

The Compassionate Coach: Building Bridges to support Educators with Challenging behaviours



Presented by
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Together We Grow



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We Grow™**



Welcome!
Introductions!

Where in the
world are you
joining from?

What's your
role in ECE?

**We are so glad you are
here!**



**If we have not before let's
become friends! What unites
us?**



**choose
JOY**



What are we talking about today?
To strengthen our leadership/ coaching
with Compassion, Joy and Grace!



“Behind every challenging behavior
—child or adult—is a story and a
need.”

The more you connect the less you correct!



What the Research is
telling us!

22% → 80%

Implementation:
Training to Coaching!

500

2 ways Certification &
Behavior Coaching Academy

Goal: From
Information to
Transformation!

Are you leading/
Coaching with Fear or
Compassion?

Compassion and Trust!

Story time!



3 Brain states
that determine
all behaviors!

Survival

Emotional

Learning Brain



**Brain state inside determines the
behavior outside!**

Children: often in Fight mode—hit, push, bite when unsafe.

Teachers: often in Freeze or Floating—shut down, disengage under pressure.

Directors/ Coaches: often in Flight—rush to fix, move quickly past discomfort.

1 st Poll

1. Self-Awareness / Brain States

“Which brain state do you notice most in yourself when stress arises in the classroom?”

Fight / Flight / Freeze / Floating

“Which brain state do you most often see in your teachers?”

Fight / Flight / Freeze / Floating

**When Teachers and children
feel**

Safe

Accepted

Included

**They are ready to do their best
work!**



Shows up as shut down/
resistant- we see them as lazy



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2nd Poll

Coaching Challenges- check all that apply

“Which scenario feels most challenging for you as a coach?”

Coaching a teacher you don't like

Coaching a teacher who resists change

Coaching a teacher who shuts down

Coaching a teacher who is inconsistent

All of the above

As a supervisor for coaches, this is such a great reminder for my team about understanding a teacher's brain state. When teachers show pushback or don't follow through with a coaching strategy, it's important for us to pause and reflect, not just on the strategy itself, but on where they are emotionally and cognitively in that moment. Meeting teachers where they are is key to effective coaching.

Behavior Coaching Academy attendee. October 2025

Mindset shift

From the expert
role to guidance
role



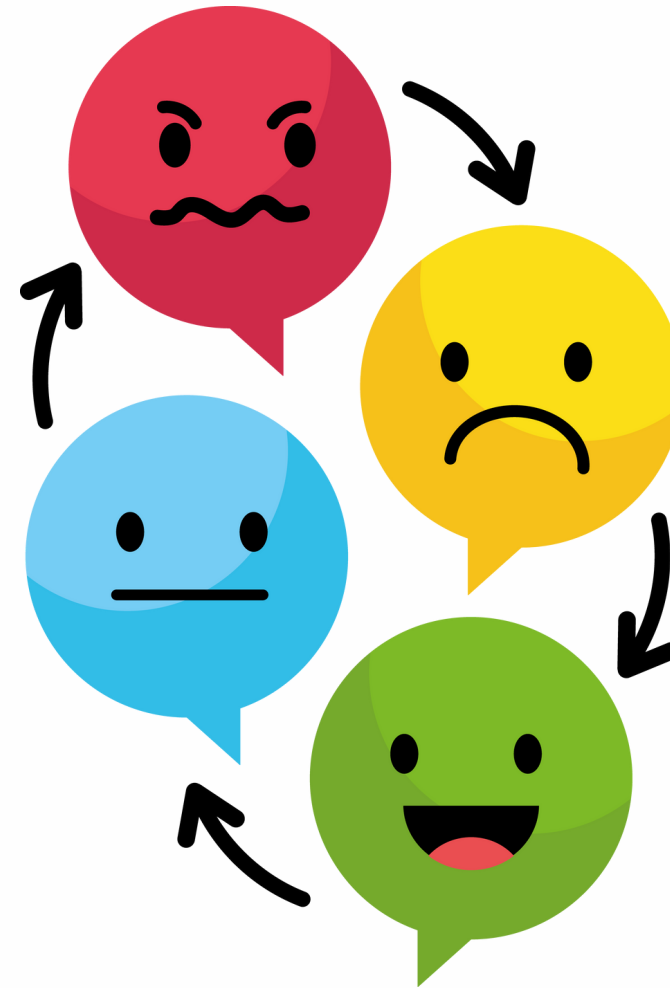
Not about showing off
how good you are at
coaching its about the
other person believing
in themselves!



Positive Intent

Practical Tips for Emotions!

1. SBA!!! 90
Seconds!
2. Let me
think
about it!



**Seek to
understand not
respond!**

“You can’t coach well if you’re still reacting.”



Me vs We

Another story of Me
vs Me!



3rd Poll

Which strategy do you currently use most in your coaching practice?

Role Modelling

Asking questions

Giving solutions / strategies

Telling them what area needs help

Transformative Coaching

Let's talk about!

Role modelling





**2nd Golden Nugget:
Assumptions and Perceptions!**

Lifeguard = jumps in to rescue or fix.

Swim coach = guides with patience and belief.

“When we rush to fix, we take ownership away from the person who needs to grow.”

When teachers show “challenging behaviors” (resistance, defensiveness, inconsistency), it’s usually stress, not stubbornness.

Key reflection: “Am I jumping in to fix—or guiding them to find their own strokes?”

Trust and Accountability



Reflective questions to ask before assuming that
they want you to role model or fix anything!

Compassion and Accountability
are two sides of the same coin

**What's their
why?**

**Be curious not
Accusatory Avoid why
questions!**

Sending a Calendar
invite!

What's the toughest time
during the day?

Would you like some
help?

How can I help with the
next steps?

Reclaiming Joy!

Two contradicting emotions!

Stress

&

Joy



**Teachers teach
who they are!**

A stressed-out teacher
teaches stress

A joyful teacher teaches
joy!



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Words Matter! Joy is a choice!

Words that increase stress!

BUT

Complaining

COMPARISON

Words that increase joy!

And

**Life is
tough
AND SO
Am I!**

Glass half full or half
empty?

Focus on the Pitcher!

*Gratitude
changes
every
Thing*

Stress
and
triggers

Joy
and
Glimmers



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“Joy, collected over time, fuels resilience —
ensuring we’ll have reservoirs of emotional
strength when hard things do happen.”

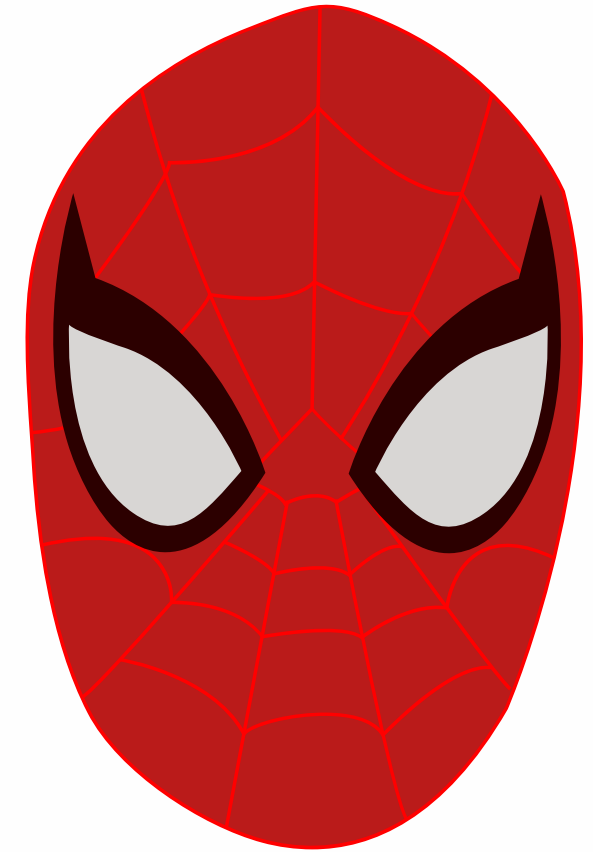
“Glimmers”—those small moments of joy, connection, beauty, or
belonging—build over time and give us the internal reserves we need to
withstand and navigate life's challenges... Brene’ Brown

Play reduces stress!

Big wolf



Spiderman



Dragon



**A leader/Coach sets the temperature
for the entire school!**

**A teacher sets the temperature for the
classroom!**

The More we Connect the less we correct!



Creating a Culture of Belonging!

All about Connections:

Belonging is an emotion!

Feel seen,

Feel Heard

Feel Understood



Belonging In Action!

Age group team meetings

Collective wisdom

Celebrate daily wins: from
To do list to Ta da list!





In closing!

Today we talked about how to coach teachers who are feeling stuck or resistant to change effectively!

Changing our mindset: from experts to facilitators, from fear to compassion

SAIL

Life guard to swim coach

Joy is a choice

Connection before Correction

Belonging is a need

Creating a culture of belonging

Reflective questions to promote change

Poll

Reflection / Commitment

“Which area do you want to focus on this week?”

Pausing before reacting

Seeing others' perspectives

Building trusting connections

Using positive self-talk



With Stacy Bengé and Prerna
Richards



Masterclass November 1st

The coupon code is MOVE2025.

**Thank you, friends! Join the ECE
Community! Together We Grow**



**Next Behavior
Coaching February
2026!**

