

Education Manager Series: Reflective Supervision in Action

Roselia Ramirez: Hello, everyone, and thank you for joining today's webinar, "Reflective Supervision in Action." This is a part of the "Education Manager Series." My name is Roselia Ramirez, and I'm from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, and it is such a privilege to welcome back a presenter for today's topic. For those of you that might remember, this particular presenter was with us right around this time last year, on this very same – same topic, so it's a privilege to welcome back Dr. Sherryl Heller. Dr. Heller is an associate professor of Psychiatry at Tulane University Medical Center and Tulane's Institute of Early Childhood and Infant Mental Health. She has more than 20 years' experience in the reflective supervision and has done just numerous amount of work around this topic, and most recently, her work has focused on leading programs that provide reflective supervision to child care providers, child care administration, and mental health professionals.

All right. So, before we move into the topic today, I want to introduce you to BETH, who has become just a very good friend of mine, not only in my professional life but also in my personal life. Because impulse control is an important component of emotional intelligence, it helps to have techniques to manage yourself in stressful situations. We all know that ourselves, staff that we work with, families could be experiencing some very stressful times, and so, BETH is a four-step approach that stems directly from cognitive therapy and has been shown to be effective. When I share these techniques with you, you'll see exactly what I'm talking about. But just, again, just some strategies and techniques to help you as you work through some of those stressful times. OK. So, this is what BETH looks like. Again, it's a four step and the acronym. So, the first part – and I invite you to kind of practice these things as we're kind of going through – but the first part is just taking that moment for that deep belly breath. Taking a slow, deep abdominal breath, breathing in, and breathing out, as you're getting ready to approach what could be a stressful situation. Again, in your personal life, with kids, sometimes we kind of need to manage and kind of take a step back and reflect before we approach situations. So, again, that step B is that belly breath. The "E" stands for emotions. So, take a look at your emotions by asking, "What am I feeling right now?" What are some of those things that are surfacing as you're thinking about what you're getting ready to encounter? So, again, it's those emotions. Getting in touch with your emotions, and then, you move into the "T," which is thoughts. Take a look at your thoughts by asking, "What negative thoughts am I having right now?" So, from those emotions, are there some negative thoughts that are beginning to surface for you? And then moving into the "H," which is the helpful response, "How can I rephrase my negative thoughts?" What is a more helpful response? This is really important to think about because how you respond to a situation is really going to set the stage for further encounters, and as you'll hear from Dr. Heller, when we're talking about reflective supervision, it's really about that relationship. So, it's really important how you respond and how that's going to impact – your response is going to impact as you move forward with that relationship. So, again, I just wanted to introduce you to BETH. Just thought it would be a great strategy as we think about reflective supervision and just the different times and things that we could be experiencing right now. OK.

So, our objectives for today's session: First, we want to start by defining the reflective supervision process, and then, we're going to move into understanding the value of reflective supervision during challenging times. We're going to explain implementation practices, including providing reflective supervision from a distance, and then, lastly, there are some resources that we want to share as you kind of move through this process. All right. So, without further ado, I'd like to turn it over to Dr. Heller to kind of begin this discussion for us. Dr. Heller, welcome.

Dr. Sherryl Heller: Hello. It's nice to be here again. I always enjoy my time with "Zero to Three," and I had a nice time doing this webinar last year. So, for those of you who were here last year, welcome back. We got some new stuff for you, and those of you who are new, I'm happy to have you here. I thought we'd start out first by talking about what reflective supervision is. So, just the definition, that we have it all in our head together, and we're all holding on to the same thing. And reflective supervision is a relationship that aims to create a climate where both the client's needs as well as the helper's needs – so, that would be whoever you're doing the supervision with – are considered so that the effectiveness of your supervisee's needs of the intervention that they're doing is optimized, right? So, we do this. We go through all of this really to help them – our supervisors – be able to provide the best work possible. OK? So, let's see. Whether we are going face-to-face or we're doing this virtually, we want to kind of start with the basics, right? So, with reflective supervision, if the relationship is already established when we're going virtually, we want to kind of maintain that. It's kind of easy to move into, from an established relationship. When you go virtually, you have a lot of those same connections, and you're used to each other, and so, that can kind of be an easy transition. Starting up on virtual can be a little bit of a challenge, but it's doable, but again, just as we do when we're doing face-to-face, you want to start the session by checking in, ask how the supervisee has been doing. How are they doing in this new world? There's been a lot of changes for us in the past couple of months, in a variety of areas of our lives. So, how are they doing? How are they doing at balancing work and home life, etcetera? You really want to check in, and given that we are shifting to virtual because of the COVID pandemic, you really want to kind of make sure and check on how they're doing with that. And now, we have all of the upheaval around social justice, and so, those are questions you might want to check in on, see how they're doing with that. Remember that the way we maintain our relationships, even our reflective supervision relationships, can be informal as water cooler conversations, where we're kind of really finding out about each other's lives and what's happening. Those aren't happening anymore, but that's an important component of maintaining a relationship. So, you might need to add a little more time to check in with people when start your reflective supervision sessions.

So, you know, since COVID started, I've been like, "How have things been for you since you started this new normal? How has it been going since you've been trying to do things virtually?" I check in with the way things are going, and it helps me to become really aware of where they are and what they might be struggling with to have to do so much virtually or so much from home. It just is ... Things that you can infer in the office, you may not be able to infer so easily because you're only seeing each other during Zoom call meetings and during reflective

supervision. I also ... I'm always sure to inquire about how they're taking care of themselves, right? You want to make sure that self-care is happening, especially now in this time of high stress in our world. You want to make sure that they aren't letting those fall by the wayside. Our schedules are changing because we're working from home. A lot of ... We don't have that decompression time driving from the office back to the house or vice-versa. How are they using that time? Are they creating other rituals that can help them transition into kind of a work mindset? These are all important components of reflective supervision that you want to check in on. OK. So, you may want to [Inaudible] your participant's guide as we move through defining reflective supervision. You might want to just jot down some of the ways that you might be intentional on reinforcing some of the components you're going to see in bold throughout this presentation. So, really think about, how can you reinforce that relationship and that relationship time together? OK.

So, the next part of our definition is that it is a partnership, right, through which – It's a partnership which nurtures awareness through a process of remembering, reviewing, and thinking out loud together, right? So, one way to maintain or support a sense of collaboration or true partnership is to have your supervisee being a part of the conversation and setting expectations, right, so, determining the time you're going to meet. Are you going to shift it to something different than what it usually was? All of our schedules are changing a bit with this new kind of normal in our world, so help them to be a part of that conversation, and what time works for them. Are you going to meet via video or phone? That's an important conversation to have and to discuss. When I do group reflective supervision, we talk about that, and everybody needs to agree to meet the same way. If we're going to all meet over the computer, we want everybody to have their cameras on most of the time, because it's very difficult to have some people chiming in via phone and some people chiming in where you can see and have that feedback. So, you want everybody kind of on the same playing field. So, we make sure that everybody agrees to the same way. And you also want to make sure that you're using reflective prompts during supervision so that you're asking questions that are going to pull for more dialogue and not just "yes or no" answers, right? You really want these questions to be open-ended, and we're going to give you some examples of that later in this presentation. And the final part of that definition of reflective supervision is that the supervisee feels partnered and is not overwhelmed by fear or uncertainty and can feel safe to express uncomfortable feelings, thoughts, and reactions, right? So, you really want to make sure that that safe place is maintained, whether you're meeting virtually or whether you're meeting in person, because you have to feel safe and connected to be able to share some of those worries, concerns, or fears you might have, right?

Face-to-face or virtual supervisory meetings can be very intimidating, especially when people are just starting to do reflective supervision, so you want to kind of make sure that you give time for the person you're supervising to feel safe, and you think the ways that might make them feel more comfortable. For example, when I'm meeting face-to-face, I have some nice comfortable chairs that we sit in. It's away from my desk. It's a nice, soft lighting in that area to help people kind of feel relaxed as we begin to talk. But you want to make sure that, for example, that you clarify that the meetings are going to remain confidential and so, you want to

let them know where you are, if you're doing this virtually, that you're in a room where other people cannot access or hear what's being said, or that you're wearing headphones so that their part of the conversation isn't feeling heard. Letting them understand that, "Oh, I'm working out of my home office," or "I'm working out of my dining room, so you may see my husband come back and forth, but, you know, I have the headphones on." So, you really want to make sure that they understand where you are, and you understand where they are. Let's see. Keep in mind that many of our staff are experiencing the same things that our families are experiencing, and so, they may need to really have time to kind of talk about the stresses that they're undergoing, the losses, what their families may be struggling with. So, you want to be consistent but flexible with meeting times. Constant changes in meeting times can make a supervisee feel not valued, so, you need to know that they need to know that they're going to get you every week or every couple of weeks. Sometimes, with these situations, it's important to increase the times that you're checking in together with each other because you don't have that office time, so that's something that's important to consider as you move out of phase one into phase two, as more and more centers are opening, and whatnot. You're going to want to make sure you're checking in with folks to see how they're feeling with these new adjustments, to help them think about what safety steps they're putting in place.

Let's see. And then, when we have this kind of safe relationship that's collaborative – that's a real partnership, this enables your supervisees to learn more about themselves, about the people they work with, as well as about the work that they do, right? So, we want ... This allows them to have continuous improvement, and this can still happen over virtual supervision. I often recommend that we check in regularly. It could be annually. It could be quarterly, if it's a new relationship. [Inaudible] feel the relationship is going? What's working for them? What isn't working for them? Are they getting out of reflective supervision what you hoped for them to be getting out of reflective supervision? Dialoguing about how the process is working, where they might see that the relationship might want to work more on is an important part of what you do, and there are measures out there that allow supervisees to assess their supervisor relationship with their elected supervisor as well as you, as a supervisor, can go through and kind of do an evaluation yourself, which I think is really important to do on a regular basis. So, when we have all those things in place, then productive reflection can happen. We have that foundation of acceptance and trust that's characterized by safety, calmness, and support, and that's when we create an environment where people do their best thinking, and when they're struggling with a case, or when they're struggling with certain obstacles in the work that they're doing, then this is going to allow them think out of the box and to think of multiple solutions, and if we're really comfortable with talking about what they might be worried about or what their fears are, or if maybe they feel like they maybe made a mistake, they can do that in a situation where they feel calm, safe, and supported.

So, we know what reflective supervision is, and we know the essential features that support productive reflective supervision are, but what does it look like in action, right? That's what you guys are here for. That's what the title of this was about. How do we as supervisors actually create a reflective dialogue? And this is what we're going to focus on for the rest of our talk today. OK? So, while we're physically distancing and are taking measures to protect ourselves

and others from disease, we want to consider how essential RS elements can be maintained when providing it virtually, right? That's what we really need to think about. What it is that's important about reflective supervision that makes it work? What are these key elements, and how can we maintain those elements in a virtual environment, right? We know one of those key elements is the relationship. What things could you do to build and maintain a positive, productive relationship? I'd like you all to kind of put those ideas in the Q&A box, and Roselia is going to share those with me in a bit, as they start to come through. So, I already talked about some of the things you could do, like committing to regular meetings, being clear around confidentiality, beginning each session with a check-in as to how people are doing. Have any other ideas popped up for us, Roselia?

Roselia: So, some other ideas, along with those regular check-ins, is, like, checking in with folks that are not work-related, so just kind of making them feel that, you know, when you're checking in with them, that it's just not all about work, that you're really caring about them as individuals. And just as you mentioned, letting people know that you are there for them because many of staff are experiencing a lot of the same things that families are experience, so, I know that you've mentioned that as well. So, I think folks are really hearing that. Another thing that kind of came in is ensuring that staff know how to use technology. You know, technology is something that ...

Dr. Heller: Very good.

Roselia: ... many folks are fearful of, and so, that can be kind of impacting, and it could come across as a relationship issue, but it's just really that they're not comfortable with the technology that's being used. Someone mentioned that they're planning on sending a questionnaire asking what teachers need and want from a coach and how to be able to determine how they could best support. There's a lot that are coming in about, again, just kind of asking staff, you know, how they're doing. Ice breakers, sharing jokes.

Dr. Heller: Excellent. Yes!

Roselia: And then really that piece of the communication on a regular basis, and then, being respectful of schedules, home life ...

Dr. Heller: Yeah.

Roselia: Let's see here. Oh, someone mentioned encouraging texts. So, rather ... As another means of just kind of those check-ins is maybe sending someone a text. They might, maybe, feel more comfortable and be responsive to texting.

Dr. Heller: Great. Thank you. Thank you, guys. Thank you, Roselia. I appreciate it. Definitely, some folks are more comfortable over the phone, and so, there are some folks I still do reflective supervision with over the phone rather than doing it virtually because that's what they're more comfortable with, or that's what works better for their home environment. Other folks, it's so important to be able to have that connection over Zoom. I have one supervisee

who goes out into her car in the garage, and we do it over the phone in the garage via Zoom so that she can see me and have that space, but she's got no space in her house to kind of be away from her kids. So, really being flexible and asking your supervisee about what would be most beneficial to them. Excellent, excellent.

OK. So, now we want to think about virtual considerations, right? So, prior to starting reflective supervision virtually, there is a number of factors to consider. One is what platform to use, right? There are a number of platforms that are out there, but for many of us, there needs to be certain protections in place. For example, when I do my reflective supervision, I need to make sure that's it's HIPPA compliant. More and more platforms are recognizing the importance of this, and they have that ability there. Do both parties have Wi-Fi access? A lot of places do not have Wi-Fi access. Some centers have problems with it, or they have poor Wi-Fi access. Some folks in rural communities don't have great Wi-Fi access, or they're paying for the amount that they use. It's not one kind of global fee, so, it's preferable for them to do it over their cell phone, so you need to make sure that you're thinking about that. Do both parties have video cameras on their computer? If not, is a cell phone an option? So, some folks who don't have a video camera will call in on their cell phone because they have a camera on their cell phone, and that will allow that visual component of virtual reflective supervision to work. Can both parties be in a private and quiet space during the scheduled call? I just told you about the supervisee who sits out in the garage. Today, I was able to say to my kids, "OK, from this time to this time, I'm going to be giving a webinar, so you guys need to kind of be out of my office space." And so, they're all in other rooms in the house. I have the ability to do that because my house is large enough, but not all people do, and many people have multiple family members living in their home. Also, it's important to have a backup plan if the virtual platform fails, right? So, we all have where it's just freezing up for whatever reason. We get dropped. Bad weather won't allow us to get on the Internet, but we could communicate by phone or text. So, making sure you have a way to contact your supervisee if something should happen that eliminates you in the middle of a call and in the middle of a reflective supervision session, everything stops, you have a way to reach out so you can reconnect and wrap up that session. OK. So, also, we need to discuss etiquette. Like, what are the ground rules do you think are important to put in place for virtual reflective supervision? I know that you answered some of these questions for us on the MyPeers app, and I think, Roselia, do you have some examples of what folks spoke about on there?

Roselia: Yeah, I do, actually. We had a few folks that responded, and so, one of the responses was to treat all participants with respect and dignity. "We can have different opinions but does not mean one is right and the other is wrong," so, just kind of having that mutual respect. Another one was, and you kind of talked a little bit about this already, was being sensitive to individual needs and situations so that my normal is not everyone's normal. And so, understanding that there are going to be those situations where staff are working in multiple – there's multiple family members. There's children in the home, not having the technology ... So, just kind of being sensitive to those individual needs. And then lastly, a few folks talked about the use of cameras, that when we're in this time of separation and feeling isolated, just the use of cameras could really be a norm to kind of set the stage, and of course, you know, if folks

don't have access to a camera, but when those cameras are there, building that relationship so that comfort level is there so that they feel connected.

Dr. Heller: Yes, yes. Excellent, excellent, and I think when you're doing group calls, you need to make sure that everybody kind of knows the same rules and following the same rules. So, all cameras off or all cameras on. You want to have that similarity. Muting when you're not speaking; a lot of times, there's background noise people aren't even aware of. Many of the folks that I do reflective supervision with are enjoying beautiful weather, so they go sit outside on their porch, or they sit in their yard which is lovely, but the wind can be really loud on their microphone, and they're not hearing it, but the rest of us are. So, being comfortable with asking people to mute when they're not speaking can be really helpful. Reminding people not to multitask, it's important. When you're face-to-face, people don't usually do that, but when we're home or on our computer and a notification pops up, people may tend to check an email or may not even think about looking at their phone and checking a text message, so really stressing to people that we want to be in this space together. One of the ways I help to hone that down is, I'll usually do – before we start a session – we do a mindfulness moment where everybody – we do some guided breathing together, and there's many, many reasons for that, but I always, at the end of it, say, "Now, let's open our eyes and return to this reflective space we've created together," to help remind them that we're going to be reflecting together, and that's what the focus should be that we can release all the other things that are going on for this period of time together. Also, because people have young children, and you know they have young children, they may need to take care of a young child's needs in the middle of a reflective supervision session or whatnot, so give them the space to do that. Go ahead. Mute your phone. Mute your sound and go ahead and take care of your child, and come on back, or turn your camera off briefly so you can do what you need to do, but please come back when you're finished, are all important things to do.

Great, we're all thinking the right way. So, now we're going to start talking about active listening. We're really going to think about it a little more deeply. All of us know what active listening is, but I really want to talk about those components of it, and we're going to go through four of them: Stop, look, listen, and respond. So, while you're doing this, go ahead and jot down notes in your guide that might come in handy because near the end of this, we're going to watch a reflective supervision video, and you may want to look for some of these behaviors in that supervision video. OK. So ... Stop. That's the first thing is really stop what you are doing so that you can pay attention to the supervisee. You can pay attention to the speaker. It is so important to make eye contact and to let them know that you're focused on them, and if you're looking down at your phone, or if you're attending to a child, or if you're responding to an email, that really makes them feel like they're not important. And so, they really need to know that they've got your full attention, and you want them to provide this to you as well. Because I'm at home, and I have children, there are moments when they come into the room that I'm in unexpectedly, and that's when I say, "Excuse me, I'm so sorry. This is really important. I need to attend to this," and I'll mute and attend to it, and then I come back and again say, "I apologize, again," and they understand. Just like with them, we have to deal with what's happening at home, but again, I try not to let it happen too often.

So, let's see. The other things is if you're doing it by phone, really be aware of background noises. I remember I did supervision with somebody for a while, and I thought they were washing their dishes while we were speaking, and finally, I just kind of asked, and it turned out that when she spoke to me, she liked to sit next to a fountain she had in her back-porch area, and that sounded like washing dishes. And so, I had the perception that she really wasn't paying attention to what was going on, when in reality, she was working to put herself in a nice space. So, you know, feel free to ask and to remind that we really want to be focused and not multitasking. We both want to stop and really listen to what's going on.

The next piece is looking, right? Active listening involves not only our ears but our eyes, right, and our face and body. So, when I'm face-to-face, I'm going to lean forward. I'm going to let them know that I'm looking at them. This can be challenging on Zoom, right, because I have your picture down in the left-hand corner, and you have my picture in the upper right-hand corner, so, I'm looking at the lower left-hand corner, you think I'm not looking at you. So, a lot of times I need to make sure I'm just focusing on the camera to let them know that I'm really thinking and looking about them. I'm really thinking about what they're seeing of me so that they know that I'm attending. I'm going to go ahead and nod. I'm going to really watch my facial expressions so that they know that I'm attending to what they're saying, and really, you know, reply with "hms," nods, little sounds to let them know that I'm connected and I'm listening to what they're saying, a "Wow!" That's not going to necessarily interrupt them, but it's going to note that I'm there and I'm listening to what they're saying.

OK, and then, it's listening to what's being said, right? So, as much ... [Inaudible] They're telling you they're fine, but their arms are folded, and they have a scowl, you might want to comment on, "Well, tell me more about that," or "Your body's telling me something different from what your face is telling me," and you can find out a little bit more about what's going on. This can be a little more challenging over the phone. I really don't recommend starting reflective supervision over the phone until you've had a chance to be with somebody a few times face-to-face, if possible, because you really want to learn what their speaking and dialoguing pace is. Some people talk fast. Some people are really slow. You want to understand what that pace is so that you're not interrupting, and so, that you can really cue into what's happening. If a fast speaker slows down, that's telling you that something's happening, and you can learn about their intonation. Some people are much more expressive with their tone of voice than others. Some, you know, can be pretty flat. Well, you want to make sure that you understand that about this person so that if somebody who does have a lot intonation suddenly gets flat, that's a cue to you that there's some emotions going on. So, really think about how a person sounds, and maybe ask about it, right? What is the message? What are they telling you? How does she sound? Frustrated? Excited? Angry? Sometimes, you can cue into what their emotions are just from the way they sound. "Oh, you sound so excited about that." Is her voice soft or louder than usual? That can be telling you something about what's going on for them – there emotionally about – what is going on for them emotionally. Falling over my tongue today.

And it's OK, as I mentioned earlier, to ask about conflicting messages. You can say something like, "You're telling me that it's OK you were treated that way, yet you are showing me

something different with your arms folded and a frown on your face. Share more with me so that I can understand this conflicting message." That's OK to point that out. They may not even be aware that they're doing that, and it may allow them to step back and recognize that they're not really OK. They've just been socialized to say they're OK, and that they're really upset about the way that they're treated, or that they're fearful that if they share with you how upset they are, that you're going to think differently of them. So, hopefully that discussion can come out. And then the final piece of those four parts of active listening is "Responding," right? We want to respond in a way that shows we're listening and we're understanding, right? That we're connecting with them. We want to show that we understand how they're feeling emotionally. When we're reflecting and we're doing a lot of thinking, there are going to be periods of silence, right, and that's OK. Silence can be protective. It can be a space to allow us to process. So, don't necessarily rush in on those silences, but you can nod, or you can "mm-hmm," or you can indicate with your facial expression that you're [Inaudible] too, so that they know that you're taking this time to process it a bit. You can even say, "Wow, that's a lot to think about. I'm not sure how I think about that," right? And so, you can, just as I'm, nodding my head, and I'm slowing my voice down, and I'm, you know, querying with my eyebrows ... That is providing a lot of information for your supervisee, to let them know, "Oh, let's think about this for a little bit."

OK? So, now we're going to get into some specific strategies of what you can do to respond in a way that's reflective and that's going to promote reflective dialog. So, one of the ways that we talk about doing this is paraphrasing, right? So, that's when you kind of put in a nutshell what the individual said to make sure you got the gist of it and that you are on the same page. It's going to be shorter. It's going to be a summary. It's not going to be a repeat of word for word. So, this lets them know you're listening. This makes sure that you're on the same page, and this kind of helps them provide a coherence of what they've just said. Sometimes, as people are processing and thinking about things, they're throwing out a lot of information, and it's really the first time that they've thought about it, so they're processing out loud, and when you can summarize for it, you're kind of adding some coherence to it. So, some examples we have there on the slide are, "I can hear what you are saying. It can be emotionally draining to work with children who have been abused." Another response could be, "So, she applied the techniques you two discussed, and it worked! Seems like she is finally trusting you." So, again, you're paraphrasing and then allowing an interpretation of – like we did on the second one, to promote further dialog, or is one strategy that you can use.

OK. Another strategy is reflective questioning, right? So, a lot of times as people are talking, we want – we can provide them with a line of thinking that might be helpful. So, this can be, again, you know, really useful. We even do this when we're coaching folks a bit. You kind of know where you think they need – they might want to consider going, but again, you don't want to say it for a variety of reasons. One, it's more empowering, and they're more likely to move along with things when it really comes from them and it's their own idea. But also, they're the ones that were in the experience, and so, they know all the nuances, and you want to make sure – you want to give them the opportunity to kind of say, "No, that's not going to work." So, we kind of put that in our reflective questioning. "Wow, I can see how that really makes your

job difficult. What do you think can be done so you can manage your feelings to enable you to provide the best care possible to the children in your room?" Right? So, my worry there is that this person is getting stressed and overwhelmed in the classroom and letting her emotions kind of interfere with her ability to manage the classroom, but I can put it in a question so that we can get to the brunt of the problem. So, really focus the problem. How can she do management of her feelings?

So, let's see. So, the question allows the supervisee to leverage the answer with their own knowledge and experience. [Inaudible] ... The line of thinking. Slight push to move them out of the position if they really are like, "I don't know what to do." And it might move them out of that blind corner, kind of enable them to see a solution. So, reflective questioning is good. Open-ended questions are always important. Those are your go-to; really practice those open-ended questions. We're going to give you some examples of ones in a handout at the end of this session, but you really want to avoid those yes-and-no questions. We really want to promote our staff – our supervisees to think about their own thoughts and emotions and behaviors, right? So, if they're talking about an event, you could say, "And then what happened? And what did the child or parent do next?" I really want them to unpack it so it's like a movie playing in my mind. When they're talking about an interaction that didn't feel right, that didn't go well or a family they're struggling with, I want to really hear about a recent interaction. I want to hear about all of the details. As they're starting to relive it, they're going to have insights, and they're going to remember things that don't come to mind immediately with walking away from the experience that might help shine some light on why they felt the way they did. Inquire about internal responses: "How did you feel about that? What do you think the teacher felt like about that? What do you think the parent was feeling?" Right? We know that emotions are really important for us to be aware of. They can be great information in helping us to understand why we respond in a certain way or understand in more detail how a certain situation went the route that it did. So, we want to make sure that we're attending to those experiences. So, we really want to promote questions that promote the supervisee to think out loud and to ponder and questions where there's not a right answer. So, this is where it's OK to wonder and hypothesize about potential causes and potential solutions that might really help you to understand the situation.

So, when in the moment, which we can't predict, if you've got multiple hypotheses or multiple solutions, multiple strategies they can try, then your supervisee can kind of reach into their tool kit and go from one to the other. So, you might say, "Oh, that interaction was really rough. I wonder if that mother doesn't like dropping off her child or has struggles with separation," or, you know, a couple of things, and it may not be those things, but what you're doing is opening the door for the supervisee to think about the mother's perspective, and then, may be more comfortable about attending and conversing with that mother about drop-off because it's been such a difficult time. Note the picture on this slide. It lists a number of words, where, what, and how, and that's all useful with starting open-ended questions. And then others' perspectives, which I hinted at a little bit before. It's really important for the supervisee to think about multiple viewpoints and not only the viewpoints but their experiences and their histories and their expectations. All of that, all of our beliefs and value system we bring into every

interaction, right, and we need to be thinking about those of other people, and this can be a challenge. This is a level of critical thinking that can be challenging for people without a lot of practice because if I can see your perspective, and it's different from mine, then that means my perspective's wrong, is what some people tend to think instead of the reality that we can all have different perspectives, and then that can be OK, and that can move us forward, once I understand your perspective, to help us move to a solution that's going to work for everybody, right? So, gaining those other perspectives can be very helpful and very beneficial for future insights, right? "That doesn't sound like Carla. I wonder why she said that," can really open the person to stop being angry with Carla for being so rude or for saying something they found insulting but to take a step back and say, "Huh, you know, why did she say that? Well, I think she said it because she doesn't like me." OK. You know, could there be another reason? Could there have been something going on that day? Has she said other things like that before? Again, as you begin to open it up and think about it more broadly in a safe, calm space where people can really think about their own feelings and emotions, can help them to understand another's perspective and maybe help those next interactions to run more smoothly. You know, why do you think she was so angry? "Well, I don't know why she was so angry," and then you may go back and explain to her, "Oh, you know, this is the same time of year that her mother passed away last year, and I know that was really difficult for her. And so, maybe she was dealing with that." It really opens the door for a lot of other thoughts. Hypothesizing, again, I mentioned this a little bit early, but it's important that the supervisee feel confident in their own ability to think and surmise, and this can be a developmental process, right? As they get to do and learn more and more. Sometimes, especially a supervisee who's new to the field or position, may need someone to suggest, I'll repeat, suggest hypotheses, right?

So, what would this look like in action, right? How do you present something that's a hypothesis that they, the supervisee, because, remember, it's a collaborative relationship, can feel comfortable disagreeing with or maybe saying, "Well, no, that doesn't quite plug in together," and here is some of the ideas. "I wonder what would happen if you did blah, blah, blah, blah, blah," right? So, then you're thinking that's what they should be doing, but now you're allowing them to wonder about it and decide if they think it would be helpful or not. "Have you thought of ... How do you think Carla would feel if ... I remember reading ..." and then some information that you have that you feel like they may not have. "Do you think that is worth trying?" So, again, rather than blurting out and saying "This is what you need to do," or, "This is what I would do if I were you." When you phrase it in that, you're giving them the power to decide, and you're allowing them to think more broadly about the situation and how their behavior might impact. So, that's a really nice – another nice type of reflective responding. There's repeating back what you heard, right? This allows for clarification that both parties are on the same page, which is important, because it's not unusual to be on different pages. There have been different times when I have reflected back what I thought I heard, and they're like, "No, no, no, no. That's not exactly what I meant," and then we get clarification, which is helpful because I was going to take a left when really, they were wanting me to take a right. So, allows us to discuss that, and it also allows space for us to slow down. So, sometimes, if things feel like they're getting really emotional, or there was a lot of information that was presented really

quickly, and I'm feeling a little overwhelmed, repeating back what I've heard really helps us to slow down and kind of think together.

Reframing can sometimes be done when you're repeating back. So, if they said a statement that seems not to be really positive or is not considering other people's perspectives, you can reframe it a bit so that it allows them to open their thinking and allows them to consider multiple perspectives. Ideally, it's a new perspective to the situation that the supervisee is struggling with, right, and it's not changing the view. It's just adding new insight or filter, right, just like this little guy here in the picture. He's seeing the same thing, but maybe he's seeing it in a little more detail. Or maybe he's getting a little more information, and that's what we think that that reframing and restating piece does when we're providing reflective supervision to folks. OK. So, here's some ways you can do that reframing and that restating. "OK, let me see if I have this. Do you think maybe Carla was upset about something at home? Isn't her mother ill? Perhaps, that's why she said, 'Blah, blah, blah, blah.'" "Do you think the management did this because they this," right? A lot of times in reflective supervision, we are thinking about what folks ... A lot of times in reflective supervision, we are helping folks to understand why management did certain things, and we want to make sure that folks are seeing that other perspective. And then, there's scaffolding, right? We want to support the acquisition of new knowledge by giving them a little information. This really empowers staff to really think about their own performance and where they might need to grow, right? So, when you feel like the supervisee doesn't have information that they're needed, first you can provide it in drops to see if they can pick up on it and they can continue that way, but it shouldn't be the first reflective supervision used. You need to give them all those other strategies I've talked about first, and if they still don't seem to be getting it, then you want to go ahead and give them the information, and the story that I like the best is one that Trudy Merch mentioned in one of her trainings. If you have a new person working for you, and they come to you, and that say, "Where's the bathroom?" you don't say to them, "Where do you think the bathroom might be? Where was the bathroom at the last place you worked? If you were building this building, where would you put the bathroom?" At that point they're probably going to consider quitting and maybe go to the bathroom on themselves which we don't want happening. So, when somebody asks a question when they really don't know the answer, again, you can say, "Oh, you know, down the hall and to the left." You can give them a little bit of information and help them learn, right? We're getting ready to show you a video clip about a supervision session that was done with a mental health consultant and myself.

[Video begins]

Narrator: Sherry is a supervisor with a statewide early childhood mental health consultation program, and Courtney is a mental health consultant. Sherry and Courtney have been meeting every other week for reflective supervision for the past year. Courtney is discussing a consultation with a mother of a child with developmental disabilities. She is particularly concerned with a recent meeting at the program where the mom was not included. As you watch their session, note the supervisor, reflective supervision core components.

Courtney: I don't know how to repair their relationship between mom and teacher.

Sherry: How did she feel about not being involved in that meeting?

Courtney: I think it was hard for her. I think she was kind of white knuckling it.

Sherry: Right.

Courtney: You know, we talked about it and left it up to her, but with a gentle, like, "You know, it's really useful for the teacher to really be able to talk directly with the therapists, and sometimes, some of those conversations ..." And I did – I kind of used myself a little bit with mom in talking to her about it, and saying, "You know, as a mother with a kid who is on the spectrum as well, I understand this, but I really see some merit in letting them talk without my having to hear everything.

Sherry: Wow, wow.

Courtney: And so, that was good, and that worked for her. So, it was scary.

Sherry: How was that for you?

Courtney: It helped me to be more clear about the times when I'm white knuckling it when people are talking about kid and about my family without me, and that feels uncomfortable, and having to explain it to someone else makes me feel like, "This is why we do it, and there's merit to it, and ...

Sherry: That must have been really powerful for her to hear that.

Courtney: This – all this stuff is just powerful. It's powerful for me. It's powerful, I'm sure, for her on some level, but there's a whole level of reflection that I get to take when I leave this center about like, "OK, so what roles have I played in this?" Then my drive home, or wherever I'm going, is often reflection for me on them, reflection on me on myself. Did I bring too much of my own story ...

Sherry: Right ...

Courtney: ... to this today? Did I sway her too heavily by doing this?

Sherry: Your experiences ...

Courtney: So, there's a lot of that.

Sherry: Wow. Wow. That's a hard thing to do, to really check yourself. And such an important thing to do. And then to be willing to kind of share that with her, I think put her in a nice ...

Courtney: I hope it did. You know, I ... Now, that we're talking about it now, I wonder if I should have also shared with her, though, my uncertainty about bringing my own ... Wanting to say to

her, "You know, I'm not trying to sway you. It's not my place to tell you ..." I don't know, this is hard stuff.

Sherry: It is. So, you wondering if by sharing your experience with her, you are remembering how powerful your words can be as a mental health professional to somebody.

Courtney: As a mental health professional, and a mother, and all of those things being all swept into one. It was a totally different ball game before I had kids.

Sherry: It was, it was.

Courtney: And you could say things and be so much sure of yourself. "Oh yea, this is exactly what needs to happen, mom." Or teacher or whomever. And yeah ...

Sherry: Now, you're experiencing it on both sides. I think that's really powerful. Really powerful that you are sharing this but that also you're careful enough to think about it, and I think that speaks really well for what's going on there. So, we have a mom here that you connected with, and you realized that you're carrying some of your own things into here, but you're kind of thinking about them and holding them and being very honest. And then,

Courtney: I wish I could take those timeouts, though. "Timeout, Mom. Let me go sit in my car and reflect real fast before I get into this."

Sherry: [Laughs] Yes, so many times I wished the same thing.

Courtney: [Laughs]

Sherry: What do you think about having another meeting but where moms apart of it?

Courtney: With everybody?

Sherry: With everybody.

Courtney: Yeah.

Sherry: Maybe to kind of say, "This happens. This happens with kids. They could be going along well; something gets shaken up. Let's all get to where we are, and our observations ..." Maybe hold it in a way where there's not finger pointing and blame, but ...

Courtney: But so she stills feels a part of the circle.

Sherry: Right? Good, good.

[Video ends]

Dr. Heller: OK, OK.

Roselia: OK. Well, Dr. Heller, we're kind of starting to wrap up our time together, lots of great information. We did have a lot of great questions that came in, but I think I'm going to kind of try to wrap, I was kind of looking at the different questions, and I think some of them will kind of feed into this one question. I will let folks know that the other questions we're not able to get to, what I'll do is I'll kind of put together, like, a little summary document, and then, post that on the MyPeers, but here's a question if you could just kind of maybe think about this one, and hopefully, this kind of encompasses questions that came in. How would you recommend starting this practice with staff that are reluctant? So, there's that reluctance, that buy-in, including stuff like not using the cameras, just the relationship as a reflective supervisor as well as a managerial role. So, how would you suggest just kind of starting this practice when that reluctance is there?

Dr. Heller: That's a great question, and it's a big question. There's lots of different strategies that, you know, you can use. You know, one is, you know, to kind of, you know, maybe start a dialog about what their prior supervision has been like, right, and how this might be a little bit different. Again, understanding where their supervision history has come from. Lots of clarification on how they're going to be evaluated. We make sure that whatever they say in a reflective supervision, they're not going to be evaluated about, and we clarify that with them because evaluation should ... You know, we're not going to evaluate somebody on thinking about where they need to grow and their growing edges or whatnot. So, that's another piece of the way that we do it. There's measures out there that I can give you links to, that you can send out, Roselia, that you could share with your supervisees to have them kind of see this is what supervision is supposed to be about. Where do you think we work well? Where do you think we have some growing edges? Another trick is I usually start people in reflective supervision in groups if I feel like this is a new skill for them and to enhance their reflective capacity because we feel a little bit safer in groups rather than jumping straight into individual. That's another consideration.

Roselia: Yeah. Great. Well, thank you so much. I mean, there's a lot to consider when you're kind of building that relationship, which I think, you know, you just really touched nicely on that. All of this really, the success of it is really built on that relationship. So, I think strategies around that are really maybe thinking outside of the box on how I can strengthen the relationship with this individual to have a successful dialog in that – creating that safe space where they can share some of the things that are happening. Well, thank you for that. So, let's kind of move on and talk about some resources.

Dr. Heller: So, the resources that we have for you, this is encouraging reflective supervision. You'll see the top is the book that it came from, and each of the little note sheets on there has ... Like, if you want to raise awareness, if you want to ask about prospective taking – they give you different stems that you can use in your reflective supervision. I actually laminated this and I have it sitting on my desk whenever I'm doing reflective supervision, and I will glance at it if I feel myself kind of struggling in a certain area to get some ideas of some props I can use. And

then, this is an article that Zero to Three put out just a couple of months ago that's very helpful in thinking about reflective supervision with groups around virtual technology, and I think there's also some really good hints in it that apply to just doing it individually. So, that's another piece that you might want to consider looking at.

Roselia: OK, and those resources should be available in your green resource widget so that you could access those. Also wanted to mention, again, for those of you that are not a part of the MyPeers, we'd like to continue this conversation on MyPeers. There are numerous communities that you could be a part of but particularly the Education Leaders community. I facilitate that group, and so, we can continue the conversation on reflective supervision as well as some of those questions that came in. So, this is a great resource to share with your colleagues across the country if there's questions or things that you are coming across. Peer networking and sharing is a great way to share with one another and not reinvent the wheel. Like, if there's some strategies that you're utilizing that you have found to be successful, you know, share those on there with your colleagues, and lastly, again, questions we will address those on MyPeers, and that ends today's session. Dr. Heller, I'd like to thank you for joining us. It's such a pleasure to always hear from you.

Dr. Heller: My pleasure.

Roselia: You know, again, last year and this year and hopefully, we can continue to work together to put together another great session around reflective supervision. So, that ends our time together, so thank you, everyone. Enjoy the rest of your day.