



Integrating Innovative Employment & Economic Stability Strategies (IIEESS) Webinar Transcript

Peer-To-Peer Learning Opportunity: Communication to Enhance Coaching Relationships

Date: May 9, 2019

TINA SMITH: Hello, everyone. Welcome to today's webinar, IIEESS Coaching for Success Learning Opportunity: Communication to Enhance Coaching Relationships. My name is Tina Smith, and I will be the host for today's webinar. Before we get started, I want to review a couple of housekeeping items with you and explain how you can participate in today's webinar. When you joined today's call, you may have noticed that you've been placed in listen-only mode. If you have questions that you would like the presenters to address, please submit them in the Q&A box located on the right-hand side of your WebEx window. When you logged into the webinar today, your screen should have looked like the area on the top right of my slide. On the far right of the screen, you should see a section where you can chat or submit questions. Even though both sections are available to you, please submit all of your questions using the Q&A box only. You also have the ability to change the view on your screen. To change your view, please select the full screen icon, located in the upper right hand corner in the same window as the presentation. You can see this highlighted on my slide. To exit full screen mode, hover your mouse at the top of your screen and select the preferred view option by clicking on the full screen option. Please note that today's webinar will be recorded. If you experience any difficulties during the webinar, please call the WebEx customer service number at: 1-866-229-3239, option two.

Today's webinar will be presented by Miss Samantha Wulfsohn and Miss Ruthie Liberman. Miss Samantha Wulfsohn is a licensed clinical psychologist currently working at MDRC. Her work there focuses on providing technical assistance to the TANF education, early childhood, and fatherhood systems, implementing new programs as part of evaluation research or for the purpose of program improvement. Prior to working at MDRC, she spent over 15 years providing coaching and leadership to home visiting and early childhood education programs. And our first presenter, Miss Ruthie Liberman, she serves as the Vice President for Public Policy for EMPATH. In this role, she serves as Chief Policy Strategist on national and state policy related to economic mobility. She provides leadership in the areas of education and workforce development, affordable housing, and work supports to create public policy leading to family economic stability. She also plays a lead role in public consulting and technical assistance projects through EMPATH's Economic Mobility Exchange. At this time, I will give the floor to Miss Ruthie Liberman. Miss Liberman, I will give you the floor.

RUTHIE LIBERMAN: Great, thank you so much, Tina. And good afternoon and welcome, everyone, to our webinar. We have a great turnout today. And we have some interesting material to present. So first off, we'd like to find out who's on our call today and we also want you to practice using that wonderful Q&A box on your bottom right-hand of your screen, because we're going to be asking you to use it quite a bit. So let's start off by everyone putting your name in the Q&A box, what state you're from, and what's your favorite vacation spot: the mountains or the ocean? If you're in... if you're sitting together as a group, feel free to put all your names in there, and state and you can just pick one, mountains or ocean. So while you are filling that in, I wanted to let

you know that today you're going to get to watch three short video clips. All of them are going to be a lot of fun. When those video clips appear on your screen, I want you to know that you have the opportunity to enlarge the video and you can also lower or raise the volume. You'll find these controls on the bottom right of the video box, which will appear when the videos are loaded. So, I'm going to ask Tina if she's ready to start reading off the names and where our participants are coming from.

TINA: Yes, I have one from Miss Carenda from Oklahoma. And she likes the ocean. We have a Terry from West Virginia, the same thing, he likes the ocean, or she likes the ocean, I'm sorry. And we have a Bridget from West Virginia. She chose the mountains. And we also have here, from Michelle, she's from OKC, she likes the ocean. Cresha from Oklahoma likes the ocean. I want to say Miss West from Alabama, she likes the ocean. Elizabeth Walker from Alabama likes the beach, so I'm guessing the ocean. And we also have here, let's see... Lori Jackson from North Carolina here. I believe she likes the ocean. Brad from South Dakota, open plains. Karla from Alabama and Miss Williams from Alabama both chose the ocean. We have Miss Sheila from Colorado. Let's see... and Miss Beverly from Alabama, the ocean. Miss Theresa Jordan, the mountains. From West Virginia, sorry. Deborah from Alabama, she is... she enjoys the mountains. Let's see. We have Miss Bruce from Alabama. She chose the beach, so I'm guessing the ocean. Tiffany from West Virginia says the beach, all the way, in all caps with exclamation; so the ocean. We have Nicole from Alabama; she chose the mountains. West Virginia, we have Charlie from West Virginia. He chose mountains all around, all the time. So I guess the ocean, because he's used to the mountains? So we have Laura, from West Virginia, and Linda. They both chose the ocean. I have Miss Bruce on here again, the beach and the ocean. Karen Skinner from Alabama, ocean. I believe ocean is at the lead here. We have Deborah Keeton, mountains. Sheila from West Virginia, the beach, so the ocean. It looks here, we have Raymond, Donna, Monica, Iris, Sandy, and Kirsten, they all chose the ocean. Tammy from South Dakota loves the mountains. Okay, and she has yet to see the ocean, by the way. And, yeah, and I have a Kathleen, she likes the ocean. And last, but not least, Emma from Missouri. She likes the ocean.

RUTHIE: How about you, Sam, what's your choice?

SAM WULFSOHN: Oh, wow, it's hard for me to choose. I love to be in the mountains because I rock climb, but I also love the ocean. So I can't choose, sorry. And you, Ruthie?

RUTHIE: Well, I'm the ocean, so I was saying, we can have a fantasy last meeting where the mountain people can join Sam, and the ocean people will join me in Waikiki or something like that. How's that sound? Should we suggest that to OFA?

SAM: Yeah, let's do that.

RUTHIE: Great. Well, we have a super turnout. Thank you all for joining us, and I just wanted to help you understand what we're going to be doing today. Our webinar is a follow up to our big webinar on coaching relationships. Last month, we also had a really large group and we had great participation from all of you. So we're hoping that you'll be equally inspired to share your thoughts and insights with your colleagues today. We're going to focus on communication strategies and talk about how your communication style can have an impact on the kind of relationship that you develop with your client, which in turn has an effect on their engagement and outcome. So, Miss Tina is going to be cuing up a video right now, and this video is going to help you think about how important communication is. It is going to include some comedy stars that you're familiar with, and it's also a comedy routine that you're familiar with, but I want you to stick with it 'til the very end, where you will see the moral of the story. Okay, go ahead, Miss Tina.

[START VIDEO]

STEVE HIGGINS: I tell you, Jimmy, you know what I love? Jimmy, I love baseball. When we get to St. Louis, will you tell me the guys' names on the team so when I see them in the big St. Louis ballpark, I'll be able to know those fellas?

JIMMY FALLON: All right, but you know, strange as it may seem, they give these ballplayers nowadays very peculiar names.

STEVE: Funny names.

JIMMY: Nicknames, pet names. Now, on the St. Louis team, we have Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know is on third.

STEVE: That's what I'm trying to find out.

JIMMY : I'm telling you: Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know is on third.

STEVE: You know the fellas' names?

JIMMY: Yes.

STEVE: Then who's playing first?

JIMMY: Yes.

STEVE: I mean the fellow on first base.

JIMMY: Who.

STEVE: The fellow playing first base for St. Louis.

JIMMY: Who.

STEVE: The guy on first base.

JIMMY: Who's on first.

STEVE: Why are you asking me for?!

JIMMY: I'm not asking you, I'm telling you: Who is on first.

WHO: You guys talking about me?

JIMMY: Yes, as a matter of fact, we are. This is Who.

STEVE: How should I know?! I never met the guy!

JIMMY: Well, now you've met him.

STEVE: Met who?

JIMMY: Yes.

STEVE: Look, would you tell me your name?

WHO: Who.

STEVE: You.

JIMMY: Who.

STEVE: Him!

WHO: Me?

STEVE: Yes!

WHO: Who.

STEVE: Mm. What is your name?

JIMMY: No, no, no, What's on second; this is Who.

STEVE: That's what I'm trying to find out!

JIMMY: All right, calm down, will you?

STEVE: Okay, listen: when I say hello to this fellow right here, I'm saying hello to who?

WHO: Hello, nice to meet you.

JIMMY: See, now you're starting to get it!

STEVE: Get what?!

WHAT: I'm right here.

STEVE: And who are you?

WHO: I'm Who.

STEVE: What?

WHAT: Yes?

STEVE: Who's this fella?

JIMMY: No, who is that fella.

WHO: I am Who; Who am I.

STEVE: How am I supposed to know?! What's your name?!

WHO: No, What is his name.

STEVE: I'm not asking you what his name is! I'm asking you: who is this fella right here?

WHO: That's right.

STEVE: But what's his name?

WHAT: What is my name.

STEVE: You don't know your name?

WHAT: Of course I do.

STEVE: Well, then tell me.

WHAT: What.

STEVE: Your name!

WHAT: What.

STEVE: What's wrong with this guy?

JIMMY: Who?

WHO: What?

WHAT: Yes?

STEVE: Oh, I think he's got hearing problems.

JIMMY: Who?

WHO: What?

WHAT: Yes?

STEVE: Look, can't you see I'm talking to him?

WHAT: Who?

WHO: What?

WHAT: Who?

WHO: What?

WHAT: Who?

WHO: What?

WHAT: Who?

WHO: What?

JIMMY: Boys, boys, settle down! Now then, I'm glad that's all cleared up. He's Who, and What's his name.

STEVE: I don't know!

I DON'T KNOW: All right, gentlemen, I couldn't help overhearing your conversation. Look, it's very simple. This fellow's actual name is Who, W-H-O, and this fellow's actual given birth name is What, W-H-A-T.

STEVE: Well, that clears it up. Why didn't you just say that in the first place? But wait, who are you?

I DON'T KNOW: I Don't Know.

EVERYONE: Third base!

[END OF VIDEO]

TINA: All right, Miss Liberman, back to you.

RUTHIE: Great. So, obviously I think that was a great introduction to the importance of communication. There's so many facets to communication and we're going to be delving a little deeper, if not as humorously, into them today. But, let's just start off with: What is communication? When we think of communication, we, and that would include me, we mostly think about the giving side of information. But we all know the truth is that the receiving side is just as important. In fact, it can be even more important.

When you think about your work today, you know that the majority of your time is spent communicating. Communication is the essential part of working with people. How we communicate plays an important role in how we build trust and connection. Good communication is an essential part of building and maintaining healthy relationships. So today we're going to delve into the following communication topics. First, we'll define and talk about attending behaviors. This is where we really pay attention to the needs of the client. We'll also talk about what it means to be an empathetic listener, so that the client feels that we understand where they're coming from. Then we'll talk about the role of nonverbal behavior in our communication with clients. We'll discuss some useful verbal communication strategies that help us share ideas and motivate clients in a non-threatening manner. And finally, we'll review strategies for managing stress, and making an emotional connection to the client.

SAM: I should point out that the last bullet is actually a teaser for our next webinar.

RUTHIE: Right, thank you, thank you. So, attending behaviors. Good attending behaviors demonstrate that you respect the person and are interested in what he or she has to say. The effect of attending is encouragement to the client to go on talking about her ideas or feelings freely. Without using words, you're communicating that you're listening to the client. There's several components of good attending behavior. Eye contact: Looking at the client is one way of showing that you're interested, but you have to make sure that you're doing it naturally. Later on, Sam is going to show you a great example of how not to look at your client. Posture, as I sit myself up: How you hold your body can indicate that you're interested and also indicates how comfortable you are about meeting with your client. You want to be relaxed so that you can convey that you're ready to focus on her, but you don't want to look like you're ready to fall asleep. Facial expressions: A good

listener's facial expressions are a true sign of responsiveness. Are you smirking, smiling, frowning, raising your eyebrows? I suggest that sometime you put a little mirror up near where your phone is and watch yourself when you're talking on the phone, or ask a colleague to give you feedback. I know I myself will often have facial features that don't necessarily reflect how I'm feeling.

Now we're going to talk about empathetic listening. Empathetic listening requires you to put yourself in the shoes of the other person, so that they can feel heard in a non-judgmental way. Empathy allows your client to feel safe, acknowledged, and valued. Empathetic listening also means that you avoid interrupting, even when you have something important to add. And that relates very carefully to the first bullet, which is that we should make sure that we're spending about 70 percent of our time doing empathetic listening, and only about 30 percent of our time talking. It's really important that if you offer solutions to your client, you make sure that they're interested in hearing what you have to say. And so Sam and I are going to try to do a little demonstration with you right now. We'll see if this works out. We want to show you different ways of listening, and hopefully as we get to the end of these demonstrations, you'll see a great example of someone who's listening with her ears, eyes, mind and open heart. Okay, Sam.

SAM: All right. So hi, Ruthie, how are you today?

RUTHIE: Not so great. I'm having a hard time with child care.

SAM: Oh, oh. That's an example of what we would call pretend listening. Let's do another one: Hi, Ruthie, how are you today?

RUTHIE: Not great. I'm having a hard time with child care.

SAM: Oh, child care, huh? So that's an example of selective listening, where I was only listening to part of what she was saying, related to her child care. Let's try a third example: Hi, Ruthie, how are you today?

RUTHIE: Not so great. I'm having a hard time with child care.

SAM: Oh, okay, so it sounds like you're having a hard time with child care and we need to think about that together. So that's an example of attentive or active listening, where I'm reflecting back what she said, and I'm paying attention to what she has to say. Let's try the last example; here we go. Hi, Ruthie, how are you today?

RUTHIE: Not that great. I'm having a hard time with child care.

SAM: Well, that sounds really hard. So, child care is giving you some trouble, huh?

RUTHIE: Yeah, it is.

SAM: Okay, so that's our last example of empathetic listening.

RUTHIE: And Sam, I have to say, you actually, like... I felt moved by the way you reacted to me, even though I knew that we were role playing. So I think that was a really good example there. You kind of made me feel like I wanted to talk more.

So, I know that all of you have thought a lot about being good listeners, and you probably have covered this in your supervision and in orientations, at other times. So I'm interested in you now putting responses into the Q&A box, and sharing with the group some examples that you can provide about good listening skills. Okay, so what do good listeners do? You can describe them or you can talk about what you think about to help you be a good listener. So please, put those in the Q&A box, and Tina will be reading off some of the responses. I also would like to highlight, if anyone can suggest how you can indicate in a phone conversation that you are a good listener, because I know particularly in Missouri and also in New Hampshire, two of the states where I'm working, a lot of the case work does end up happening over the phone. And folks are looking for some tips on how you could do coaching over the phone and how you can send the message that you're being a good listener.

TINA: Okay, Miss Liberman, we do have some responses. Sheila stated: Don't type when the client is talking. Another is: Look at the other person to let them know you're paying attention. We have another suggestion: Nodding while listening. Replying back what they are saying. Another response is: Good listeners are present

in the conversation, meaning they are not thinking of a response while someone is talking. Good listeners make eye contact, and actually pay attention to what people are saying, not looking through papers or at the computer while they are talking. Another response is: By repeating back what the participant is saying. Another suggestion is: Don't interrupt or change the subject. In the phone conversation, the tone of your voice is very important. Also, paraphrase what the client is saying, so they know you understand. Another suggestion or comment is: By looking at the person when they are speaking, when on the phone, restate to make sure you understand.

RUTHIE: Great; thank you all. Those were really good responses and I particularly thank those of you who gave some ideas around the phone. I know I often hear people typing on the other end, and you know that then they're not quite listening and paying attention to you. Here are some of the ideas, or indicators, that Sam and I came up with... actually, Sam came up with these. I think that you've covered most of them, but I do want to emphasize the first bullet point, which is: Let go of their need for control. So I think that relates a lot to not thinking about what your reply is going to be, but really trying to use your mindfulness to clear your brain, listen to what they have to say, and then allow yourself the time to come up with an appropriate response, not the response that you had in mind for controlling the conversation.

Another bullet that I'm not sure I've heard mentioned was using silence and waiting. That's one that is particularly hard for me. But I have had great role models in Sam and others, who are wonderful communicators, and you have to learn how to sit with that discomfort of the silence. Some people's reactions just take a little bit longer, or their emotions may be getting in the way of being able to respond, and it's really important for us to learn to be comfortable with that silence and waiting. Sam, is there anything else you want to comment on? Not hearing you, Sam. I don't know if others are having that problem.

SAM: Sorry, I was on mute before, because I didn't want you to have to listen to me coughing. So I notice there's a couple of additional comments in the comment box, one from Raymond that states: Pay attention and have clients close in proximity and taking notes. And then I like this, it's kind of interesting: In a phone conversation, if you smile, somehow it's heard by the other person on the line. And I think smiling is one of my favorite things in communication; obviously you have to be responsive to the person's emotional reactions, but I think that's really neat. So thank you for that from Lori Jackson.

RUTHIE: Yeah, and I think, yeah, just the act of smiling puts you in a positive frame of mind. It's one of those body/mind interactions, and especially if you're not looking forward to having a conversation with your client, it's quite easy to kind of force yourself to smile, because they can't see you, but it might lighten up your tone of voice and kind of give the message to the client that you really are happy to be talking to them and you're eager to have this conversation with them. So, that was great. And we're going to move over to the next slide, and Sam, hopefully you have the control right now.

SAM: Yeah, so we're going to... speaking of smiling, we're going to share another video with you that Miss Tina's going to put up, that hopefully will get you a smile. And the point of this video, and Miss Tina, you can start queuing the video right now, is really to highlight for everybody why nonverbal behavior is an important aspect of communication.

TINA: Okay, I will play the video, guys.

[START VIDEO]

PAM: It is crucial that you listen, Dwight. Also, you want to respect their... Are you listening now?

DWIGHT: Yes.

PAM: Okay, well, you have to show us.

DWIGHT: That's impossible. Listening happens in the ear and in the brain. I mean, some organisms have external hairs that vibrate to indicate auditory stimulation, but unfortunately, our external hairs don't vibrate at all.

PAM: Huh, uh-huh.

DWIGHT: What are you doing?

PAM: A little smile and a nod shows that I hear you. Got it?

DWIGHT: Kind of.

PAM: Nellie, why don't you tell Dwight what we were doing earlier today, and Dwight, you show us that you're listening.

NELLIE: Well, we were in the warehouse, where we were discussing a mural that our commission planned to paint there. We were talking about the color schemes, and the major themes we want to hit: Children of the world coming together, cutting down trees to make paper. But not in a child-labor-y way.

ERIN: It's just up and down. Just a regular nod, like a person would.

DWIGHT: I am a person.

[END OF VIDEO]

SAM: Okay, thank you.

TINA: You're welcome. I'll give you back the controls, Miss Sam, so you can proceed.

SAM: So I think the point of that video—oops, I hope I'm coming in right. The point of that video is that the nonverbal components of communication both convey a message that “I'm telling you something,” and also that “I'm listening to you.” And I think that kind of highlights well for us, as to how important nonverbal communication can be. And from this slide, you can see that the message is strongest, that your tone of voice and your nonverbal communication is the most strong piece of communication. So just a quick example: If I look at you and I smile and I say: “Oh, Ruthie, I like your shirt today!” She's getting the message that I like her shirt. However, if I say: “I like your shirt.” I think she's getting the message that I do not like her shirt, even though those are my words, which say: “I like your shirt.” So nonverbal communication is a key and important thing to keep in mind when you're communicating with people.

All right, let me move you to the next slide. So here are some examples of some nonverbal strategies that are important to pull out of your back pocket. One is facial expression, and we've talked about that. And I know I was selling the smile, but I think a facial expression can also be one that shows that you're concerned or you're worried and reflects the feelings of the person you're communicating with. Gestures: I think you guys have seen me before; I'm a big gesture person and obviously there are different ways of doing that. Our body language: Are you open or are you sitting like this? Gives a different kind of message to the person that you're communicating with. Eye contact, wait time and silence, the orientation of your body, and then being just aware of kind of your pitch. Are you speaking in a high-pitched voice because you're worried about something, or are you speaking loudly or are you speaking softly—all of those communicate different things. So those are important to keep in mind.

So I'm interested to hear from all of you in relation to nonverbal strategies, and this is a chance, again, for you guys to share your thoughts about this. And we drew up two questions for you to think about. You can respond to one or both, but I'd like to hear from you: What nonverbal strategies do you use when you first meet a client, and what, you know, what's your favorite thing that you pull out all the time? And then what do you think is most important when you first start to establish a relationship with the client in terms of the nonverbal piece? So if you could take a moment to think about that, and write your reflections in the Q&A box, and then Miss Tina will read to us what people are thinking in relation to nonverbal communication.

TINA: We have someone. Miss Trenda suggests: Handshake. I have from Beverly: A smile and a handshake. Chantel: Eye contact. Deborah: A smile and a handshake to greet. Good.

SAM: And I appreciate the handshake because we haven't really spoken about that, but people have different kind of comfort levels with touch, but sometimes just a gentle touch is a great way to connect with people and a verbal communication strategy as well.

TINA: I have from Chantel: Lean in. Raymond: Smile. Always smile with eye contact. That's from Lori. Alita: Greet them with a smile, extend hand for handshake, plus eye contact. Another eye contact and smile from Carlette West. Okay. Miss Dubose: Smiling. So I see smiling and handshake and eye contact are the top suggestions for nonverbal.

SAM: Great.

RUTHIE: I just want to comment: I liked the suggestion of reaching your hand out, because that does give the visitor an opportunity not to shake hands if they don't feel comfortable with that. So that was pretty subtle there.

TINA: I have from Miss Tammy, she's saying: First smile, in bold. Then she put: An open posture to make them feel welcome. Gesturing them to your office, the chair, et cetera, to welcome them. I have Charlie who suggests: Handshakes and an uplifting tone. Trust is very important in establishing a relationship.

SAM: Thank you; these are all great examples. Okay, so I'm going to just move us very briefly to thinking about just the cultural differences in nonverbal communication, and this could be a whole other webinar on its own, but I just wanted to highlight three things that you can do to try to be more aware of the cultural piece, because there are different cultural components to them, especially the nonverbal. Eye contact, some people view eye contact as a sign of respect and friendliness. Other cultures might find it as disrespectful and that, you know, the eye contact makes people uncomfortable. So just think about those things.

And so, there's a couple of things for you to try to remember. One is observing people. So if you are working with clients from different communities, of different cultures, observe what they're doing, and that's a wonderful way to learn different ways that people interact. Know that there are individual differences. So there are both differences that come with communities and different cultures, but there's also differences in individual people, so if you're talking to somebody who's more extroverted versus introverted, they're going to use nonverbal communication in different ways. So try to be aware of that. And then I think the third one for me that's really helpful is that it's not just one nonverbal signal, but when you're looking at people, if you meet somebody and they look down and they don't smile at you, is it because that's their style of communication, or is it they don't want to talk to you? So what you want to do is look at the whole nonverbal package. So if all the other nonverbal signals are giving you the message: "I want to communicate with you, but I'm just looking down, because that's how I've used eye contact," then they're giving you a different kind of message than if they're looking like this, which is folded arm, head down, eyes down, frowned face. Very different to kind of looking down with a smile and an open posture. So try to look at those nonverbal signals as one group, and that's a helpful way to keep things in line. So here's just a few little kind of hints of things to keep in mind as you communicate, keeping a kind of cultural lens on it as well.

Okay, so now we've talked a lot about kind of receiving information and sending nonverbal messages, so we also want to spend a little bit of time speaking with you about some verbal communication strategies that are specific, list specific suggestions to help build relationships and support the relationship. And we're going to talk through four different examples of things. So the first example, I'm going to... for each of these examples, I'm going to tell you why we do this type of a statement, and then tell you how, and then I'm going to ask people on the phone to try to give us some examples of some specific examples of how they might do that.

So our first example statement is a clarifying statement. And the reason you do that is because you want to get some more information or make sure you understand what the person is saying. And there are a couple of ways you can do that. One is you can ask open-ended questions. And then the second is you can restate your interpretation or kind of encourage them to give you more explanation, about what it is they're talking about. So, take a moment and think if you can come up with an example of a clarifying expression that you might use with a client. And you can put those answers in the Q&A box. I have a couple that I can think of, but I want you guys to try and think of some first.

So here's an example from Chantel. Thank you. She says: "Can you tell me a little more about that?" That's a great example of a clarifying statement. Alita: "Let me make sure I heard you correctly. You stated..." Fabulous. I almost feel like as an aside I want to print up the chats from this session and share it with everyone, because there's so much great information being shared with us today, you wonderful people. "

RUTHIE: Good idea.

SAM: “I understood you to say...” That’s from Tanjula—I hope I’m saying your name correctly—Williams. Oh, excuse me, Fannie said, sorry, “I understood you to say... And so you are saying that...” These are all wonderful examples of clarifying questions. Super. So a couple I have, just so you know, is: “Let me make sure I understand.” And then I’ve got, I also have: “So you’re saying...” And so that’s a good, I guess, a good back pocket way of clarifying something with someone.

All right, let’s move on to the second example. So the second example is a reflecting statement. And here what you’re trying to do is you’re trying to show that you understand what the speaker is... both what they’re saying, and also what they’re feeling. So it’s not just the content, but it’s the emotional component of it. And the way that you do that is you reflect the speaker’s basic feelings, or you can paraphrase basic points that they’re sharing, or you can ask reflective questions. So, given that you guys are so great at coming up with examples, I’m going to hand the floor back to you and have you share some examples, possibly, of some reflecting questions that you might, or reflecting statements that you might use, which could be both questions and statements. So from Beverly—oh, I think this was from earlier. “That sounds really frustrating.” And then from Elizabeth, we have: “It sounds as if you are a little angry about that experience.” Wonderful. “So you were feeling blank, blank, blank about this.” Wonderful. “One example I have is just to ask directly: ‘So how do you feel about it?’ Or: ‘Tell me more about how you’re feeling about this.’” Super, all right.

So, I’m going to move on to the next type of verbal statement that you can use, and this is summarizing. And so the reason why we would summarize with a client is just to review how things are going and kind of pull together several ideas. And the way that you do that is you’ll restate a major idea that’s been expressed, and then again, include feelings in the conversation. So let’s see what examples you guys can come up with. Perhaps, the moment I start to say something, something will pop up on the screen. So restate... thank you, Trena. “Restate what they said.” So just reflecting back exactly what they say and then restating it. Wonderful. Another example might be: “So these seem to be the key ideas that you’ve talked about.” Alita says: “So your plan of action includes... How do you feel about this so far?” So she’s combined some things here as well. Another example might be: “Let’s make a summary. Here’s a summary of what I’ve heard you say so far. One, two, three, four.” And I’m just throwing a little nonverbal in there for you guys, for anyone who’s watching the screen. Okay. So let’s... oh, before I jump into encouraging, I see Raymond also says... oh, maybe Iris is saying that: “Restate what they say or state, ‘Let me make sure I understand you.’” That’s great; thank you. Tammy said: “So what I hear you saying is...” Exactly.

So I’m going to jump into the last example of a verbal statement that helps to build relationships, and this is an encouraging statement. And the reason we do this is to show interest in what’s being said and also encourage further conversation. The way to do that is to use a neutral rather than an evaluating comment. And also to ask for more information. And I’d like to just say a little bit more about the first point of using a neutral rather than evaluating comment. I think we’re all very used to saying “good job” or “great work,” and I think the message we want to convey to clients is that they shouldn’t... that you want them to also feel good when things are not going well and encouraged. And so if you lack... if there’s no good job, great work, it just means I’m not doing well. So if you keep everything neutral, and you just provide neutral comments, then when things are up, they’re up, and when they’re down, they’re down, and there is no kind of evaluation associated with anything across both... in both scenarios. And the idea there is to really keep people trying again. So I think it’s better to say: “I’m really glad, you know, that didn’t work out but you got up back on the horse and you kept trying,” rather than: “Oh, you did that so easily. Great job.” The first example is something we want to keep encouraging, this kind of growth mindset, I guess, in our clients, that I’m not going to give up, and when I try again, when there’s a risk, that’s the kind of thing we want to be encouraging.

So, I’m going to let you guys give me some examples of an encouraging statement. And I’m looking in the Q&A box for some wonderful ideas, so that we can add it to the record and share with everybody. And then from Carlette: “You can do it!” There you go; that’s encouraging. Thank you. “All of these are great ideas. You put a good deal of thought into this.” And then we have... that was from Alita Bruce, and from Chantel Hagen: “You put a lot of work into that. I hope I can help to keep supporting you.” And Trena Jordan: “You completed the goal you set out to do.” And then from Bridget: “I hope you’re excited to work together to meet your goals.” And then from Charlie: “I understand you may be disappointed, but don’t give up. Keep striving towards your goals.” These are great examples, awesome. This is really starting to make sense. “Very proud of you,” from Kathleen. Wonderful. “So how are you feeling about your progress?” from Marcita. Thank you very much, and these are

great examples. And feel free to keep... oh, Monica just said: "Glad to see you're still trying." I was going to say, keep throwing your ideas in there as we kind of continue moving onto our next piece of the conversation.

So, we're going to have a little... hopefully this will be a fun activity. So I'm going to show you another video, and this is a video of—I'm putting in quotes—"a coaching interaction," so to speak. And we're going to get to watch the video twice. The first time, what I want you to do, and everybody will have received a list... Tina will give you... I don't know. Tina, are you going to upload the observation form, in case people don't have a copy of it? But you will have received—

TINA: I will do that at the end of the webinar.

SAM: Oh, okay. So what I'm asking you to do for the first viewing of this, just watch this video and get a general sense of how the communication is going: Kind of watch for examples of attending behavior, examples of empathic listening, examples of nonverbal communication, and examples of verbal strategy. And then what we're going to do is we're going to get to go back and watch it again, and try to note specific examples of all of those, and then have some conversation and share a conversation about what we're seeing happening with this coach. Also, there is no example... go ahead, Ruthie.

RUTHIE: Well, I just want to say: Before this webinar, you should have received an email with that observation sheet, so maybe before the video starts, if Tina can get people time to get that sheet, and then use it during the second viewing. So maybe, Sam, you keep talking.

SAM: Yeah, I've got... I've filled mine in right here, so you can see kind of what it looks like. It's just this simple... Oh, no, mine's not a nice version of it. You guys got a nicer version. But the other thing to keep in mind is that there is no perfect coach, and this individual is an example of somebody who is not a perfect coach. So if you notice her do something that you think: "Well, that's not really the best... I think she could have done this piece differently and it would have been a better verbal communication strategy to build relationships," that's okay. You should make a note of that and say: "This is what she did and she might have done this in a different way." You know, her tone of voice or whatever it might be. So let's give you a chance to... if you didn't have a chance to print up the sheet, you can download that, and then we will show you this little short video, which is also kind of fun. It'll be like no other coaching interaction you have ever seen in real life, let's just say.

TINA: Everyone, if you didn't get the sheet already, just right-click on this link that I have here for you to download it for yourself, okay? I'll give you a few seconds and then we'll start with the video, okay, guys? Hopefully that was enough time for those who didn't receive the observation form. I'm going to go ahead and start the video for you guys to watch.

SAM: Thank you; that sounds great.

[START VIDEO]

WOMAN: It's a mess. You must feel horrible. You've lost everything: your father, your tribe, your best friend.

MAN: Thank you for summing that up. Why couldn't I have killed that dragon when I found him in the woods? Would it have been better for everyone?

WOMAN: Yup. The rest of us would have done it. So why didn't you? Why didn't you?

MAN: I don't know; I couldn't.

WOMAN: That's not an answer.

MAN: Why is this so important to you, all of a sudden?

WOMAN: Because I want to remember what you say. Right now.

MAN: Oh, for the love of... I was a coward, I was weak, I wouldn't kill a dragon!

WOMAN: You said "wouldn't" that time.

MAN: No, you... whatever, I wouldn't! 300 years and I'm the first Viking who wouldn't kill a dragon.

WOMAN: First to ride one, though. So...

MAN: I wouldn't kill him because he looked as frightened as I was. I looked at him and I saw myself.

WOMAN: I bet he's really frightened now. What are you going to do about it?

MAN: Eh, probably something stupid.

WOMAN: Good, but you've already done that.

MAN: Then something crazy.

WOMAN: That's more like it.

[END OF VIDEO]

TINA: And we'll play it one more time for you guys to view it again.

SAM: So now, as you're watching this, try to make some notes of examples, specific examples that you can share with us.

[START VIDEO]

WOMAN: It's a mess. You must feel horrible. You've lost everything: your father, your tribe, your best friend.

MAN: Thank you for summing that up. Why couldn't I have killed that dragon when I found him in the woods? Would it have been better for everyone?

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MAN: I wouldn't kill him because he looked as frightened as I was. I looked at him and I saw myself.

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MAN: Eh, probably something stupid.

WOMAN: Good, but you've already done that.

MAN: Then something crazy.

WOMAN: That's more like it.

[END OF VIDEO]

TINA: Okay, Miss Sam, the presentation is back to you.

SAM: Sounds good. So as I said, you were going to see a coaching session probably unlike any you've ever seen before, and I was wondering if anybody else has coached a Viking on flying their dragon. My guess is

not, but it is a nice example of some of these different communication strategies that we've talked about. So what I would like to do is hear from everybody. If you have any examples that you saw of the coach, what types of attending behavior she noted, that you noted in her. So this is, again... there's two pieces to be thinking about when we're talking about attending behavior. One is she's sending the message: "I'm listening, I'm in this with you, I hear you, and I'm not judging you." And then the second is just showing she's being authentic, she's showing empathy and positive regard for her person that she's coaching. So if you can give me some examples, we can talk through those.

So, we hear from someone that says: "She reminds him that he's the first to ride a dragon." So she pulled out something positive for that, in terms of her attending. So she's saying, you know, "I'm showing you some positive regard, I'm highlighting the positives." Thank you. Any other examples of attending behavior that you noticed in the coach? "She encourages him when he starts thinking of doing something to help the dragon. She says: Good." Charlie says: "She changed the word. She said: couldn't to wouldn't." Yes, that was a kind of flip on her, on him, yeah. That was pretty tricky. "She observed his body language and interpreted his feelings." Bridget is saying: "When she asks why he didn't kill a dragon, reminding him there was a reason he didn't kill the dragon; that stops to make him think. She gave him positive reinforcement and empowered the boy to take control." It is kind of a great example, too, because he went from being, at the beginning of the coaching session, pretty dejected and upset and mad at himself, and then he went off to do something fabulous. Trena is sharing: "Her tone of voice." And Alita said: "She did not allow him to fully express himself on how he felt." So that's real interesting. Thanks, Alita, maybe you can say something more about what she could have done to help him to express himself more. "She had time to talk through his feelings by asking some open-ended questions." And then Sheila said: "She understood what he was going through and still encourages." So one of the... oh, Lori Jackson: "She's not afraid to not candy-coat the situation, which seemed to help him come to his own conclusion to take the next step." And that's a great point. I think in coaching you want to balance kind of showing the positive and having unconditional positive regard, but also coming up with ways of giving feedback to people so that they can make changes and move forward.

One of my favorite moments was the wait time, where she goes: "So...?" And obviously, that's perhaps... just to give you backstory there, they actually... they might be boyfriend and girlfriend in the story, so it is a different type of relationship, but we're using this as a coaching. But you can use one verbal point and then use that as a way to provide wait time. She valued what he said and she told him she wants to remember what he says now, which is a great statement too. I want to remember what you are going to say, right now, in the moment. Wonderful example. I also noticed some facial expressions, which were pretty good for a cartoon character. We maybe could have had more of those if they were real people, and kind of raised eyebrows to reflect... to help see that she was listening and interested. I also noticed that at the beginning, did you notice how she walked up right next to him, and she's kind of started positioning herself, and then eventually turned around and looked right at him? So that's a nice example of how I'm attending and I'm using nonverbal communication.

What about... did anybody note any, some specific examples of clarifying, reflecting, summarizing, or encouraging statements? Oh, and look at that; Brad already has something up there. So he reflected like: "You've already done something stupid, which was leading him on to the next action," which is something really adventurous, which is actually a good thing for a Viking to do. Any other examples of some of the verbal, verbal statements that she might have used to help build the relationship and create a really... in a way, that relationship is what creates that foundation and that kind of safety place for them to go off and do something. I noticed something where she reflected back his feelings, when she said: "You must feel horrible," which, the tone was a little sarcastic. So, if we were going to do it again, you might not have that sarcastic tone, but in terms of just the pure verbal component of it, it's a nice example of reflecting. Ruthie, did you notice anything that you wanted to share?

RUTHIE: Yeah, I mean, I guess I want to say that she really knew her partner there, because some of the things that she said in the beginning, you could tell they had a close relationship, and those would hopefully not be things that she would say to someone she barely knew. She took advantage of the depth of their relationship to use some strategies that she probably thought would get him going, but not all strategies work with all individuals. You really have to take them person by person.

SAM: Yeah, that's a great point; thank you. And I'm looking to see what you guys... a lot of what you've already shared are things that I had noted myself. I think that anything else that anyone has seen... I almost feel like we've hit on every possible example I can think of. "To validate his concerns," from Raymond. Thank you. Are there any other examples that any of you saw that might be something she could have done differently, that might have been more powerful? And made the communication more effective?

RUTHIE: Again, I mean, I would say, you know, at the beginning, I found her to be really judgmental and, you know, "that was dumb," or I don't remember the language exactly, and I was thinking, "Well, that's not the best example of what you could say to someone." Again, it worked in their situation, but you've got to be careful about the level of honesty.

SAM: And the other example that she had at the beginning where he says: "I didn't kill the dragon." And she's saying: "Well, anybody else would have done it." That isn't necessarily a great way to motivate a person, by making them kind of feel bad about something they didn't do. Any other thoughts about this coaching interaction? Well, I'll be excited for any of you who have your first Viking to come in and chat with you about their goals. I want to hear directly from you; I want to be the first person to know that this has happened.

Okay, so I'm going to move on. We've covered all the content that we wanted to cover. And we have a little bit of time, so we want to see if anybody has any last questions or comments, before we... it looks like we might be able to give you back a little bit of extra time today, because we moved through this material so quickly. Ruthie and I were very efficient today. Feeling proud of us. There's a message here from Beverly: "What's simple to you may not be simple to the next person, like killing the dragon." Yeah. Thank you, Beverly. So any other questions on this topic, or comments? Things you're wondering about? We would be happy to chat with you about them.

RUTHIE: Sam, I'm wondering if you could talk about when you're a supervisor, how do you... how might you be able to reflect to the folks that you're working with how effective their communication is, how might you observe it, and help them having more of a coaching stance in the way that they're interacting with the client?

SAM: For supervisors?

RUTHIE: Yes.

SAM: All right, so I'm going to wing this. That's okay, I'm good at winging it, I think. But I guess the first thing I would say is I'm curious for any supervisors that are actually already on the call what thoughts you have about this question that Ruthie has, of how you help any of your staff or team become better communicative, and how you give them feedback. And then I can tell you a little bit about some thoughts, because of course, I always have something that I'm thinking of related to this stuff. So for anyone who's a supervisor, anything that you've done that's been useful in helping support your team?

RUTHIE: And while people are typing, I'll just say the first thing that comes to my mind is the parallel process, how you communicate with your staff sets an example and a tone. And there could even be times that you call out and say, you know, "I want you to be aware that I thought carefully about what I'm saying or how I'm reacting to you," do the reflecting, you know, kind of call out what you're doing so that they can learn from your example.

SAM: And I think it can kind of be in a range. One is by simply being a model and when you receive this kind of communication, you're more ready to be able to offer this similar kind of communication in terms of the parallel process. The other is that you might just be even more structured and more goal-oriented, and have a conversation about what are the things that you struggle with, when it comes to communication, what things come easy, and potentially provide some goals, or sort of work together to set some goals, and provide some feedback. But certainly, the best way to know about what your staff is doing in terms of communication is to be able to observe them, and also give them time to observe themselves and think about how things are going for themselves.

So there's a couple of ways you can observe yourself. One is just to be mindful in the moment, and reflecting in the moment. The other is to kind of look back on what you're doing, and help your staff look back on what went well and what might be different. The last, which might be a little bit difficult, but videotaping yourself

communicating can be very helpful. Because you can learn a lot about what you do with your own facial expressions and your own gestures, or even just being on a video chat like this. I can see what I'm doing and I'm thinking: "Oh my gosh, I've got to sit on my hands a little bit. It might be too much." Or this is... when I was a graduate student, I had to videotape myself a lot for clinical work, and I discovered that I am like a frog, I'm sticking my tongue out of my mouth all the time and licking my lips, and I thought, "I've got to stop being a frog," and so these are things that you can learn about yourself. So supervisors can provide just nice models in a more informal way, all the way up to something really, really structured that could really be goal-oriented and supportive and allow your teams to learn and develop in that way. So those are some things that I can think of.

Does anybody else on the phone have thoughts? Oh, hold on, sorry. We have a couple of examples from people. "Pointing behaviors out in the moment." That comes from Chantel. And Raymond says: "Observation of clients and workers interacting. And then afterwards providing feedback in a one-on-one, during conferences. Teaching them what self-awareness is and why it's important." These are really great examples, yeah, thank you.

RUTHIE: I do want to add that we're hoping, for the July webinar, that we will be able to share coaching observation tools, kind of a rubric that supervisors can use to observe their staff. And it kind of goes beyond communication, but it certainly has communication on there, and that is something that some of the states actively do now. I know New Hampshire is quite active in observing their case managers out in the field, at least twice a year and giving them some feedback. So that is something you might want to consider incorporating for all levels of staff. Think about how critical the communication is, of that very first person that your client meets when they walk through the door, and how that can set the tone for openness and success, you know, while they're working with you.

SAM: Yeah. Deborah shared something that said: "There's power in the word 'yet.'" And I was... could you say a little bit more about what you're thinking there? Because that sounds really interesting to me. And I'm sure people would like to hear more about it. As she's... hopefully Deborah is typing something there. The other thing that occurred to me is something that we... just that other means of communicating, which we haven't really talked about. A lot of this is in person, and we've touched on the phone, but we should also be mindful of the communication that we do—you know, texting, emailing—and I don't know how much people are doing with that these days with clients, but also keeping that in mind. And so again, supervisors, how you communicate your written communication and then similarly staff who are communicating with clients. And I might have shared this during our last webinar, but somebody from the Oklahoma team communicates with their clients, and this is a great example of communication that builds relationships, is when they first come in the first time, she sends them a handwritten note, just to say, you know, "I'm thinking about you. We're going to do this together." And so that's an example of communication that's happening that really promotes relationships. Just wanted to share that as well.

I don't know if Deborah has any more to say about her comment. Ah, there we go. "Such as when you say they haven't accomplished their goals, you can say you haven't accomplished your goals yet. And that shows them that you can still reach it, and they try." That's great, thank you very much, yes. So you're getting... "I believe in you," so maybe you haven't reached your goals yet, which implies that I think that you will, eventually, someday reach your goal. So thank you, Deborah. Any other questions or comments that people are thinking about? I think you've all done a wonderful job of communicating your thoughts and ideas today in the Q&A box.

RUTHIE: Yes, I agree.

SAM: Wonderful group; thank you so much. Okay. We just wanted to give you a heads up on a couple of next steps. The first is just to keep in mind we have some upcoming webinars; we have our June webinar. It's going to move towards focusing on self-care and kind of dealing with some of those potentially emotionally challenging scenarios. The July and August webinars we're working out, but some of the topics that we're thinking about are related to what Ruthie had just shared, for kind of an observation tool for coaching. And then the last thing I want to say is that when we sign off, we're going to have a survey that pops up after the webinar, and I know it's hard after you've been sitting and listening to something like this to do yet one other thing, but if you can just take a couple of minutes to respond to that, it's really helpful because your answers are things that help us to try to make these things better. So if you... we'll try to keep an eye out, and maybe we can send you a bucket of stars to thank you for completing the web survey and for participating today.

That's something that I learned from Michelle Watson, who's at Public Strategies, and I think it's a fun idea. Anything else, Ruthie, that you want to share before we sign off?

RUTHIE: Just thank you, everybody. You were great participants.

SAM: Here's our information if you need to ask questions or are interested in anything else. You can reach out to myself or Ruthie, and I am going to hand it back to Miss Tina, who will let you know kind of the final pieces of the webinar today. Thank you, everyone. It was really fun chatting with you all.

TINA: And thank you, Miss Sam and also Miss Ruthie, for the great presentation today. On your screen, I will upload another file for you all to download for your own use. It will be a Communication to Enhance Coaching Relationships handout, and also maybe the observation that some of you all did not get to download when we were doing the previous activity. You can also download that for yourself, if you would still like to write and use that tool. And again, we're going to also have a survey at the end of the webinar, and just please take a couple of minutes to respond. Your answers are very important to us. And thank you all again for your attention, and if you have questions, please submit them to your coaches. And as you can see here, Miss Sam and Ruthie's email address is here as well, if you'd like to send them an email with any questions.

SAM: Bye!

TINA: Bye-bye. And again, those who have not downloaded any of the handouts, they are here. Just right-click on the file that you would like to download, and right-click. Thank you; have a good day.