

**Inclusive Listening
Special Education Scenarios
Lorig Charkoudian and Erricka Bridgeford, Community Mediation Maryland
Transcript**

Philip Moses>> Greetings and thank you for joining us. Last December and January, CADRE hosted a two-part webinar with Lorig Charkoudian and Erricka Bridgeford from Community Mediation Maryland. It was titled "Inclusive Listening, Building Understanding, Supporting Collaboration." The webinars were extremely well received and many participants noted that they wished the presenters would provide additional examples especially scenarios that we might come across in the world of special education. Lorig and Erricka have graciously agreed to return and provide two new scenarios for us.

The earlier two-part webinar introduced participants to the concepts and strategies of Inclusive Listening, a system for listening and reflecting for mediation and facilitation. Inclusive Listening has been developed over the last 15 years by mediators and trainers in Maryland. Inclusive Listening honors participants' experiences, supporting them to have the conversation in an authentic way. At the same time, it acknowledges participants' feelings, highlights their values, and identifies topics in a neutral way to prepare for collaborative problem solving. We invite you to watch the recordings of the first two portions of this webinar in advance of today's Part 3. You'll find today much more enriching if you do. You can find the recordings on the CADRE website. So now I will turn it over to Erricka and Lorig.

Lorig Charkoudian>> This is Lorig and it's a delight to be with folks again and we hope you've had a lot of opportunities to practice. I think when we ended our last webinar we talked about all the incredible opportunities that there are to practice both with your friends and family and co-workers as well as every time you watch a dramatic television show or movie or even, you know, while you're waiting at the bus stop and listening to the conversations around you. You don't

always have to say things out loud, like you can reflect in your head. And sometimes we can be reflecting to folks in the bus stop around you.

So now that you've had all that practice, we're coming together again and trying to create another opportunity to do some practice together and a chance for folks to think about feelings, values, topics, quiz yourself, and then we'll walk through both the answers that are consistent with Inclusive Listening and also the answers that we would consider inconsistent with Inclusive Listening and talk about why one wouldn't use those other answers and words in the context of Inclusive Listening.

So what we're going to do, as you know because you've recently reviewed Inclusive Listening is we're listening for feelings, values, and topics and so we're going to start by listening for feelings. And so we have what feelings are expressed. So we're going to take a look at this next slide and we're actually going to read this out loud so what you can do is you can be looking at it, of course, but you also can be just listening to it as we read it with emotion and intensity. And you can be thinking if you were listening to this person speak in the context of a meeting or a mediation or even just a one on one conversation, what feelings are you hearing. And we have some sample feelings you can pick from, but you may also just want to be thinking off of feeling words that you know and jotting those down. And then we'll walk through the ones that we would highlight in the context of an inclusive listening reflection. So here's Erricka to give us this first commentary.

Erricka Bridgeford>> Hi, everyone. So this first scenario is a conflict between a mom and dad making decisions about their daughter. So mom starts. It's clear to me that Janice is having behavior problems because we are forcing her to be something that she's not. We're making her feel like there's something wrong with the way she was born. Yes, she's deaf, but how do we know that this isn't a gift from God? Yes, she was born with a missing hand, but why should she have to live with that prosthetic? Before she went to school, she was just healthy and fine without the

prosthetic. She was doing great, using sign language and even reminding us to use our hands and to look at her when we speak. That kind of eye contact helps her feel connected and not so alone. But she went to school and suddenly we made her try to fit in and be normal. I'm the one who has to convince her to put that prosthetic on every morning. I'm the one who has to see the tears when she is so uncomfortable after having that thing on her body all day. I've been trying to hold in my own tears as I tell her that this is for the best and that it's helping her use all of her body. I feel like a liar and a cheat. I don't know that she wouldn't be better off using her own body parts to the best of her ability. She might be able to do all of these tasks without a machine on her arm. Now that we've told her that we want to get her the Cochlear Implant, I can see why she's rebelling. All of a sudden she's hitting children with her prosthetic, not answering when teachers try to communicate with her, and teaching the other kids profane signs that she's found on the internet. We've taught her that she needs to fit in, but we never asked her what she wanted. So yes, she's finding her own way to fit in. I can see that she feels powerless and her new behavior is her way of gaining power over her own life. I can't blame her. We were wrong and we need to admit it. We certainly shouldn't add surgery to the mix making her have to adjust to whatever bit of hearing the implant will provide. Because she's almost seven, the implant might not even help with her speech. Why risk it? Let's try letting her live as she is. Let's get her help using what she has instead of focusing on what she doesn't have.

Lorig Charkoudian>> Okay, so hopefully you've been jotting down some feeling words that you heard during that commentary. And then we have some samples here for you to pick from and you may have some that aren't here. But we've got guilty, religious, doubtful, heartbroken, burdened, abandoned, regretful, disconnected, and wrong. You can take a minute to think about which of those feeling words you might reflect back to this mother in this context. And then we're going to just wait one second so people can think about that.

And now we shift to the ones that are consistent with Inclusive Listening. So we've got guilty, we've got doubtful, we've got heartbroken, we've got burden, and we've got regretful. So hopefully you have those. We're going to take a look at some of the other ones that we didn't pick and we're going to talk about why those are not the feelings that we would reflect in the context of strategic listening on the next page.

So religious is not a feeling word really and it would be your analysis of the mother. So she mentioned the comment about it's just really a gift from God, but that doesn't necessarily make her religious. It would be to reflect that she feels religious would be sort of your analysis or your opinion about her. Abandoned also would be your opinion about the situation. So when she's talking about being the one who has to force the daughter to take the action to put the prosthetic on, she's talking about it as something that she's feeling really torn about but she's not talking about it as though she's been left alone to do it. It's more about her struggle with her need to do it. So abandoned would be a feeling word in some context, but in this context it wouldn't be the right feeling word. Disconnected is not something that she expressed. And wrong is both your opinion, but it's also sort of an analysis of guilt, of who was guilty in this situation. And so we generally don't reflect it sounds like you feel wrong. We find that it's not as helpful in connecting people to the emotions that they're feeling.

So those are the feeling words for the mother and now we're going to take a look at the father in the same context and we're going to take a look at what feelings he's expressing. So we're going to listen to what it is that he has to say and then we're going to take a look at the possible feeling words.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So dad says: How can you say we were wrong? The last thing we need to do is go back on what we've been doing. Janice needs to see us being on the same page and sticking to our guns. That will show her that we will do anything to give her a happy life. We are not wrong

for wanting her to be more like everyone else. Don't you see the constant news reports about bullying? Children who are different will always be an easy target to be teased, rejected, and even hit. She might not like the prosthetic now, but when she's able to use it like a hand, she will thank us. But she'll never get there if you won't make her use it. When I get home from work, I have to be the bad guy and tell her to pick up things with it or try to tie her shoes with it. You won't even help her learn to write her name with it. The minute she gets frustrated, you let her stop. She is going to be frustrated a lot in life and we can't teach her to give up. I wanted her to get the Cochlear Implant a few years ago when it would have been most helpful in her speech development. You said no and I didn't want to fight about it. But now we have to get it for her before it's too late. We can't deprive her of the opportunity to hear music, understand sounds in her environment, and even understand speech. Since we waited so long, it won't fix all of her speech problems, but it can help her learn to talk a little better. I can't believe you think God wants her to be like this. How could you think we should let a seven year old decide her own fate? That's why she's having behavior problems because she can see that we are not on the same page. We need to be parents and decide what's best for her. If it was up to her, she'd be on the internet all day finding new insults and curse words, not pushing herself to get a better life.

Lorig Charkoudian>> And now we're going to take a look again; hopefully you've been jotting down what you're hearing as she's speaking. And now we're taking a look at some of the possibilities that we've put here. So we've got possibilities of stubborn, controlling, protective, hopeful, shocked, burdened, set up, mistrustful, rejected, determined and pressured. So I want you to take a minute to take a look at those and think about which of these feelings are feelings that the father has expressed that you might use in a reflection to the father. And if you need more time, I think you can pause this. We're going to go ahead and flip to the next slide.

So the feelings that were expressed, the ones that are consistent with the Inclusive Listening approach are protective, hopeful, shocked, burdened, set up, determined, and pressured. So we're going to talk about, so we heard him talk about feeling protective of his daughter. We heard him talking about when he was talking about the possibilities of what could happen with the prosthetic and with the surgery feeling hopeful. The comments about how could you believe that God wants her this way so that was where the shock came in. He also talked about feeling burdened when he was saying that he feels like he's the one who consistently has to take on the tasks of encouraging her to use the prosthetic and learn how to use it. He talks about feeling determined, right, when he talks about pushing through and really getting through this period to where she'll be able to be more functional with it. And then the pressure around this timeframe and when is it too late and the need to get this now before it's too late. So that's where we heard those feelings.

Next we'll take a look at what feelings were not expressed that we had on there. And again, we've got stubborn and controlling and so those are often words that people might hear depending on how you felt about his opinion and whether you agreed with it or not. Sometimes people will hear somebody's who's really feeling very forceful about a particular approach and trying to ask other people to engage in that same approach and people will say, oh they're being stubborn and controlling. So first of all, that would be your opinion about how they're acting. It wouldn't be an emotion that they're expressing so those wouldn't be feelings that we would reflect in the context of Inclusive Listening. And then mistrustful, so mistrustful is not what he expressed. And then rejected, we put this one in here because sometimes when a parent especially is talking about their fear for their child, like I'm afraid she'll be rejected or she'll be bullied, that we hear people who are just learning Inclusive Listening will reflect that back to the parent as though it's their feeling. And he really never said that he felt rejected. That was his fear for Janice and so we would not in the context of Inclusive Listening, we would not be reflecting rejected to the father.

Okay, so we're going to take a look at values. Can you start to go through that?

Erricka Bridgeford>> Okay, so when we're looking at values, we want to be focused on what the person is saying, what they're expressing is important to them, what are the goals and needs that they have. We don't want to be focused on what it is they dislike about other people. So values are about -- a lot of times we hear values and people's insults or what they're saying they don't like about other people. And if we only focus on what they don't like, that doesn't help them take ownership of what they actually want and be thinking about how is it that they can not just own what they want, but then get what they want when it's time to problem solve. So we're listening in this way where we are listening to not what you don't like about the other, but out of that what is it that we're saying that is important to you, that you do want, what are your goals. And so Lorig's going to read the event.

Lorig Charkoudian>> So we're going to read this one more time. It's the same one. But what we want to highlight really is in one context -- I mean in one sort of set up commentary how we're listening in that same set of commentaries for the feelings for the values. So this time, again, from a practice perspective, you're just listening for the values. So I'm going to read it out loud and you're going to be thinking what is it that is important to, what is this mother's values. You can take a look at our possibilities at the bottom and/or you could just be jotting down what you hear and then later take a look at how they match some of the possibilities we've listed.

So again, it's clear to me that Janice is having behavior problems because we are forcing her to be something she's not. We're making her feel like there's something wrong with the way that she was born. Yes, she's deaf, but how do we know that this isn't a gift from God? Yes, she was born with a missing hand, but why should she have to live with that prosthetic? Before she went to school, she was just happy and fine without the prosthetic. She was doing great, using sign language and even reminding us to use our hands and to look at her when we speak. That kind of eye contact helps her

feel connected and not so alone. But she went to school and suddenly we made her try to fit in and be normal. I'm the one who has to convince her to put that prosthetic on every morning. I'm the one who has to see the tears when she is so uncomfortable after having that thing on her body all day. I've been trying to hold on to my own tears as I tell her that this is for the best and that it's helping her use all of her body. I feel like a liar and a cheat. I don't know that she wouldn't be better off using her own body parts to the best of her ability. She might be able to do all of these tasks without a machine on her arm. Now that we've told her that we want her to get the Cochlear Implant, I can see why she's rebelling. All of a sudden she's hitting children with her prosthetic, not answering when teachers try to communicate with her, and teaching the other kids profane signs that she's found on the internet. We've taught her that she needs to fit in, but we never asked her what she wanted. So yes, she's finding her own way to fit in. I can see that she feels powerless and her new behavior is a way of gaining power over her own life. I can't blame her. We were wrong and we need to admit it. We certainly shouldn't add surgery to the mix making her have to adjust to whatever bit of hearing the implant will provide. Because she's almost seven, the implant might not even help with her speech. Why risk it? Let's try letting her live as she is. Let's get her the help using what she has instead of focusing on what she doesn't have.

Erricka Bridgeford>> Okay, so for the values expressed by the mom, we have happiness, so she's talking a lot about Janice's happiness. Oh, I'm sorry. We need to pick first. So, A. Happiness, B. Not Fitting In, C. Acceptance, D. Connectedness, E. Independence, F. God's Will, G. Choice, H. Technology, I. Authenticity. And you'll have a minute to pick them.

And so we'll move on to -- so here were the values that were expressed based on the way we listen with Inclusive Listening. So she talked about Janice's happiness being important to her. Also it being important to her for others to accept Janice as she is -- her body is. She talked about the connectedness piece with being able to look at each other when they were talking and Janice

reminding them to do that so that she could be connected to what others were saying. Janice's independence and being able to choose what she wanted was important to her. And then there's the piece throughout about Janice's ability to be authentic being important to her. Just being who she is and present in the world how she is.

So then the next one, these are the values that were not there based on Inclusive Listening. So B, not fitting in -- so this would be your opinion of what is important to mom, that because you hear her saying that it's important to her for Janice to be herself. It would be your opinion to stretch it and say, oh she doesn't want her to fit in which isn't really what she's saying. And then there's the piece of about God's will. So you did hear the mom ask a question; how do we know this isn't a gift from God. And so if you were to analyze what that meant, you could decide that it means that God's will is important to mom and because it's a question that she's asking it's important for us to not assume what it means but instead we would need to ask more questions to understand what that means to her when she's asking about it being a gift from God. And then technology; this wouldn't be something that mom expressed being important to her at all. She is mentioning prosthetics and implants, but she hasn't said that those things are things that are important to her.

Lorig Charkoudian>> Now we're going to do the same thing with dad so we're listening, again it's the same commentary and I'm going to read it out loud. You can either look at the samples that we have below while I'm reading it and pick from there, or you can be practicing as though you don't have samples in front of you and you can be thinking about what would be the values that you're hearing. What's important that you would be jotting down. So dad says: How can you say we were wrong? The last thing we need to do is go back on what we've been doing. Janice needs to see us being on the same page and sticking to our guns. That will show her that we will do anything to give her a happy life. We are not wrong for wanting her to be more like everyone else. Don't you see the constant news reports about bullying? Children who are different will always be an easy

target to be teased, rejected, and even hit. She might not like the prosthetic now, but when she's able to use it like a hand, she will thank us. But she'll never get there if you don't make her use it. When I get home from work, I have to be the bad guy and tell her to pick up things with it or try to tie her shoes with it. You won't even help her learn to write her name with it. The minute she gets frustrated, you let her stop. She is going to be frustrated a lot in life and we can't teach her to give up. I wanted to get her the Cochlear Implant a few years ago when it would have been most helpful in her speech development. You said no and I didn't want to fight about it. But now we have to get it for her before it's too late. We can't deprive her of the opportunity to hear music, understand sounds in her environment, and even understand speech. Since we waited so long, it won't fix all of her speech problems, but it can help her learn to talk a little better. I can't believe you think God wants her to be like this. How could you think we should let a seven year old decide her own fate? That's why she's having behavior problems because she can see that we are not on the same page. We need to be parents and decide what's best for her. If it was up to her, she'd be on the internet all day finding new insults and curse words, not pushing herself to have a better life.

Erricka Bridgeford>> Okay, so the choices are A. Consistency, B. Good Parenting, C. Being like everyone else, D. Safety, E. Perseverance, F. Quality of life, G. Unity, H. Endurance, I. Guidance, J. Politeness, and J. Follow-through. Let's take a moment to see which ones you get. So with Inclusive Listening, things that dad expressed were important to him were consistency for Janice to be able to get to use the prosthetic and to get used to it and do it on a consistent basis. Safety so when he's talking about worry about her being bullied and picked on and hit, expressing that her safety was important to him. Perseverance and endurance, definitely him saying that it's important to him that she's able to push through on things that are hard and difficult and when she gets frustrated. And overall talking about the quality of life she has that she'll thank them later if she's able to be, to persevere through the hard times now, that she'll be, that it'll make things easier for her later. Also this piece about we, as her parents, we should be the ones to make decisions about what's best for

her. So the guidance is important to him and then also the follow-through with when things are frustrating, it's important to him that Janice is able to push through. And also as parents they are able, the pieces about wanting them to continue to follow through when Janice is upset as well as to persevere.

So then we get to the pieces that would not be good things that he talked about from an Inclusive Listening standpoint. So good parenting; you want to be careful any time you put an adjective in front of something that you think is important to someone because then you are making the decision that the thing this person is saying about that thing is either good or bad. So good parenting would be your opinion about parenting and not specifically expressed by the dad. So the things that he talked about were the guidance and perseverance kind of things and so those things about parenting were important to him, but you don't want to decide if those things are good or bad. And then C., being like everyone else. So this would be an assumption that because he's saying that her safety's important to him and that some level of being able to fit in in general is important to him. He's not saying that he just wants her to conform and be like everyone else. And then politeness wasn't expressed by dad so if you hear someone -- so you did hear him talking about her finding new profanity to teach other people, then her behavior thing that he didn't talk about that is important to him for her to be polite to other people.

Lorig Charkoudian>> Okay, the next thing we're going to do is we're going to take a look at topics. And so again the topics are the concrete things; the things that the people that are involved in the conversation, in the conflict, could make a plan about. And again we're looking for things that are framed in a non-judgmental way. The more specific the better and we're looking at framing things in a way that doesn't take sides and so you can refer back to the topics grinder that we talked about in a previous webinar.

Now what we're going to do this time is we are -- I'm going to take a look at this. I'm not going to read it again because you've now heard it twice. But we're going again, if you from a practice perspective if you want to read through this and not look, if you're able to not look at the bottom and just jot down the topics that you see or hear in it, or you can be looking at the bottom while you're reading through it. But again now you're looking at it from the lens of what are the specific things that they could make a plan about that are inherent in this conversation. And so the options that we've listed at the bottom are communication, profanity, speech, arm, hearing, hitting and implant. So you want to think for a minute about which of these would pass through the topics grinder which of these would be the specific and non-judgmental frame of the things that they could make a plan about. And again, you can pause this now if you want to take a look and read through and then we're going to shift to the next page. We're going to tell you what the inclusive listening topics would be.

And so what we've got is communication, speech, arm and hearing. And so these are the specific things that the mother would want to make a plan about and what she wants in each of them may be different from what the father wants in each of them, but these are the concrete things that she's talking about that they could make a plan about. We're going to take a look at the other ones and talk about they wouldn't be considered topics in the context of strategic listening, Inclusive Listening. So we've got to test the other topics, we've got the topics grinder here. Again, this is something that we went through in detail in the previous webinars. So the first question is did somebody say they had a conflict about it, is it specific or concrete, does it blame someone, does it take someone side, and does it set off a yes or no scenario.

So profanity both blames and it sets up a yes/no scenario whether or not the daughter should be using profanity, should be allowed to use profanity or get access to it. Hitting again sets up a yes or no. The implants take sides and again it sets up a yes or no kind of a scenario. And for those sort of

all three of those get stuck even though people talk about having conflict about them and they are specific, they have blame in them and they set up a yes/no scenario. So in the context of Inclusive Listening in trying to support dialogue, we wouldn't frame the topics as being those three.

So then we'll take a look at the father. So again now you've heard the father twice. If you want to pause the webinar and read this over and jot down what you think the topics are, you can do that. We've gone ahead and put in these sample ones for you to pick from. And the ones we've put in there are music, communication, prosthetic, hearing, Janice's tasks, behavior problems, speech, sharing parenting, bullying and arm. You can pause, you can take a minute, figure out which ones you think are the topics that would be consistent with the Inclusive Listening approach.

And the ones that we believe are consistent with Inclusive Listening are communication, hearing, Janice's tasks, speech, and arm. And the ones that we wouldn't use in the context of Inclusive Listening is music, prosthetic, behavior problems, sharing parenting, and bullying. And so again if we take a look at the topics grinder, music is not something that dad said he had a conflict about so he wants her to hear music. That's one of the things the implant might do. But that's not a topic that they have conflict about. The prosthetic again sets up a yes/no. The behavior problem blames and it's not specific. So what the things that are problematic? Sharing parenting isn't specific; it takes a side and it's also more of a value. And bullying also blames and it's not specific. So those would be the topics in this context.

So now what we're going to do is we're going to shift to the next example and again we're going to walk through this with you and give you a chance to practice the strategic listening with a different example. So we're going to start with what are the feelings that are expressed. So we're going to give you this new situation that's between a guardian and school staff and we're going to start with the guardian and you're going to be listening to the guardian and thinking about what are the feelings that are expressed in the scenario and be jotting those down.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So the guardian says: You people are unbelievable. I'm not stupid. I'm aware of all the research about the racial disparities in autism care. People who look like us have way less access to care and I am not just some emotional Latino woman. I am a concerned guardian. When my sister died giving birth to my nephew, I vowed to take care of him. This school system has made it very hard to do that. In pre-K when Devin had obvious speech delays, I was told not to worry and that he'd be talking much better by the time he was in kindergarten. Last year when he got to kindergarten and had problems engaging with his classmates, I was told he had emotional problems because his mom was not alive. As if I wasn't giving him a loving home. Finally, I got an advocate, got him tested and found out that he's autistic. Now you people are telling me to set up a timer while he eats, make him wait for food and some other crazy stuff just because you all don't want to monitor him properly at lunch and snack time. I'm doing my job at home and I need you to do your job in school. I send the food that he likes, although it's extra work every night. There's no need for you all to label and blame him with bad table manners just because you want to control him. And it's unacceptable that you're letting his classmates tease him for how he eats. Yes, he gets messy. If people were assisting him during his meals, he'd be a lot less messy. As it stands, some inept lunch aid calls me at work every day because Devin gets upset while he's eating. This doesn't happen at home and I never hear Ashley's mom talking about her autistic daughter hating mealtime at school. I doubt that it's a coincidence that Ashley's a precious little white girl.

Lorig Charkoudian>> So we have some choices now for what feelings that you might reflect back. We've got burdened, emotional, misunderstood, judged, suspicious, hungry, exhausted, committed, and protected. So you can take a minute to think about which of these would be consistent with a reflection you might do with Inclusive Listening. And if you want to pause it, you can. We're going to take a look at the next page now with the ones that we suggest using.

And so we have misunderstood, judged, suspicious, committed, and protective. And then we're going to take a look at the ones that we would suggest that you wouldn't use and those are burdened; I think a lot of times that's your assumption that when somebody's expressing that there's a lot of work involved that they are feeling burdened. But she really didn't articulate specifically burdened. Emotional is another one that comes off very judgmental. It's vague but it's also an opinion when you're hearing somebody who's feeling very intense about a situation. Hungry was related to her concerns about her child, not what she was feeling. And exhausted again is an assumption about how she might be feeling if she was dealing with a challenging situation, but she didn't express that explicitly.

So now we're going to take a look at the school's commentary on the situation in this dialogue with a parent. And so again we're going to read it aloud and you're going to be able to listen to it and look at it and be thinking about what would be the few things that you would reflect to the teacher.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So the special ed teacher says, it's terrible that you and Devin didn't receive services much earlier in his life. It's unfair that you had that experience on top of losing your sister. We applaud you for stepping in to raise your nephew as your own son. But we need you to believe us when we say that we are not like the other people you've come across in the school system. It's important for Devin to develop good social skills. It's crucial that he develop good manners so that he'll have a better chance being accepted by his non-autistic peers. He needs to be able to build community with others and table manners are a big part of that. We do wonder if Devin gets coddled during meals at home based on the way he reacts when it's time to eat in school. As soon as he sees his food, he aggressively grabs for it. Once he has his food, he stuffs it in his mouth and gets it all over himself at the table. He hates using spoons, but prefers to use his fingers when eating things like mashed potatoes or pudding. These types of things make other children laugh

because it looks funny to them to see food smushed all over their friend's face. The staff does their best to keep the children from laughing because it makes Devin upset. But it also makes it harder to keep them all focused on finishing their food. It's hard to get children not to giggle at something that naturally looks funny. Our goal overall is to ensure that Devin understands how to wait for his food and to pace himself while eating. We only suggested the timer because research shows that it helps autistic children learn how to pace themselves instead of rushing to eat. I'm sure you'd be upset if Devin choked and we want to avoid that as well.

Lorig Charkoudian>> So in thinking about what feelings are expressed by the special education teacher in this case, we have these options here of pity, sad, protective, amused, challenged, worried, and grateful. So if you want to take a minute to figure out which ones of these you would reflect consistent with the Inclusive Listening approach. You can pause it for a second. We're going to shift to the next screen now. And we've got sad, protective, challenged, and worried as the feelings that were expressed by the teacher. And we're going to take a look at the next one which talks about why pity, amused and grateful would not be what the speaker expressed. So pity was not really expressed. That would be an opinion if you were to say well she pities the parent. Amused is another one where she talked about the children feeling amused and so again, sometimes people will hear a feeling word in the context of something that was said, but it's a commentary that they're making about other people and so it wouldn't be something that you would reflect back to them. And gratitude was not expressed by the teacher.

Now we're going to take a look at the same scenario and again we're looking at values and what do you hear in terms of the values, what's important to both of them. Now I get to be the people involved. So I will be the mother now in this case the guardian. So again it's the same one, but I'm going to read it again because what we're trying to support through the practice is listening to somebody talking and out of what you're hearing can we pull out the values now. When you do this

of course in real life you're pulling all three; feelings, values, and topics at the same time. But breaking this down for practice. Now you're listening just for what's important to the parent here.

You people are unbelievable. I'm not stupid. I'm aware of all the research about the racial disparities in autism care. People who look like us have way less access to care and I am not just some emotional Latino woman. I am a concerned guardian. When my sister died giving birth to my nephew, I vowed to take care of him. This school system has made it very hard to do that. In pre-K when Devin had obvious speech delays, I was told not to worry and that he'd be talking much better by the time he was in kindergarten. Last year when he got to kindergarten and had problems engaging with his classmates, I was told he had emotional problems because his mom was not alive. As if I wasn't giving him a loving home. Finally, I got an advocate, got him tested and found out that he's autistic. Now you people are telling me to set up a timer while he eats, make him wait for food and some other crazy stuff just because you don't want to monitor him properly at lunch and snack time. I'm doing my job at home and I need you to do your job at school. I send the food that he likes, even though it's extra work every night. There's no need for you all to label him and blame him with bad table manners just because you want to control him. And it's unacceptable that you're letting his classmates tease him for how he eats. Yes, he gets messy. If people were assisting him during his meals, he'd be a lot less messy. As it stands, some inept lunch aid calls me at work every day because Devin gets upset while he's eating. This doesn't happen at home and I never hear Ashley's mom talking about her autistic daughter hating mealtime at school. I doubt that it's a coincidence that Ashley's a precious little white girl.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So the choices for value language in Inclusive Listening would be peace at work, attentiveness, research -- well, the choices -- research, responsibility, good parenting, equality, and accountability. So you can pause it if you want to take a minute to jot down the ones you think would be valued. And so the values expressed were attentiveness, research,

responsibility, equality and accountability were the things that the guardian expressed were important to her.

And then the things that aren't expressed; peace at work would be an opinion because you heard her say that she gets a call from the lunch aid every day, but she didn't express that it was about peace being important to her. And then again, good parenting we talked about earlier would be your judgment about what is good or bad and it's vague. It's not specifically saying what about parenting this guardian is saying would be important to her.

Lorig Charkoudian>> Now again we're going to do the same thing in terms of practicing listening to the special ed teacher and what you're listening for again is now what is important to the speaker using value language. It's terrible that you and Devin didn't receive services much earlier in his life. It's unfair that you had that experience on top of losing your sister. We applaud you for stepping in to raise your nephew as your own son. But we need you to believe us when we say that we are not like the other people you've come across in the school system. It's important for Devin to develop good social skills. It's crucial that he develop good manners so that he'll have a better chance being accepted by his non-autistic peers. He needs to be able to build community with others and table manners are a big part of that. We do wonder if Devin gets coddled during meals at home based on the way he reacts when it's time to eat in school. As soon as he sees his food, he aggressively grabs for it. Once he has his food, he stuffs it in his mouth and gets it all over himself at the table. He hates using spoons, but prefers to use his fingers when eating things like mashed potatoes or pudding. These types of things make other children laugh because it looks funny to them to see food smushed all over their friend's face. The staff does their best to keep the children from laughing because it makes Devin upset. But it also makes it harder to keep all of them focused on finishing their food. It's hard to get children not to giggle at something that naturally looks funny to them. Our goal overall is to ensure that Devin understands how to wait for his food and to pace

himself while eating. We only suggested the timer because research shows that it helps autistic children learn how to pace themselves instead of rushing to eat. I'm sure you'd be upset if Devin choked and we would want to avoid that as well.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So the actions are trust, pacing, humor, patience, obedience, community, acceptance, research, not spoiling children, and safety. So you can pause here if you want to take a minute to jot down what you got. And so the values that were expressed using Inclusive Listening would be trust is important to this teacher, pacing, patience, community, acceptance, research and also Devin's safety. So the things that would not be, humor wasn't expressed as something that was important to the teacher. We did hear the person talk about the children being entertained by something or thinking something was funny but the person did not say the humor was important to them. And then obedience would also be your assumption because this is a grownup talking about what they are hoping that a child would do and what they're trying to help a child do. So it would be your assumption that they want the child and that it's about obedience, but that wasn't specifically expressed by the teacher. And then again, not spoiling children. You heard them talk about they wonder if Devin is coddled at home. They didn't specifically talk about not spoiling children being something that was important to them. So that would be your analysis and opinion of the situation.

Lorig Charkoudian>> The other reason, even if the teacher had said it's important not to spoil children, we would not be reflecting back in the context of Inclusive Listening, not spoiling children because the idea is to focus on what does somebody want and since they don't want them spoiled. What is it they want? Is it about accountability, is it about learning, is it about responsibility. We wouldn't ever frame value as what someone doesn't want. We're framing it in terms of what the goal is and what they do want.

Erricka Bridgeford>> Okay, so we're moving onto topics and just like before, we aren't going to read the event again. But now we're focusing on the things they said that they had conflict about. So your choices for the guardian are racism, Devin's treatment, meals, lunch aid, and communication between students. So we're looking for the things that they talked about that would pass the topics grinder. So you can pause here if you want to take a minute to see what you get. So things that do pass the grinder, we have meals and communication with students were things that the guardian talked about -- communication between students.

And then moving onto things that were not topics; so racism is not specific, what about it would you be talking about but also it's loaded, it blames someone for being racist. Again, Devin's treatment is not specific. What things about his treatment are you talking about? And then lunch aid blames the lunch aid and takes the side of the person who's speaking who's angry at the lunch aid. So you want to pull out what are the things that are happening that the person has conflict about.

Lorig Charkoudian>> I'll just make a quick comment about the racism and just to be clear. The reason that it's not a topic is not because we don't want to touch the concept of racism because it might be hot or a difficult conversation to have. It's not a topic just because it's not specific, right, and because it blames somebody. So the way that that would get handled is we have parts of it are handled and captured in feelings. Do you remember back when we talked about -- trying to get back there quickly -- back when we talked about feeling judged and misunderstood were some of the stuff about how she felt misunderstood and judged in terms of the way that she felt people were seeing her in terms of her race and her culture and how it played out. And then we talk about it again when there's this reference to equality when she's talking about how Ashley gets treated and how her son gets treated. But if we feel like those two aren't sufficient to capture it and they don't really capture what it is that's going on for her, we're still not going to name racism as a topic. What

we're going to do and this gets into a much bigger piece that we're not really covering in this webinar, but what we would do with it is we would ask more questions.

So we would do the reflection. It sounds like if you're feeling judged and misunderstood and you talk about equality being important and what's happening for Ashley and what's happening for Devin, and you said you felt like race may have something to do with it and can you say more about that. And then in those answers, we're going to continue to listen deeply for what are the feelings, what are the values, what are the topics. But we're not going to make racism broadly as a topic, again not because we're afraid to touch it because we absolutely want to open it up as a dialogue, but just because in and of itself isn't a topic because it's not specific. It doesn't give us something really specific to work on.

So maybe that's a topic for another webinar. We'd be happy to do that one, too. But we're going to move on now and we're going to take a look at what are the topics that are included in the conversation from the special ed teacher.

Erricka Bridgeford>> So your choices are manners, meals, using spoons, communication between students, and timer. So you can pause here if you want to take a minute before we move on. And then the topics that pass the grinder are meals and communication between students. Moving to the things that would not be topics in Inclusive Listening would be manners because it's not specific, it takes the side about that Devin should use manners or learn manners so it's not specific about what it is you want to know about -- you want to make plans about in relation to manners. That's a really broad thing. Using spoons is someone's suggestion about what should happen in relation to meals. And so it blames if you're saying that Devin doesn't use spoons and it also takes the side that he should and it sets up because it's somebody's idea and suggestion about what should happen around meals which is the topic there, it sets up a yes he should use spoons and no he shouldn't use spoons. And then timer is the same thing. So timer was a specific suggestion that

they made in relation to meals as a topic and so it takes the side of the person who has the idea and it sets up a yes or no about whether or not there should be a timer used on meals or whether there shouldn't be.

Lorig Charkoudian>> So what you can do now, we're close to wrapping up this piece of the webinar, but what you can do now is that you can go back to the earlier webinars and you can see the pieces we talked about the second webinar that we did talked about how you put all the pieces together and how do you actually do the reflection once you've got the feelings, values and topics. So at this point in front of you, you should have, for both of these two separate events, you should have the feelings, values and topics for each person and what you can do is you can take a look at that and now practice giving the reflections that you might give to the individuals involved in these situations.

And so we're going to wrap that up and we hope this has been helpful and happy to continue the dialogue and hope to see folks at conference or trainings around the country and continue to stay in touch. I think there's information also about how to reach us through our website and hope this has been helpful.

Erricka Bridgeford>> Thanks for having us, have a great day.

Lorig Charkoudian>> Erricka and Lorig, on behalf of CADRE we want to thank you again for sharing your expertise and wise thinking on this very important topic and it's very much appreciated.

Thank you again and everybody for joining us.