



**Welcome!**



# Changing our minds:

*Reframing challenging behavior*

# What to Expect

## Structure

**Theoretical framework** based in

- ★ Nonviolent Communication
- ★ Trauma-Informed Care
- ★ Collaborative Problem Solving

**Practical skills and tools** to use at work when met with challenging behavior

## Objectives

**Develop** a common language to talk to and about each other, based in empathy and understanding

**Reframe** “difficult customers” as individuals with a possible unmet need

**Understand** challenging behavior, the impacts of trauma and toxic stress

**Identify** 3-5 skills and tools to utilize at work in order to be more effective in navigating challenging interactions

*Tool tip:*

**Transparency** - making clear expectations and indicating what's to come



Tool tips are a demonstration of the tools provided *in action*

*Tool tip:*

**Consistency** - meeting our innate need for predictability helps us feel safe and in control

# Introduction

## Presentation Outline

- *Welcome, why are we here?*
- **Personal introduction**
- *What to Expect*
- *How we think about behavior*
- *Shifting our thinking; Unmet needs*
- *Trauma-Informed Care basics*
  - *Small groups*
- *Working Collaboratively:  
Partnering in Care*
- *Wrap-up*
- *Questions and Discussion*





# How We Think About Behavior

Recall a time when you found yourself **frustrated** with someone at work, 2 minutes to write

- What was happening?
- What was so frustrating about this interaction?



# What came up for you?

Reflect on how you reacted internally

- How did you feel during this encounter? e.g. Emotions, body sensations, etc.
- What sort of thoughts came to mind? e.g. Criticism, wishes, assumptions

*Tool tip:*

**Remain curious** - generate shared understanding - increases ability to take others perspective

# Shifting our Thinking

*People do well if they can!*

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We want to feel  
successful and content

- ★ Find safety and belonging
- ★ Feel healthy and fit
- ★ Have a sense of agency  
and control

*What's getting  
in the way?*

*What does this  
individual need in  
order to be successful?*



consistency  
 learning  
**CONNECTION**  
 order joy  
**AUTONOMY**  
 shelter  
**MEANING** stability  
 creativity

**ANGRY**  
 EMBARRASSED  
 lonely hopeless  
**VULNERABLE**  
 overwhelmed  
 weary **AFRAID**  
**CONFUSED**  
 anxious





# Reflect back...

*Tool tip:*


**Empathy** - building understanding through shared experiences

## *Common unmet needs or values while at work*

- Cooperation
- Consistency
- Ease
- Order
- Respect
- Safety
- To understand and be understood
- Rest/sleep
- Food
- To matter


## *Possible feelings in response*

- Frustrated
- Resentful
- Worn out
- Detached
- Irritable
- Uncomfortable



Not something you *are*  
or *aren't*, or *have* or  
*don't have*

It's a skill




*Empathy:*  
*The ability to*  
*understand and share*  
*the feelings of others*

”



# The Basics of Trauma-Informed Care

The effects of trauma, adverse experiences, and toxic stress;

- Memory and cognition,
  - Attention,
  - Emotional regulation,
  - Sleep quality,
  - Beliefs about self,
  - Ways of interrelating,
  - Decreased life expectancy;
  - Increases sedentary behavior, smoking, alcoholism, drug use, missed work, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, suicide rates, etc
- 



# TIC Basics

ACE's Study: Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Abuse; Physical, Emotional, Sexual
- Neglect; Physical, Emotional
- In home; Mental illness, Incarceration, Domestic Violence, Drug use, Divorce

Our Members have been through, and are going through a lot

- Impacts of war
- Poverty/Famine
- Loved ones dying
- Loss of mobility
- Institutionalized care

## Key Concepts

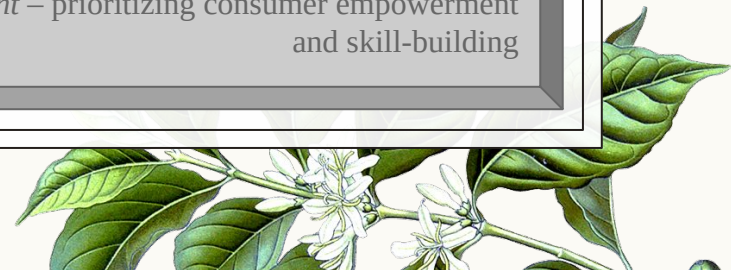
*Safety* – Ensuring physical and emotional safety

*Trustworthiness/Transparency* – Making tasks, expectations, roles, policies as straightforward and clear as possible

*Choice* – prioritizing consumer choice and control

*Collaboration* – maximizing collaborative processes

*Empowerment* – prioritizing consumer empowerment and skill-building





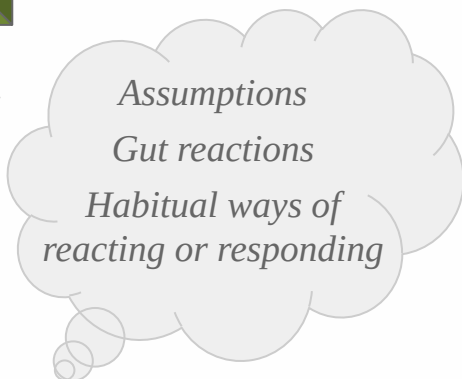
# Applying a new lens

## Challenging Behavior

Yelling and attempts  
to leave the building



Rude, disrespectful,  
derogatory comments



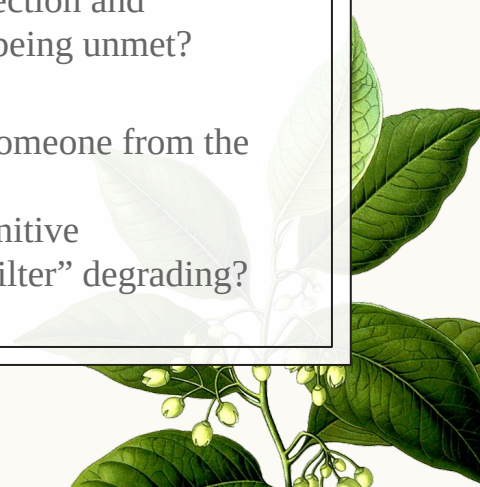
*Assumptions*  
*Gut reactions*  
*Habitual ways of*  
*reacting or responding*



## Reframing using empathy

Determined to leave for a  
funeral in Iowa?  
Need for connection and  
community is being unmet?

Reminded of someone from the  
past?  
Decline in cognitive  
functioning, “filter” degrading?





# Small Groups

*Tool tip:*  
**Empowerment** through education - teach instead of tell

*Take ~7 minutes...*

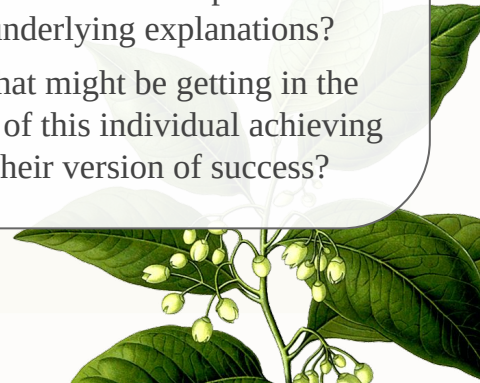
1. Share example of frustrating time at work
2. What are some automatic thoughts about this person or the situation?
3. Reframe with empathy →

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## Questions to ask:

- Can I identify any unmet needs?
- How might this individual have been feeling?
- What if this was a loved one?
- What are some possible underlying explanations?
- What might be getting in the way of this individual achieving their version of success?





**Now what?**

*Responding in the moment*



# Partnering in Care: A Collaborative Approach

## Step One

Identify and understand the individuals concern

## Step Two

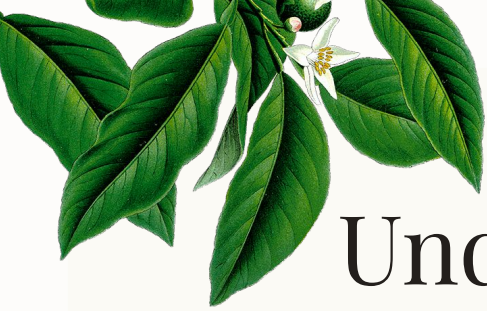
Self-regulation and Empathy building: Identify your own concern

## Step Three

Partnering in Care, Problem solve collaboratively







# Step One: Identify and Understand Individuals Concern

- “Can you tell me about the problem?”
- “How can I help?”

**Remain curious:** asking questions to identify the issue, generate shared understanding

**Validation:** acknowledge real concern, recognition that their feelings are valid and worthwhile

- “That sounds like a difficult situation”
- “I can see why that might be upsetting”

**Observation:** verbalizing the unspoken, while avoiding criticisms or judgement

**Reflection:** confirmation that you understand the issue at hand

- “I noticed that you haven’t been coming to activities lately”
- “It seems like maybe you’re frustrated?”

- “What I’m hearing you say is...”,
- “It sounds like... did I get that right?”





# Step Two: Self-Regulate & Identify your concern

*Ultimately, we are here to serve members and to meet their needs*

Take an opportunity to regulate ourselves and come to a calm place

- When flustered and frustrated, much harder to be of service

*Tool tip:*

**Self-Care** - helping others to the best of our abilities asks us to identify and take care of our own needs

Much harder to meet others needs when we have not met our own!

- Focus on your breathing, reaching out for assistance, distancing self when reasonable, eating food/drink water

Check in with ourselves to understand our concern

- If “I want to get the thing done”, may need to divorce ourselves from completion of task

# Step Three: Working Collaboratively

- When we behave as if we're saying "*this is how it's going to be*"
  - Demonstrates that their wishes and desires don't matter
- Partnering in care
  - acknowledgement of the universal desire to enact agency (control and autonomy) over our lives
- Working collaboratively **shares the reigns** instead of taking power away

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# Step Three: Working Collaboratively

*Tool tip:*

**Choice** - prioritizing others' needs for autonomy and control

Doing *with*, not doing *to*

- Getting input: “What do you think would be best?”
- Building trust and demonstrating respect

Yes, this can take MORE time...

However, when done hurriedly and without patience, could cause issues in the future. Proactive vs. Reactive

“But I don’t have time for a discussion”

- Fast paced environment, understaffed, maybe an imminent safety concern?
- Remember: empathy can be a skill, a tool, while at work, used as part of our job
- “Explaining yourself”, can soundlike an argument, often invalidating

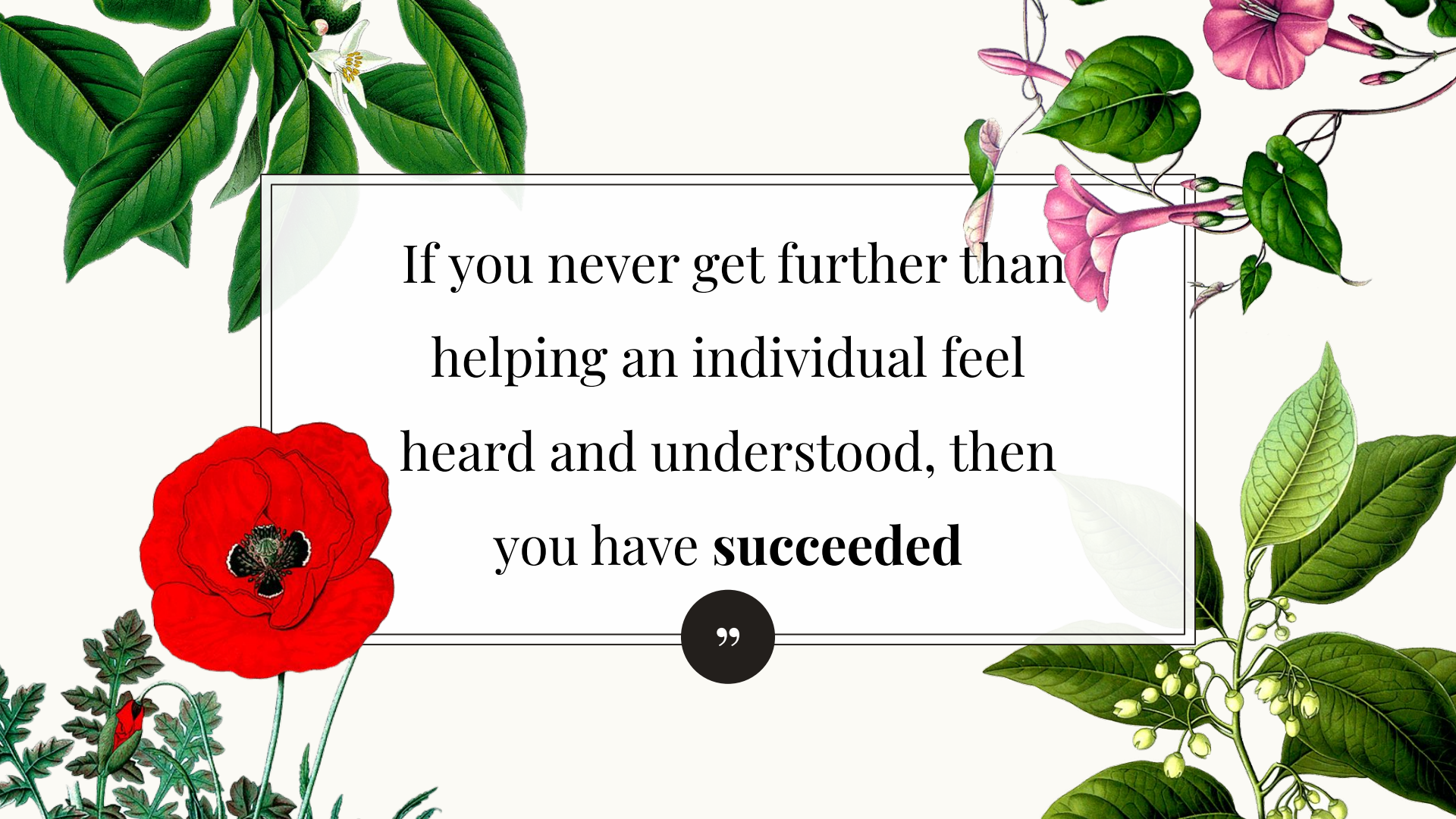




# Step Three: Working Collaboratively

- Dementia or not:
  - You may not be able to understand or identify the unmet need, there may be no real “solution”
  - A simple and sincere apology can go a long way
- When working together, be in *their world*:
  - Be reassuring and agreeable. It's okay to go along with a delusion.
- What if **non verbal**? Same things apply:
  - Explain what you're doing
  - Acknowledge (verbalize and validate) non-verbal cues





If you never get further than  
helping an individual feel  
heard and understood, then  
you have **succeeded**

”



# Tool Tips

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**Validation** - acknowledge real concern, recognition that their feelings are valid and worthwhile

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**Consistency** - meeting our innate need for predictability helps us feel safe and in control

**Choice** - prioritizing others' needs for autonomy and control

**Empathy** - building understanding through shared experiences

**Collaboration** - doing *with*, not doing *to*, acknowledging our need for agency and control

**Self-Care** - helping others to the best of our abilities asks us to identify and take care of our own needs



# Wrapping Up

## *Questions and Discussion*

Did we meet our **objectives**?

**Develop** a common language to talk to and about each other, based in empathy and understanding

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