

## CONSIDERING CULTURAL AWARENESS AND THE USE OF OURSELVES

**Please Note: the terms parents and caregivers are not gender specific nor are they biologically specific**

### **Regulation Brain System**

#### *Cultural Reflection*

1. From a cultural view, in this family, is it typical for a parent follow/read/respond to infant's cues?
2. What is this family's usual view of reading infant cues? Responding to infant cues?
3. From a cultural view, how does this parent feed, sleep, diaper, clothe his or her baby?
4. From a cultural perspective how are gender roles defined? (e.g., who earns the income/who cooks/who cleans/who changes the diapers)
5. What is this caregiver's cultural view of prenatal care, birth, labor, delivery?
6. What is this family's cultural view of post-partum depression?
7. Are there any toxic stress patterns at the personal and interpersonal levels in this family? (i.e., chronically in blue or combo/oversleeping; going into stress responses too quickly and too frequently)
8. What possible survival behaviors are present (i.e., adaptation to an oppressive system)? How do you, as practitioner, maintain an awareness and facilitate a dialogue regarding internalized oppression?
9. What are the systemic, institutional, and cultural barriers that create and/or support any toxic stress patterns in the family?

#### *Parallel Process Reflection*

1. Do you experience this family's cultural values around early care as matching or aligning with your own cultural values of early care?
2. Do they remind you of anything similar to how you were raised or how you are raising or how you raised your children?
3. If there are differences in your family values, what are they?
4. If there differences in your professional values, what are they? Does this cause discomfort? Alarm? How do you communicate your discomfort?
5. Are you triggered by the family's chronic red/blue/combo zone, any other toxic stress pattern, or the family's internalized oppression? If so, how (red/blue/combo zone)? Whom do you go to for reflective practice to process your stress responses?

#### *Power Differential Reflection*

1. If there is a cultural difference between your value system and the parent's value system for feeding, sleeping, diapering, clothing their baby, how comfortable are you with the differences?
2. Are you in a dominant position as both a practitioner and culturally?
3. If you are "triggered" by the cultural differences (#1 above), what stress response(s) do you have (red/blue/combo)?

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4. If you are triggered by the cultural differences, how does this affect your capacity to use your heart, hand, and head skills?
5. If this family is “triggered” by the cultural differences between you and this family, what stress responses do they have (red/blue/combo)? How do you respond to their stress responses? With your heart/hand/or head?
6. If there is a professional concern that is alarming or reportable, how will this be experienced by the family in terms of dominance and your use of power? Is there any way you can prepare them or modulate that for the parents?

### **Sensory Brain System**

#### *Cultural Reflection*

1. From a cultural perspective, when does this caregiver think infants should talk, walk?
2. What is this family’s cultural view of infant’s fine motor skills (i.e., when should infant pick up objects toys independently)?
3. What is this family’s cultural view about feeding and meals (i.e., parent’s role in feeding is fostered, child’s independence in feeding is fostered, meals are prepared vs. child’s choices, family eats together or not, etc.)?
4. Does this family “tune-in” to processing issues, (i.e., visual spatial, auditory, olfactory, proprioception, etc.)? In other words, is this topic something this caregiver notices as part of a delay? Or an individual difference?
5. What does the family think about intervening when the child does have a developmental delay (i.e., the family may not care about the delay and sees it as part of a Western cultural bias; what if your referral sources sees denying services as parental neglect that is reportable)?
6. In terms of “matching or countering” for modulation – from a cultural perspective, can this caregiver up-regulate/down regulate? Note: Some cultural groups do not feel comfortable “down regulating” and some cultural groups find “upregulating” outside of their comfort zone.

#### *Parallel Process Reflection*

7. Do you find yourself in alignment with this family’s cultural values around early developmental milestones?
8. Do they remind you of anything similar to how you were raised or how you are raising or how you raised your children?
9. If there are differences in your family values, what are they?
10. If there differences in your professional values around developmental guidelines, what are they? Does this cause discomfort? Alarm?
11. Do you find yourself comfortable or uncomfortable around the sensory-motor climate in this home (e.g., being an up-regulating or down-regulating type of household)?
12. Do you have any professional concerns that the sensory-motor climate is blocking regulation and/or engagement?
13. Whom do you go to for reflective practice to process your concerns?

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### Power Differential Reflection

14. If there is a cultural difference between your value system and the parent's value system in regards to developmental milestones and early intervention? How comfortable are you with the differences?
15. If you have not parented or parented a child with special needs in your life, do you or your clients have feelings about the validity of your input?
16. Are you in the dominant position as both a practitioner and culturally?
17. If you are "triggered" by the differences, what stress response (red/blue/combo) do you have?
18. If you are triggered by the differences, how does this affect your capacity to use your heart, hand, and head skills?
19. If the family is "triggered" by the differences, what stress responses (red/blue/combo) do they have? How do you respond to their stress responses? With your heart/hand/or head?
20. If there is a professional concern that is alarming or reportable (e.g., a provider reports neglect for a child who needs services for motor/speech delays), how will this be experienced by the family in terms of dominance and your use of power? Is there any way you can prepare them or modulate that for the parents?

### **Relevance Brain System**

#### Cultural Reflection

1. What range of feelings are valued by each parent? Ignored? Shamed? [Consider the Feeling Wheel – Peaceful, Powerful, Joyful – aspects of green? Sad – Blue; Mad – Red; Scared – Combo]
2. From a cultural perspective, how does this family feel about "approach" and "separation"?
3. Has there been an immigration history and/or familial separations?
4. From a cultural perspective, how does this family feel about attachment (connection-in) relationships? Note: Some cultural groups do not afford attachment relationships very much "power" as these relationships "come and go".
5. Are there cultural value differences in how male versus female children are viewed and valued?
6. If there is mental health or substance abuse issues in this family – how is it viewed? Is it viewed as "normal/typical"? Or problematic/challenging?
7. Are you comfortable with families discussing or bringing up issues of mental health and/or mental illness?

#### Parallel Process

8. From your family of origin, were there value differences in how male versus female children were viewed? Are these simpatico or different from this family?
9. Are you similar or different from this family in terms of sharing a range of feelings?
10. Are you similar or different from this family in terms of sharing levels of engagement?
11. Do you feel "welcomed" in this home? How did your family welcome newcomers in your home?

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12. If there differences in your professional values around sharing emotions and feelings, what are they? Does this cause discomfort? Alarm?
13. Do you find yourself comfortable or uncomfortable around the emotional climate in this home (e.g., household of shame, rage, depression, intrusiveness)?
14. Do you have any professional concerns that the emotional climate is traumatic to this child/spouse?
15. Whom do you go to for reflective practice to process your concerns?

### Power Differential Reflection

16. Are there experiences for this caregiver/family in which they have felt excluded, discriminated against or treated poorly?
17. From a cultural perspective, what makes this caregiver feel empowered/competent?
18. If there is a cultural difference between your value system and the parent's value system in regards to socio-emotional health and the quality of engagement in relationships? How comfortable are you with the differences?
19. Do you view these parent(s) as holding the dominant position in terms of SES, education, professional status? Is this a trigger for you?
20. If you are "triggered" by differences in socio-emotional capacities, SES, education, professional status, etc., what stress responses (red/blue/combo) do you have?
21. If you are triggered by these differences, how does this affect your capacity to use your heart, hand, and head skills?
22. If the family is "triggered" by these differences, what stress responses (red/blue/combo) do they have? How do you respond to their stress responses? With your heart/hand/ and/or head?
23. If there is a professional concern that is alarming or reportable (e.g., refusing to acknowledge abuse or neglect, domestic violence, refusal to get help), how will this be experienced by the family in terms of dominance and your use of power? Is there any way you can prepare them or modulate that for the parents?

### Executive Brain System

#### Cultural Reflection

24. Does the family's culture value movement and exploration (i.e., explore things orally, walking vs. being carried, being allowed to explore and move away from the parent)?
25. Does this family value dependence or independence or both? How does this family support these for their children?
26. How does this family's cultural group view play (i.e., value or devalue)? Parent role in play? Play as a learning experience? How does this family play together?
27. In this family, who do they believe is their child's best teacher?
28. From a cultural view, how does this family believe children learn the best?
29. What are the culturally laden expectations around attention? Impulse control? Being on time? Thinking about others?

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30. From a cultural perspective, what do the parents think his or her child needs, in terms of skills, to make it in life?
31. From a cultural perspective do these parents have “reflective” time to think about things and to collaborate with you?
32. From a cultural perspective, how does this family view “intervention”? What is this family’s cultural view of seeking intervention? Medical care? Psychological care? Mental health care?

#### Parallel Process Reflection

33. Are you similar or different from this family in terms of sharing how learning as “play-based” is viewed?
34. Are you similar or different from this family in terms of values regarding attention, time, impulse control, and thinking about others?
35. If there differences in your professional values around any of these items, what are they? Does this cause discomfort? Alarm?
36. Do you find yourself comfortable or uncomfortable around the ability to hold his or her baby in mind in this home (e.g., parents distracted, cannot keep appointments, frequent cancellations)?
37. Do you have any professional concerns that the executive ability of the parent (i.e., to hold his or her baby in mind, to keep track of necessary schedules, appointments, and play-based learning) is dangerous to this child/spouse?
38. Whom do you go to for reflective practice to process your concerns?

#### Power Differential Reflection

39. Are there experiences for this caregiver/family in which they have felt excluded, discriminated against or treated poorly in terms of his or her own ability to learn and be educated?
40. From a cultural perspective, what makes this caregiver feel empowered/competent to work and to learn?
41. If there is a cultural difference between your value system and the parent’s value system in regards to learning, staying on task with schedules and appointments this child or parent needs? How comfortable are you with the differences?
42. If you are “triggered” by differences in how executive items are viewed, what stress responses (red/blue/combo) do you have?
43. If you are triggered by the differences, how does this affect your capacity to use your heart, hand, and head skills?
44. If the family is “triggered” by the differences, what stress responses (red/blue/combo) do they have? How do you respond to their stress responses? With your heart/hand/ and/or head?
45. If there is a professional concern that is alarming or reportable (e.g., refusing or inability to keep appointments for self-care or child’s needs, inability to plan ahead and follow through with necessary items), how will this be experienced by the family in terms of dominance and your use of power? Is there any way you can prepare them or modulate that for the parents?