Workshop 7: Reflective Practices: Caring for Ourselves

Overview of Topic

This session will help professionals become aware of the personal feelings and reactions that get stirred up in our work with infants, young children, and families. We will discuss why it is important to engage in a process of “reflection” so that we can better use these feelings to understand ourselves and the infants, children and families we serve. The nature of reflective practice allows workers to feel that they are not in this work alone and that they can count on the lessons and support of others to help them determine the course of their work. Staff members are helped to understand the profound, yet often unexamined role their own feelings, reactions and subjective experiences with infants and families has on their work. We will also review ways that professionals can care for themselves so that they reduce the risk of “compassion fatigue” or “burn-out” that relationship-based work can induce.

Recommended Duration: 3 hours

New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards
Domain I: Social & Emotional Development
Components: Relationships with Peers and Adults

Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Competency Guidelines
Theoretical Foundations
Knowledge Areas: Infant/very young child & family centered practice
  Relationship-focused practice
  Family relationships & dynamics
  Cultural competence

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the importance of self-awareness and reflection in relationship based work -- for all cases, not just those where the worker experiences difficulty or conflict, but even in those cases where the work appears to be “going well”.
2. Participants will learn ways to engage in reflective practices to help inform their work, relationships and interventions.
3. To emphasize the need to “care for the caregivers”.
4. Participants will become familiar with how their feelings, responses, and reactions to young children and families can impact and influence their work.
A 5 STEP REFLECTIVE PROCESS


STEP 1: **ACKNOWLEDGE** your feelings
   - Take your own temperature

STEP 2: **RECOGNIZE** asking for help is OK
   - No one should be alone in this work

STEP 3: **PRACTICE** “WONDERING”
   - What is it like for the other person?

STEP 4: **ACCEPT** this process takes time
   - Being reflective is NOT a quick fix

STEP 5: **MOVE** forward
   - It’s OK not to have all the answers
What is the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health?
NJ-AIMH is the statewide organization for multidisciplinary professionals who work to support the relational and emotional development of families from pregnancy through early childhood. We are focused on professional development and education, public awareness and advocacy, and endorsement of professionals in the areas of infant and early childhood mental health, learning and development.

What is the NJ–AIMH Endorsement®?
Endorsement is a process that supports and recognizes the development of professionals who work with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families. This process uses a nationally recognized set of competencies that helps define best practice and guides professional growth.

Who can apply?
All professionals who have experience working with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, parents/caregivers and meet the educational, work, training, and reflective supervision/consultation requirements as specified at each level.

Why apply for the NJ-AIMH Endorsement (IMH-E®)?
- To grow and develop as a professional in the rapidly expanding infant and family field
- To be recognized by employers and peers for having attained a level of competency in culturally sensitive, relationship-focused practice that promotes infant mental health
- To better support the infants, toddlers, families, students, agencies, and institutions in the promotion of infant mental health.

What are the main steps to the NJ-AIMH Endorsement (IMH-E®) process?
1. Review the Endorsement levels and determine where your education, experience, training and supervision fit best (please see the back side for more information on Levels)
2. Register on NJ–AIMH’s web–based Endorsement Application System (EASy) at http://easy.mi-aimh.org/njaimh and pay registration fee and NJ-AIMH membership fee (if a new member)
3. Wait 48 hours for an email from the EASy system with a username and password
4. Log into EASy to prepare a professional portfolio including requesting official transcripts, sending reference forms through EASy to 3 references, uploading education, work experience, and training information and documenting reflective supervision (if applicable)
5. Submit your completed portfolio via EASy along with the Endorsement Processing Fee.
6. Level III and IV applicants only: sit for the Endorsement Exam

What is the application review and decision process?
Level I & Level II applicants receive an endorsement decision after at least two portfolio reviews. Level III & Level IV applicants move on to a written exam after at least two portfolio review committee members examine and approve. Certificates are issued after all Level III and IV exams are reviewed.

Questions? Please contact the Endorsement Coordinator at endorsement@nj-aimh.org. For general questions about the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health, please email info@nj-aimh.org
What are the levels of Endorsement and requirements for application at each level?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level I</th>
<th>Infant Family Associate</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Reflective Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CDA, or Associate's degree in a related area or 2 years of infant/childhood paid work experience (including college, AA and CDA work)</td>
<td>30+ hours of defined training or portfolio</td>
<td>CDA, or Associate's degree in a related area or 2 years of infant/childhood paid work experience (including college, AA and CDA work)</td>
<td>24+ hours over 1-2 years of reflective practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Level II | Infant Family Specialist | Bachelors or Masters degree in defined fields, 30+ hours of training | 30+ hours of defined training | 2 years post-BA paid IMH work; | 24+ hours over 1-2 years of reflective practice |

| Level III | Infant Mental Health Specialist | Masters or Doctorate in defined fields (some possible credit for intensive in-service training) | 30+ hours of defined training | 2 years post-grad paid IMH direct services to infants/caregivers OR one year supervised graduate internship | 50 hours over 1-2 years of reflective practice |

| Level IV | Clinical Mentor | Masters or Doctorate in defined fields (some possible credit for intensive in-service training) | 30+ hours of defined training | As in Level III + 3 years Post Grad providing IMH reflective practice supervision/Consultation and defined leadership activities | 50 hours over 1-2 years of reflective practice |

| Level IV | Policy | Masters or Doctorate in defined fields (some possible credit for intensive in-service training) | 30+ hours of defined training | 3 years of post-grad experience in policy/Administration related to IMH field and defined leadership activities | OPTIONAL: 50 hours over 1-2 years |

| Level IV | Research Faculty | Masters or Doctorate in defined fields (some possible credit for intensive in-service training) | 30+ hours of defined training | 3 years of post-grad experience as a leader in university-teaching and/or published research and other defined leadership activities | OPTIONAL: 50 hours over 1-2 years |

How much does Endorsement cost?
Endorsement fees have three parts: the NJ-AIMH Membership Fee ($35), the Registration Fee ($20), and the Endorsement Processing Fee. The Endorsement Processing Fees are based on Level of Endorsement and are as follows:

- Level I: Infant Family Associate - $25
- Level II: Infant Family Specialist - $100
- Level III: Infant Mental Health Specialist - $300
- Level IV: Infant Mental Health Mentor (all types) - $400

What are the requirements for continuing education for the IMH-E credential?
1. Ongoing membership in NJ-AIMH (or another IMH association)
2. Annual participation in 15 clock hours of culturally sensitive, relationship-focused training experiences that promote infant mental health.
3. For those endorsed at Levels II, II and IV-Clinical, annual participation in 12 clock hours of reflective supervision/consultation.

Questions? Please contact the Endorsement Coordinator at endorsement@nj-aimh.org. For general questions about the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health, please email info@nj-aimh.org
Yes, I would like to become a member of the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health. Enclosed you will find my check made out to NJ-AIMH and my membership choice.

Name:
Address:
City:
State: Zip Code:
Contact Phone:
Email Address:
Discipline:
Agency Affiliation:
Fax:

**NJ-AIMH Membership Dues Options**

Regular $35 ___  Student* $20 ___

* Student members must submit proof of student status

Please make checks payable to

**NJ-AIMH**
and remit to:
NJ-AIMH
PO Box 43662
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

Or fax to: 973.655.5376

Please direct any questions to: 973.655.6685

www.nj-aimh.org

A multidisciplinary organization for professionals working with parents and young children

An affiliate of
NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

The New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health is a statewide, multidisciplinary organization for professionals working to foster healthy social and emotional development in infants, young children and all whom form relationships with them.

Our purpose is to CARE:

- **Collaborate with statewide and local stakeholders in the IMH field**
- **Advocate for public policy that positively impacts infants and their caregivers**
- **Report on the vital importance of emotional and social development from infancy onward**
- **Endorse practice standards to increase member and practitioner competencies in the field of IMH**

MEMBER BENEFITS

- Professional Networking opportunities
- Opportunities for professional leadership
- Early notification and reduced rates to NJ-AIMH events, including conferences and trainings.
- Participation in advocacy efforts working towards the optimal development of infants, toddlers and their families.
- Access to the Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E®).

NJ-AIMH STANDING COMMITTEES

NJ-AIMH welcomes and encourages active member participation in its central committees:

**Membership:**
Encourages those who both work with and advocate for infants and toddlers to join NJ-AIMH as members.

**Training and Education:**
Promotes professional education for those who work with infants, toddlers, and their caregivers. Offers professional seminars, study institutes, presentations, and professional sharing.

**Public Awareness:**
Increases public awareness of infant/toddler mental health through the dissemination of information regarding training events and resources. Advocates and support changes in public policy or practice to foster the mental health of infants and toddlers.

**Nominations:**
Recruits candidates for election of the NJ-AIMH Board of Directors and supervises elections.

**Endorsement:**
Plans and implements the New Jersey Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E®) process, creating a system for training and endorsing professionals working with infants and toddlers in this unique and prestigious credential.

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH (WAIMH)

WAIMH is an interdisciplinary, international infant mental health organization which supports research, education, and intervention aimed at promoting optimal mental health for infants and their caregivers, sponsors regional and world conferences, and promotes international cooperation and networking amongst individuals from diverse disciplines. For more information please visit: [http://www.waimh.org](http://www.waimh.org)

ENDORSEMENT

The intent of the NJ-AIMH Endorsement (IMH-E®) is to recognize and document the development of infant and family professionals within an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based, infant mental health learning and work experiences.

Endorsement by the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health verifies that an applicant has attained a level of education as specified, participated in specialized in-service trainings, engaged in professional work related to infants and toddlers, obtained reflective supervision/consultation from mentors or supervisors, and acquired knowledge to promote the delivery of high quality, culturally sensitive, relationship-based services to infants, toddlers, parents, other caregivers and families.

Recognition of NJ-AIMH Endorsement tells employers, parents, health and legal practitioners, and insurance providers that the person endorsed has expertise related to the social and emotional development of infants and young children in families. NJ-AIMH endorses professionals from many disciplines at the following four levels: Infant Family Associate, Infant Family Specialist, Infant Mental Health Specialist, and Infant Mental Health Mentor. Each Level recognizes knowledge, training and conformance with best practice standards. Of additional importance, the NJ-AIMH Endorsement offers individuals in the infant and family field a professional development plan that focuses on cultural sensitivity, early emotional development, and relationships.

Revised January 2014
Reflective Practices: Caring for Ourselves

Part of a series funded by:
The New Jersey Department of Children and Families

Developed by:
Gerard Costa, Ph.D., IMH-E®IV, Clinical Mentor
Director
Lorri Sullivan, M.Ed., IMH-E®IV, Research/Faculty
Curriculum Coordinator
Kaitlin Mulcahy, LPC, IMH-E® IV, Clinical Mentor,
Associate Director

No part of this material may be copied without the express permission of:
The Center for Autism and
Early Childhood Mental Health

“Keeping Babies & Young Children in Mind”

- Workshop 1: In the Beginning – What Happens Early Matters
- Workshop 2: Infant & Early Childhood Development
- Workshop 3: The Language of Behavior
- Workshop 4: Encountering Early Stress and the Power of Meaningful Connections
- Workshop 5: Relationship-based Practices
- Workshop 6: Me, My Family, My Community
- Workshop 7: Reflective Practices: Caring for Ourselves
Questions We Hope to Answer

- What do we mean by “reflective practice”?
- Why do we need time for “reflection”?
- Why must we attend to our feelings about infants, children, and families?

Building Adult Capacities To Support Child Outcomes Video
http://developingchild.harvard.edu/

Skills Adults Need

- Executive Functioning
- Self-Regulation
- Problem-Solving
- Ability to Work on a Team

From: http://developingchild.harvard.edu/

- Planning/Monitoring
- Focus/Attention

- All these skills are needed to create well-regulated home & school environments in which healthy learning & development can take place
What do we mean by “Reflection”? 

- Turning your attention to your thoughts, feelings and attitudes
- Wondering about the nature of your work and relationships
- Learning about your “story” or personal narrative

---

Reflection

Stepping back from the immediate experience to sort through thoughts and feelings about what one is observing and doing with children and families.

From Reflective Supervision, Zero to Three, 1995

---

Reflection is needed at many levels....

- **Personal** – looking at “yourself”
- **Interpersonal** – looking at the nature of relationships. This includes
  - Peer
  - Helper-Family
  - Parent-Child-Family
- **Organizational** – reflecting on ways that programs and “systems” interact with families and intervene when families are in need
Reflection in Helping Relationships

A relationship that aims at creating a climate where both the family’s and the helper’s needs are being considered, so that help and support can be optimized.

Our Feelings About the Work

Our subjective experiences and feelings about the children and families we work with, has a profound, but often unexamined impact on our work.

Reflective Relationships

Three Essential Features of Reflective Relationships

- **Reflection** – stepping back, slowing down, wondering
- **Collaboration** – having a “partner” in the process of reflection
- **Regularity** – occurs consistently and is “protected” time

From: ZERO TO THREE.ORG
Reflection with others creates a partnership so that the helper never feels alone, is not overwhelmed by fear or uncertainty, feels safe to express fears, uncertainties, thoughts, feelings, reactions, and learns more about him/herself, the family and the work.

Core Messages in Our Work

• Parenthood is a relationship NOT just a skill
• We must always seek to understand families through THEIR story and experiences
• Support for Families must be guided by our EMPATHY

Empathy Video (Cleveland Clinic)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDDWvj_q-o8
Reflective Questions

- How does compassion come into your role?
- Can you make a connection between the messages in the video and your work?

Paying Attention to Our Feelings

- Awareness of our emotional state going into a situation with the child/family
- Awareness of sensitive issues and experiences from our own life/background
- Awareness of any changes in our emotional experiences while with child/family
- Using our feelings in ways and situations that will benefit the child/family

Reflective Activity

- Think about:
  - the last time you felt a knot in your stomach at work
  - a situation that made you anxious or nervous at work
  - the most recent time you felt overwhelmed and at risk for “flipping your lid” at work
  - Did you have someone to reflect with? Did you reflect by yourself?
  - What helped you feel better?
Three Factors That Influence our Interactions with Children:

- The nature of our childhood.
- Our ability to recall good and bad events and feel the feelings again.
- Our ability to separate our needs, problems, feelings and thoughts from those of the infants and children.

Stress on the Job—Reflective Activity

- I’m like a frying pan
- I’m like a crockpot
- I’m like a microwave
- I’m like a blender
- I’m like a toaster
- I’m like a fridge

How do you handle stress on the job??
RED FLAGS

- Unable to get paperwork or required tasks done
- Feeling personally distressed, "frazzled", forgetful and in crisis
- Not expressing delight, joy in work with infants, children
- Blaming the children or families for things that go wrong

RED FLAGS

- Avoiding people, not returning calls, emails, messages
- The 2:00 AM agenda
- Not being able to "see" your co-workers as partners

Compassion Fatigue

"Compassion Fatigue symptoms are normal displays of chronic stress resulting from the care giving work we choose to do."

www.compassionfatigue.org

A physical, emotional and spiritual fatigue or exhaustion that takes over a person and causes a decline in their ability to experience joy or to feel and care for others.
Compassion Fatigue

- A "one way street"—constant output of compassion and caring over time.
- Affects those in care-giving professions—health care, mental health.
- Also affects those caring for family members, especially during crisis periods.
- From: www.compassionfatigue.org

Compassion Fatigue

- Develops over time—may take weeks, sometimes years to surface.
- A low level, chronic clouding of caring and concern for others in your life.
- Ability to feel and care for others becomes eroded through overuse of your skills of compassion.
- From: www.compassionfatigue.org

Compassion Fatigue

- May experience "emotional blunting"—reacting to situations differently than one would normally expect.
- Most critical need is to acknowledge that you may be experiencing it.
- From: www.compassionfatigue.org
### Warning Signs of Compassion Fatigue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fatigue Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic lateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminished sense of personal accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion (physical, emotional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less ability to feel joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep disturbances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusing drugs, alcohol or food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High self-expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopelessness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From: www.compassionfatigue.org*

### Compassion Fatigue Resources

- **Compassion Fatigue Self-Test:**
  - [http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/cfassessment.html](http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/cfassessment.html)

- **Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project:**
  - [www.compassionfatigue.org](http://www.compassionfatigue.org)

### Reflective Quotes-Group Activity

- [Blank pages for group activity]
Jeree Pawl and Maria St. John

“How you are is as important as what you do!”

Don’t just do something, stand there!”

-Jeree Pawl, Ph.D.

David Peters, Ph.D.

“When you over identify with a patient, there are two patients and no doctor!”
The Platinum Rule

“Do unto others as you would have others do unto others.”
- Jeree Pawl, Ph.D.

“We DON’T SELL SHOES............”
- Thea Bry

Remember....

“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.”
- Albert Einstein
5 Step Reflective Process

Step 1 - Acknowledge Your Feelings
- Acknowledge your gut reaction and identify what you are feeling.
- Take your “temperature” and Practice self-regulation....
- Try not to feel guilt over negative emotions From:


Step 2 - Recognize Asking for Help is OK
- We need help throughout our careers not just at the beginning.
- No one should be ALONE in this work!
- Find someone else to give a 3rd eye to the situation.

### Step 3 - Practice Wondering

- How do I feel about this person or situation?
- What about this person reminds me of someone else or rubs me the wrong way?
- Who does this person remind me of?


### Practice Wondering

- Why don’t I like what the other person is doing?
- What just happened? What did I do/say and what did they do/say?
- What might I do differently next time?


### Practice Wondering

- What worked or did not work?
- **How would the other person describe me?**
  - What is it like to be the other person? What is his/her experience?
  - How are we alike and/or different?
  - What would the other person say right now?

Step 4 - Accept This Takes Time

- Being reflective is not a “quick fix”.
- Take the time and do the work of being reflective.

Find the time, place and person you need.


Step 5 - Move Forward

- We all fall down and we all get up again.
- Make a plan for next time.
- It's ok not to have all the answers. Think about who else can help.
- Accept that we can't be the right person for all children and families.

OUR PERSONAL PROMISES

1. You will learn something that will change you and the way you work.
2. This will challenge you, stir you up, make you think about your own growing up and your life as a parent or professional.
3. This is not “dumbed down” – BUT you will understand everything!
4. You will develop more empathy for parents who have failed in some way.
5. Read Number 1 again.

What can we do in NJ and what are we doing?

NJ Infant Mental Health Association
New Jersey
Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E)

Professional Development Opportunities to Specialize in Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Across Disciplines

NJ-AIMH Competency Guidelines and Endorsement System

- Establishes the first ever Infant/Child Mental Health Endorsement System in New Jersey

- The endorsement (IMH-E®) will be useful in developing individual professional development plans.

NJ-AIMH Endorsement

The intent of the NJ-AIMH Endorsement (IMH-E®) is to recognize and document the development of infant and family professionals within an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based, infant mental health learning and work experiences.
Four Levels
of the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-focused Competency Guidelines and Endorsement System for Work with Infants, Toddlers, Children, Parents, Other Caregivers and Families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Level I)</th>
<th>(Level II)</th>
<th>(Level III)</th>
<th>(Level IV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant Family Associate</td>
<td>Infant Family Specialist</td>
<td>Infant Mental Health Specialist</td>
<td>Infant Mental Health Mentor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.nj-aimh.org

Endorsement Recognizes

- The Endorsee demonstrates the specific competencies needed to work effectively with families and very young children (birth to 8 years).
- Competence due to specialized knowledge acquired through education, reflective supervision and relevant work experiences with infants and toddlers and their families.

POST-SURVEYS

- Please complete a post-survey
- Make sure to write your name and PINJ ID # at the top of page 1
- Thank you!!