Linda Warren: Another aspect of building trusting relationships is to understand and respect the various ways that adults learn. Let's look at some principles of adult learning that will help mentor-coaches to work with their protege.

To create an effective mentor-coaching relationship, mentor-coaches, build on their proteges' individual knowledge and experiences. They recognize and respond to proteges' cultures and different learning styles. Adults learn best when new information is integrated with what they already know. We also know that all adults benefit from learning activities that involve them fully in understanding, interpreting and sharing new concepts together.

The mentor-coach and protege need to share with each other the ways they like to learn. Identifying and sharing preferred ways to learn fosters an atmosphere of trust, more open communication and a willingness to try new approaches. Why is it important to identify and share preferred ways to learn, Patty and Linda?

Linda Campanaro-Glover: Well it's very important because then you're successful. I have a wonderful opportunity recently with one of our newer teachers who in the mentor-coaching experience talked about how we brainstormed all kinds of strategies for a word wall and by the end of the conversation she said to me, "Could you please just come and do it with me?" So I realized that her learning style was a hands-on learning style that all of the brainstorming and the verbal interchange that we had didn't work for her.

Patty Hnatiuk: And understanding how we like to learn helps one another identify resources that we might need, helps us to decide on strategies for change in the classrooms and in the homes with the families, with the children, and with each other. It gives us an insight into where each other is coming from about how we best like to grow and change and develop.

Linda Warren: Yeah, I think that...one of the things that we've been thinking about in our conversations prior to being on air is that sometimes it simply depends on whether...what level of that professional development or experience that you're at because a newer teacher may have a different preferred learning style than someone who is more experienced and seasoned in the field.

Linda Campanaro-Glover: And all individuals are at different phases and stages of their life. It's really important to honor that and to acknowledge: how much training have we had; what haven't we been exposed to; how long have we been in the classroom or as a home visitor.

All of those variables really play a very important part in how we respond to each other. It's really fun to talk about: how do we want to do this; how are we going to set...once we set the goals, do you want me to model print awareness; do you...or read-alouds or would you like me to video you while you're doing it.

And then you can take it home and do some self-reflection. It's always a lot of fun to then sit down and brainstorm and it's amazing when you see yourself and maybe set new goals on... "Oh I'd think I'd like to do that." And again, it's the protеgеs deciding and being part of the process that makes it so successful.

Linda Warren: So a key question then becomes how are mentor-coaches learning. I mean because we are talking about protеgеs learning as well as mentor-coaches so mentor-coaches really don't have to have all of the answers. We're learning and growing together. OK. Now you are going to work with your facilitators on adult learning. Pause the tape now and resume playing when you have completed your discussions.

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