

Cultivating a Relational Stance of Active Acceptance

PPSP Track



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We're glad
you are here!





Objectives

- Participants will learn and practice validation skills as one way to communicate acceptance
- Participants will learn how to cultivate a relational stance of acceptance with parents even when they disagree
- Participants will gain insight on the meaning of their story, which may lead to healing
- Participants will engage in activities that reflect on their own story, to see their own perspective and that of others
- Participants will learn about underlying needs and how they impact meaning



PEARLS Core Competencies



The Journey to Peer Parent Support



Patricia Miles

Cultivating a Relational Stance of Acceptance



- Every interaction is grounded in some sort of relational stance
- How conscious are you of your relational stance
 - is it intentional and authentic
 - how consistently is it maintained over time across individuals
 - how well are you able to manage your own emotions
- Peer Parent Support and Relational Stance
 - linked to your personal experience
 - requires self awareness
 - maintains connection
 - able communicate acceptance even when you don't agree

Validation; A Way to Communicate Acceptance



Validation is the recognition and acceptance of another's thoughts, feelings and behaviors

- It does not mean agreeing or approving
- Helps regulate emotions
- Helps build identity
- It is a way of supporting and strengthening the relationship while maintaining a different opinion
- Builds understanding and effective communication
- Helps us persevere

Using Validation effectively takes practice



Knowing the six levels of validation is helpful:

1. Being Present

Listening to another with your ears, eyes, mind and heart

2. Accurate reflection

Summarize what you have heard from someone else

3. Mindreading

Guessing what another person might be thinking or feeling

Using Validation Effectively



4. Understanding the person's behavior in terms of their history and biology

Understanding how past experiences and biology influence emotional reactions

5. Normalizing or recognizing emotional reactions that anyone would have

Understanding that your emotions are normal is helpful

6. Radical Genuineness

Understanding the emotion someone is feeling on a very deep level

6 levels of validation is the work of Marsha Linehan, Ph.D.



Exercise # 1

The parent you are supporting is upset because her husband cut up her credit card. She says he is treating her like a child and is so controlling that she does not have room to breathe. When you ask her what his reason was, she says that she overspent for the fourth time, running the balance over the limit and he was unable to pay the bill.

How do you validate her?

Remember to use the highest level possible



Exercise # 2

Jesse tells you she quit her job. She quit because her boss criticized her loudly in front of other people. She has asked him twice before not to embarrass her but he loses his temper easily. She felt afraid of him because he reminded her of a verbally abusive uncle.

What level of validation would you use?

Exercise # 3



Joanna calls you to talk about her diet. She complains that she has eaten chocolate cake and other sweets and wants to eat more, but she doesn't want to gain weight.

What level of validation would you use?

The Parent's Journey: Knowing and Seeing the Meaning of Your Experience



- Recognize that their experience has a meaning
- See that your journey has had struggle but also triumph
- Reshape the way you value yourself and your experience
- Find ways to help your family with that meaning





Making Meaning

Meaning Making from Adversity

- Happens in all families
- Occurs on three levels
 - About the event or situation
 - About self
 - About the world
- Important factors in building meaning
 - Resilience



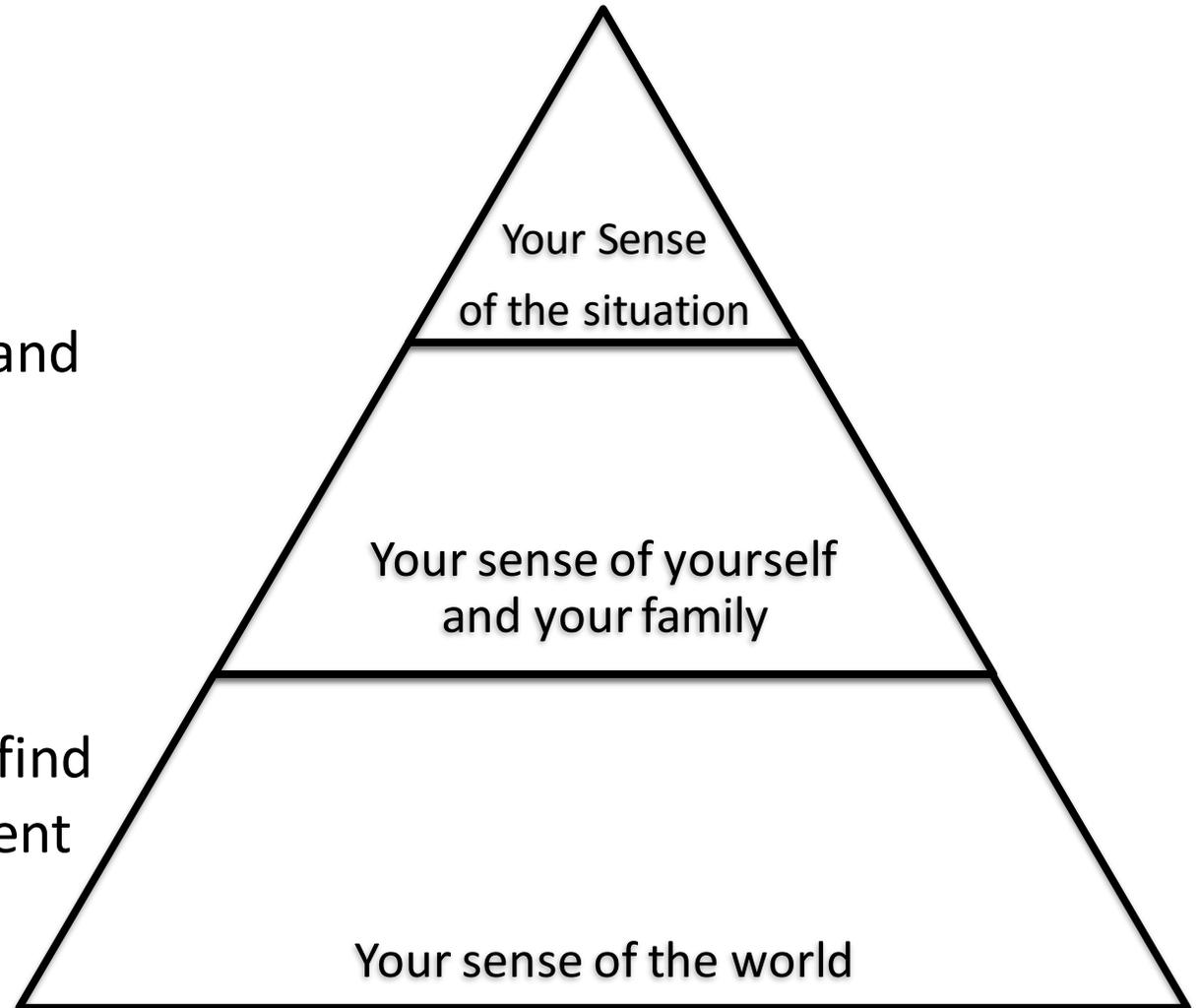
Setting the Stage for Meaning Making



The first stage of becoming defined & overwhelmed will impact

- How a parent sees a situation
- How a parent sees themselves and their family
- How a parents sees the world

The Role of the Peer Parent Support Partner is to understand the parent's experience, connect with it and then find ways to strategically support that parent on their journey



Taking Care of You: Understanding Your Story and Your Meaning



- Peer Parents are hired because they bring:
 - Relatability
 - First person experience
 - Ability to connect which can be healing in and of itself
 - Parents deserve support to help their families thrive
- It is personal
 - Role impacts your entire family
 - Expectations as you “re-live” your life experience
 - Perspectives change as experience changes

Activity: Understanding your Own Story



- Complete the Activity: Understanding Your Own Story and Your Meaning
- Identify your “defining” event
 - What conclusions did you draw about yourself?
 - What were the results your family experienced?
 - How did this impact your next decisions?
 - How were these results played out with other family members?
- How can you use this perspective in providing effective peer support to other parents?



Common Unmet Needs

- Meaningful relationship (reciprocal)
- Sense of safety and well being
- Power / control
- Joy
- Sense of belonging
- Trust
- Security
- Relevant skills and knowledge
- A sense of value and self worth



Clarifying Need



Need has many meanings

- Something you wanted
 - I really want my child to get into that program that could help him
- Something you're lacking
 - My son needs help and can't get it
- Something you required
 - My son needs to do community service but his disability is keeping him out of the program that most kids use
- Something you sought
 - I need help understanding why my son does the things he does so I can be a better parent
- A hole in our hearts
 - Ever since his sister died, my son has grown more angry and violent with us and the people at school

The Parent Journey: Seeing & Knowing the Meaning behind Your Experience



Activity: The Parent Journey and the Hole in Your Heart

- Answer the questions individually



Group Discussion:

- What is the hole in your heart?
- How does recognizing it create meaning for you?



Tips for Active Acceptance

- Practicing validation leads to increased connection and acceptance
- Avoids a focus on who is right, instead focuses on meaning
- Creates a sense of acceptance for different perspectives in your own story
- Practices the art of identifying the underlying need as a way to set the stage for meaning making
- Start small if you must while preparing to go big
- Get comfortable with the difference between acceptance and advocacy

helpful
tips 



“People take different roads seeking fulfillment and happiness. Just because they’re not on your road doesn’t mean they’ve gotten lost.”

H. Jackson Brown Jr.



Questions ?



Resources



www.psychologytoday.com/blog/pieces-mind/201204/understanding-validation-way-communicate-acceptance

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