece.

And then their willingness to want to change, because a lot of people-- I think you've said this on other trainings, Anjali. The vast majority of people that we work with, it's egodystonic behavior. They do not want to be the person who harms other people, and that's not consistent with how they want to see themselves, how they want their families to see them. And so if we start from there, we know that very few people are really committed to a life of crime and harming other people. It really is about something else, and then peeling the layers of that onion back.

Yeah, very, very true. And while we might sometimes run out of empathy, which is absolutely fine, really remembering that empathy does not mean saying to somebody their behavior is OK. It's just understanding. It's understanding where they're coming from. So like you said, Greg, whether it's trauma or whether it's, I mean, whatever, ultimately, it's just understanding where they're coming from.

But understanding doesn't make it OK. So I'm just going to make sure that you all are hearing that expressing empathy, when I express empathy towards someone, I'm not saying that, therefore, it's OK that they did what they did. Just because I understand doesn't make it OK. I'm still going to hold you accountable to whatever our agreements were, et cetera, so just sort of managing that line. So thank you, Amber, for that. That was really great.

And then Cassidy says, in terms of some of these skills that we're talking about, and social skills in particular, that it's an important piece to reinforce the difference between aggression and assertiveness, yes, when going through social skills, so conflict management, all of those things, just the difference between aggressive and assertive. Yeah, awesome.

And I often will talk about passive aggressive, as well, because sometimes that's our favorite. I'm not going to name names, but sometimes that's our favorite technique. I know it's one that I fall into, for sure, so just be able to name some of those things.

And then London's saying, I find that something I see a lot is that people try and help and heal others so much that it's actually turned into a way to distract themselves from seeing and admitting their own problems. It's so much easier to focus on other people rather than ourselves. They end up drowning their own trauma. Yeah, yeah.

So Leanne is asking, can you explain more about the difference between empathy and sympathy? Yes, so sympathy is feeling sorry for. Sympathy is, oh, you poor thing. Oh, Greg, you poor thing, I feel so sorry for you. What are you going to do? That's sympathy.

And unfortunately, sympathy can be a little unhelpful. It conveys a power differential, I'm OK, you're not. Empathy is more about understanding. Empathy is the ability to put myself in somebody else's shoes without ever losing my own shoes, meaning I'm always my person. I'm not taking over, taking responsibility for, any of that. I'm really sitting in my shoes while understanding what the other person might be going through.

Empathy is the willingness to suspend my judgment and truly hear the other person, which is tough. It's really tough, because there are times where the client might be saying something, and I'm not suspending my own judgment. I'm still saying, oh, but you're wrong, but that's not the case, or you're lying to me, or whatever it is. So empathy is about the willingness, just for a minute, to suspend my judgment while really listening to what you have to say. It's not agreeing with you. It's not saying you're OK or your behavior was OK.

And Ruth is saying that it's easier to have empathy for some clients over others. I fully, fully agree with you. Kristina posted a little link to empathy versus sympathy. Kristina, from the link I can't tell, but I'm hoping that it's a link to Brene Brown's little animated clip about empathy and sympathy?

Kristina can you tell us if that is-- yeah, awesome, great. It is Brene Brown's, it's this lovely animation with little animals. And one of the animals falls into a hole, and they talk about the difference between empathy and sympathy. It's really sweet.

And then Caroline is asking a really important question. And Caroline, I'm going to give you a very controversial answer. So Caroline's question is, don't you have to have gone through a similar situation in order to be able to say we know how they feel?

Yes. We never say, I know how you feel. We don't, because even if we've gone through the same situation, we have no clue how they're feeling. We're only guessing. And we don't say I know how you feel.

We say gosh, that sounds really hard. It sounds like you're feeling really torn up about that, or that's a lot to go through. It sounds like you're feeling pretty hopeless right now. When naming emotion, we're not saying, I know how you feel, because I promise you that even if we both have gone through exactly the same thing, we're going to have different experiences, purely because we're different human beings.

Now, in order to understand another person's suffering, I don't have to have suffered in the same way. As human beings, we've all suffered, and so we can relate to the emotion. And that's really all that's required, the ability to relate to the emotion.

And Derek, yes. Derek says, I find that this is a great opportunity to use motivational interviewing techniques when engaging and empathizing with clients. Yes, so one of the biggest ways-- and this goes back to a question that Bryson asked a while ago, which is using reflections to express empathy. And reflections are at the heart of motivational interviewing, which is really stating back what's not being said.

Nicola says, maybe say, I can't imagine how you feel. Yeah, yeah. Sometimes I'll use exactly that, or I'll say, I can't imagine how hard this is for you. So Amber says, empathy sometimes comes pretty naturally to us. Yes, we've lived experience. Affective empathy can be difficult for me when we work so hard, and they relapse and go back to jail.

Yes, when we put in a lot of effort-- but here's the rub, and Amber, I hope you can hear what I'm saying, and if it doesn't make sense, just put it back in the chat, OK? But here's the thing. We cannot express empathy with an ulterior motive of wanting them to do what we want to do. It's not fair.

So just because I'm expressing empathy and doing all the right skills, it doesn't mean that they owe me anything. And this is hard, because Amber, I'm right there with you. I get so annoyed when I've worked so hard and the person goes back to jail or relapses, and I feel like I'm working harder than they are and all of that. I hear you. I'm right there with you.

And yet, when we work hard to do our skills to the best of our ability, they owe us nothing. They are on their journey, and we just happen to be people who are supporting them in their journey. So I hope, Amber, that makes sense.

And if it doesn't, definitely-- oh, thank you. Thanks, I appreciate that. It's tough, it's so tough, and I struggle with that a lot. So I so appreciate you being vulnerable and honest about it.

Nicholas says, is it OK to say, I can't even imagine what you're experiencing, but together we can process and provide support for you? 100%, yes, yes. And Amber says, I definitely need to be reminded about that this week. Yeah, it sounds like this week has been rough. Yeah, thanks, Amber. Yes, Greg.

I was just going to say, I know we have some law enforcement people on and, Kevin's on as well. Kevin, when we're talking about all of this, I think one of the questions is obviously, how do you as a law enforcement officer express empathy? Is there a place to do that when you're clearly interacting with someone that may be going to jail or has harmed someone else?

Yeah, thanks, Greg. Let me back up a little bit here. A lot of good information here, great information to take away and apply that out into the field and all that. I know the clients that we work with, and it's obviously different, because when an officer responds to a situation, the majority of the time, the individual's probably going to be under the influence of some sort of substance. And at that point, they're not really able to work with, and trying to figure out what the best approach would be in working with the individual.

One of the tribal communities that I worked in and some of the challenges we had was we saw the individuals, a lot of times, they were in this cycle of in and out of the system and trying to understand why and what put them in that situation. One thing that we were able to actually come up with was identifying a case manager, who was applied and worked out of the police department there. Because law enforcement, in working with individuals, it'd be nice, it's great to have all the information that is here to understand a person on what their emotional state is and the history behind that, the trauma that they faced. Obviously there's quite a bit that's happening there.

And learning that and being able to apply that back into those individuals that need some help and all that, as law enforcement, yeah, we direct them into other services such as behavioral health and other health areas, as well too. But from the boots on the ground, it obviously is different in many ways, because again, it just depends on the situation. And you may come across a person that is not under the influence of something there.

And that is the time to approach the individuals with what's going on with the individual. Why are they acting out, or what's happening behind that? What are those underlying conditions as far as the person being the way that they are?

And I think as law enforcement, as we learn more, we're able to approach and work with those individuals a lot closer and all. But I think being able to identify the person that we had within law enforcement, such as that case manager, we were able to apply those resources more effectively and direct those individuals to the help that they needed to get them back on their feet again and all.

Thanks, Kevin.

Yes, thanks Greg. So we had a few additional questions that came in. And Nicola is asking, does law enforcement take trauma informed training and approaches? And it's definitely becoming a part of what the training law enforcement receives, for sure. Kevin, did you want to add anything to that?

Yeah, there is training that's available, that's offered. I wish it could be a little bit more. Dr. Nandi, the training that you've done, I wish we could have that a little more. And I know eventually, I'm sure it's going to probably be coming out for law enforcement and all that, a lot of good information, like I was saying. If we're able to take and apply all that you mentioned here, it would be awesome to apply out into the field, just so we have a better understanding of working with individuals a lot more closer.

Yeah. I've done a variety of different training, so lots of requests on de-escalation techniques. So I try and sort of scoot trauma informed approaches in there, as well. Corinne asks, as to putting our intentions and motivations with our clients with sobriety or staying out of jail. I always remember a quote, that healing is not linear. Yes, Corinne, you're absolutely right, it's not a straight line. Everyone's journey is very individual and very different, very, very true.

Harry, you asked a really interesting question. Is it ever proper or appropriate to interject what you've done that helped you get through something to offer something for them to try and help them out of that situation? So yes, with a caveat, and by that I mean that is OK to offer it as one suggestion of many suggestions.

So as human beings, we don't like to be told what to do, and we do better when we have choice. So let's say I wanted to tell Greg what I've done to help me. I could say, Greg, you have lots of different options. Is it OK if I share those with you?

Greg says sure. I say, one thing that I've tried is A, but you could also try B or C. What do you think you might want to do? And then if Greg says, well, A sounds really dumb, do not defend it. Even though it worked for you, it may not work for somebody else, so don't defend it.

So that's the only caveat. It's absolutely OK to offer suggestions with permission and with a few options. It doesn't have to be three, it could be two, just so people have some kind of choice there.

And then there's a question-- I think I might be out of order a little bit. The state of Florida requires mental health training for law enforcement, and I was fortunate to be doing that training on a reservation. That's awesome, Mary, I'm so glad. That's wonderful.

And then Cecilia says, law enforcement is trained similar to the military and to really pay attention to threats. Yeah. So this is where it gets difficult. Because if we're always thinking that there's a threat, it's very difficult to express empathy. And you're right that empathy may not be appropriate in every scenario, especially when there's an active threat. So part of it is being able to distinguish, what is the most helpful skill to be used right now?

Nicola asked, how open are officers to utilizing these tools? And it really depends. I mean, one of the trainings that I did, officers were very, very open to it, because they were recognizing that some of the things that they have been trying are not really helpful or not effective. And so they want other tools, so sometimes very, very open. But the piece that Cecilia is bringing up is really important, that if I'm always in a place where I'm defending a threat, then it's really, really tough.

And I think several of you are starting to ask about this, that if a person is high or actively intoxicated or in a drug-induced mental health crisis, it's really tough to have any skill building with them. You're absolutely right. So Josiah brings this up, and Helen brings us up. So if somebody is in a state of active mental health crisis, we need de-escalation.

And de-escalation happens through calm approaches, through empathy, all of these things, but definitely not a place to start to build some of these skills. So yeah, I appreciate that you bring that up. And Justine brings up a really important point, that if somebody is trying to get compliance, if a law enforcement officer is just trying to get compliance, utilizing being empathic will get you compliance faster than pushing really hard, because sometimes you get that same aggressive response back.

And there's just two really quick slides-- making sure to just practice in the moment role plays, or imagine if somebody said something, what are you going to do, those are some easy ways to slide in some practicing. Or I hear you saying that this is really important, convince me. Or what if, let's give it a shot, let's try it, all of these are helpful practice strategies.

And then I believe I have one more slide here, which is to offer you, if you want to know more about some of this sort of cognitive behavioral training, there's a lot available out there. There's Quick Skills, Carey Guides. I co-authored a book a really long time ago called *The Probation and Parole Treatment Planner.* It has a bunch of skills in there.

Strategies for Self-improvement and Change is a great CBT curriculum. There's a wonderful mental health and skill support called *Mind Over Mood,* a really great workbook. Thinking for a Change or MRT, any of these are examples of skill supports.

So before we close, first of all, great discussion. Thank you for the input. It really makes it much more interactive and enjoyable for all of us. In closing, we would like to share brief information on additional training and technical assistance opportunities.

NCJTC and BJA, a TTA provider focusing on supporting tribal communities and implementing system-wide strategies to address alcohol and substance abuse-related crime. TTA services include customized training, regional trainings, conferences, webinars, peer-to-peer support, community planning, tribal justice system collaboration, written resources, sharing grantee best practices, and more. For additional information on General TTA Services, links to featured offerings, and to request CTA services, please visit our program website as shown on the screen for more information.

Finally, watch your inbox and our website for upcoming webinars and virtual TTA opportunities in 2022. Please also be sure to visit COSSAP, the COSSAP Resource Center, for a plethora of valuable resources, including funding opportunities, grantee site profiles with a data visualization tool, information about demonstration projects, webinar recordings, and several additional trainings and technical assistance opportunities. The important COSSAP Resource Center links and information are shown on your screen. And for more information, you can contact the COSSAP program at COSSAP@iir.com.

For additional information on general TTA services, links to featured offerings, and to request TTA, please visit our program website as shown on the screen for more information. Finally, watch your inbox and our website for upcoming webinars and virtual TTA opportunities. This is going to conclude our webinar for today.

I want to thank you Dr. Nandi and our panelists, Kevin and Justine, for sharing your time and knowledge with us. And thank you to all of you who joined us today. We hope you can join us again in the future for other webinars and training opportunities. And we wish you a wonderful day. So thank you all.