

RENEW *Resources*

Table of Contents

Health Literacy	3
Words matter - How do you make sure participants know what they have to do to get benefits? (December 2016)	3
Counseling	4
Top 10 Mistakes in Behavior Change – February 2017	4
Need Inspiration? Heartbutton Counseling – June 2017	4
For best results – Teach-Back! – July 2017	5
5 Levels of Listening – July 2018	5
Salud staff use AIDET to improve participant experience – January 2018.....	6
Social Determinants of Health	6
What is Health Equity? – April 2017	6
Watch this powerful 3-minute video about Jeff and Chad to get an illustration of how our life situation can impact our health.....	6
Connections between racism and health – May 2018.....	6
Food Insecurity in Oregon – June 2018	7
Brain Science	7
Vroom – July 2017	7
The Power of Connection – October 2017.....	7
Are you mind full or mindful at work? – November 2017	8
How can you practice mindfulness? – November 2017	8
CDC’s Free Milestone Tracker App – December 2017.....	9
Building Core Capabilities for Life – February 2018	9
I’m glad you asked-self care – December 2017.....	10
How does your brain work? – June 2018.....	10
What is unconscious bias and what can we do about it? – February 2018.....	11
Summer Fun with Vroom! – July 2018.....	12

Trauma and Resilience Informed Practices 12

 Talking with children about tragedies in the news – October 2017 12

 Brains: Journey to Resilience – January 2018 13

 Everyday leadership – June 2018..... 13

 Strategies for Building Resilience – May 2018 14

Renew Review Activities

Participant Centered Services Resources on Our Webpage (January 2018) 15

[Implicit Bias](#) (February 2018)..... 16

Video Review and Observation Guide (March 2018)..... 17

Key points to writing a good Next Step (April 2018)..... 19

Judgment and Assumptions (May 2018)..... 21

The Righting Reflex (June 2018)..... 23

Time Orientation (July 2018)..... 24

Resilience and Self Care Plan (August 2018) 25

Statewide Meetings..... 26

Training provided..... 26

Strategies and Skill Building 27

WIC Link Articles

Health Literacy

Words matter - How do you make sure participants know what they have to do to get benefits? (December 2016)

We spend a lot of time talking to participants, but sometimes we use words that are hard for them to understand. If you didn't work for WIC, would you know what these words mean?

- NE or Nutrition Ed
- Online Ed or class
- Certification or cert period
- Recert or recertification
- Mid-cert health assessment
- High risk
- Proofs
- Eligibility pending
- Benefits or eWIC card
- Med doc form
- Food list or approved food

Not understanding any one of these words or phrases could mean someone not getting benefits in a month. It might be especially hard if a family has any kind of language barrier.

Think about:

- What words could you use instead?
- How might you explain what is expected?
- How can you help them with “when” something needs to happen?



Counseling

[Top 10 Mistakes in Behavior Change – February 2017](#)

By Dana Sturtevant, M.S., R.D. at [Be Nourished](#)

Behavior change is a process, and people often approach change from all the wrong angles. BJ Fogg, a Stanford University professor, talks about 10 mistakes people make when trying to change their behavior:

1. Relying on willpower for long-term change. Imagine willpower doesn't exist. That's step #1 to a better future.
2. Attempting big leaps instead of baby steps. Seek tiny successes, one after another. No need to check all the boxes.
3. Ignoring how environment shapes behavior. When context changes, lives can change.
4. Trying to stop old behaviors instead of creating new ones. Focus on the addition of new behaviors, not avoidance.
5. Blaming failures on lack of motivation. Solution: Make the behavior easier to do.
6. Underestimating the power of triggers. No behavior happens without a trigger.
7. Believing that information leads to action. We humans aren't so rational. We are emotional beings with a history of surviving and coping. Trust the wisdom in the room.
8. Focusing on abstract goals more than concrete behaviors. Abstract goal: move more. Concrete behavior: walk for 15 minutes today.
9. Seeking to change a behavior forever, not for a short time. A fixed period works better than forever.
10. Assuming that behavior change is difficult. Behavior change is not so hard when you have the right process. Lead with kindness and compassion.

One thing we notice is how people (and health care providers) get hung up on #7. We think if we read another book, or if someone tells us what to do, that will help us change. And while knowledge is important in the change process, it is not enough. Transformation doesn't happen in the head.

For example, you can read every book ever written about playing the guitar and you still can't play the guitar. You can talk to your therapist about how badly you want to be able to play that guitar, and it doesn't mean you can play the guitar. You have to pick the guitar up, and play it. And at first, it is messy, clunky, and it sounds like crap. But if you keep picking up the guitar and practicing, it gets easier over time. The same is true for becoming an intuitive eater. It takes time and practice.

[Need Inspiration? Heartbutton Counseling – June 2017](#)

[Heartbutton Counseling](#) has produced 4 wonderful videos on how counseling in the WIC program has the power to change lives. Scroll to the bottom of the page to watch:

- The WIC Story
- Wake the Dream
- Palindrome
- The Power of WIC

For best results – Teach-Back! – July 2017



Josephine County recently completed a continuous quality improvement project looking at FDNF coupon redemption. Glenda Taylor, WIC Lead, says one of the big take aways from the participants interviewed was that sometimes they didn't use the Farm Direct checks because they didn't understand or remember how to shop with them. Even though WIC staff cover this information, it didn't sink in. This season, JoCo WIC staff plan to use the **teach-back method** to make sure Farm Direct recipients can explain back to them how to go about shopping with the checks.

What is a Teach-back?

A teach-back is a way to make sure you explained information clearly. **It is not a test or quiz of participants.** It allows you to check for understanding and re-explain if necessary.

5 things to do when using teach-back method

1. Use a caring voice and simple language
2. Take responsibility - emphasize that you are checking to make sure you explained it well
3. Use non-shaming, open-ended questions
4. Ask the participant to explain back, using their own words (maybe ask them how they would tell others in their family how to use the checks or eWIC card)
5. If the participant is not able to teach-back correctly, apologize for the confusion and explain it again, then re-check

Watch a short video to learn more about Teach-Back!

[Short video](#) [Shorter video](#)

5 Levels of Listening – July 2018

Listening is fundamental to understanding participant needs. How well do you listen? Read to find out if you:

- Listen for the gist;
- Listen to rebut;
- Listen for logic;
- Listen for emotion; or,
- Listen for their point of view.

Salud staff use AIDET to improve participant experience – January 2018

Salud has trained all their staff to use AIDET when talking with participants. AIDET is an acronym for a powerful framework that can be used to communicate clearly with participants. When WIC staff are transparent, anxiety and stress are reduced. Salud even drafted scripts for staff to use in different situations. Here are the AIDET components:



Acknowledge

- Greet people with a smile
- Use their name if possible

Introduce

- Tell them who you are and how you are going to help them
- Escort them rather than pointing or giving directions
- Tell them who they will be seeing if possible

Duration

- Stress is less when you know about how long it will take
- Let people know if there is a delay
- Offer a chance to reschedule if needed

Explanation

- Explain what will happen
- Ask if they have questions

Thank you

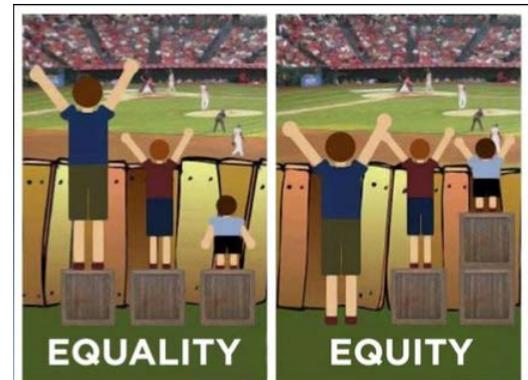
- Share the attitude of gratitude

What would AIDET sound like in your clinic?
Check out this [video](#)!

Social Determinants of Health

What is Health Equity? – April 2017

Watch this powerful 3-minute video about [Jeff and Chad](#) to get an illustration of how our life situation can impact our health.



Connections between racism and health – May 2018

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has launched a webpage called "[Race, Racism and Health](#)" to collect resources and research examining the connections between race, racism, and health in the United States, including blog posts, reports, and program updates.

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/racism-and-health.html>

[Food Insecurity in Oregon – June 2018](#)

A [recent article](#) from the Oregon Center for Public Policy highlights how food insecurity is impacting Oregon families.

Brain Science

[Vroom – July 2017](#)



[Vroom by Text](#)

Vroom brain building tips are now available via text message! Each week, Vroom will send a tip to make any moment with a child a brain building one. Participants can learn more by texting CHILD to 48258 or fill out the [online form](#).

[Vroom Aha Moments](#)

Definition: a moment of sudden insight or discovery, or awareness related to Vroom and its resources.



Check out the Vroom ideas and graphics to share on this website from [ChildCare Aware of America](#).

[The Power of Connection – October 2017](#)

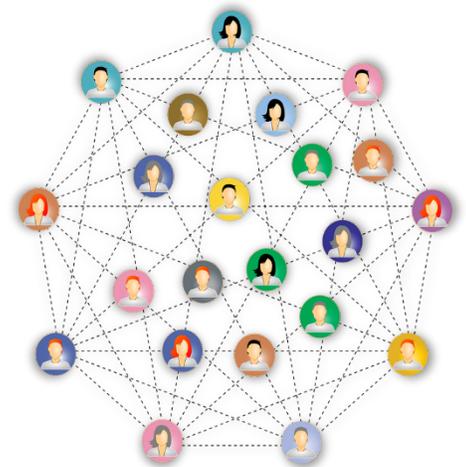
“I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.”

Dr. Brene Brown

Working in WIC can be hard sometimes. We know that much of the resilience we need to work in WIC comes from the connections mentioned by Dr. Brown. One skill we practice in WIC that supports us making connections is active listening. But in a busy clinic, sometimes it is hard to listen.

An article in *LinkedIn Daily Rundown* asked “Why are we [lonely at work](#)?”

Multitasking, [says author and leadership expert Dave Crenshaw](#). “While dozens of technology tools should help us communicate in more personal ways, they do not. Instead, they often isolate people,” he explains. Workers are in the habit of “switchtasking” (the reality of multitasking), moving from activity to activity — and we carry that over into communication. But you can unlearn the habit: Try to consciously slow your brain down while speaking with someone and focus on the conversation. “When you do this, jumping in and out of email whilst having a conversation with a coworker, you are conditioning your mind to view human beings as nothing more than vending machines.”



Are you mind full or mindful at work? – November 2017



Do you ever find yourself thinking about what happened at home before work, worrying about the next appointment, **AND** trying to focus on the needs of the WIC family in front of you, all at the same time? Stress much? How can we do anything well with so much going on in our heads? Add to that world events, it's no wonder the American Psychological Association found an increase in Americans' stress levels. Our constant checking of smartphones - with the bombardment of news and social media - can amp up our anxiety.

Being mindful and practicing mindfulness is one way to change that. Mindfulness doesn't require any special equipment, reading or traveling – it's a practice you can start today. Practicing mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress, improve health, and make us better at our jobs.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. When you're mindful, you carefully observe your thoughts and feelings without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to your current experience, rather than dwelling on the past or anticipating the future.

How can you practice mindfulness? – November 2017

Breathe!

There's an app for that!

- Why not use your device to help you disconnect and be more mindful?

Practice gratitude

- Each day, think of 3 things you are grateful for: nature, people, etc.
- Start a gratitude journal: making a commitment to writing down good things each day makes it more likely that we will notice good things as they happen.
- Practice gratitude rituals: when you wake up, saying grace before a meal, etc.

Watch a video

- Mindfulness as a superpower
(Bad word warning!)
- Meditation 101: a beginner's guide

Visit a website

- Science-based happiness (yes, the website is Happify.com)
- Mindfulness exercises to try



[CDC's Free Milestone Tracker App – December 2017](#)



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention just launched *CDC's Milestone Tracker* – a free app for tracking every child's development in a fun and easy way. This app adds to the popular suite of free, family-friendly materials available through CDC's [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#) program.

“Skills like taking a first step, saying those first words, and waving ‘bye-bye’ are developmental milestones all parents anticipate and celebrate,” said CDC Director Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D. “This CDC Milestone Tracker app gives parents tips to help their child learn and grow, a way to track developmental milestones, recognize delays, and the ability to share this information with their healthcare provider.”

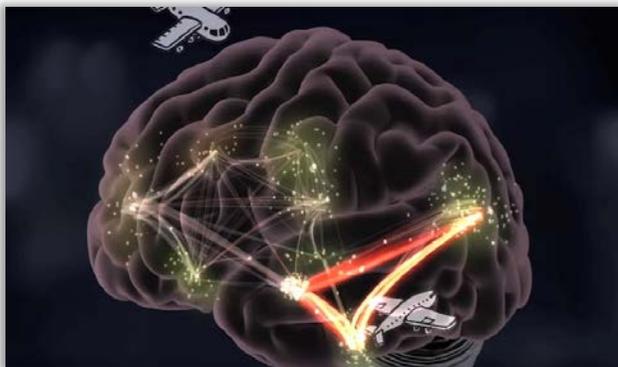
The new app offers

- Interactive milestone checklists for children ages 2 months through 5 years, illustrated with photos and videos
- Tips and activities to help children learn and grow
- Information on when to act early and talk with a doctor about developmental delays
- A personalized milestone summary that can be easily shared with the doctor and other care providers
- Reminders for appointments and developmental screening

Learn more and get information on downloading the app at [CDC's Milestone Tracker website](#). The app is available in the [App Store](#) and on [Google Play](#).

This app isn't just for parents! You can use it to engage families in monitoring their child's developmental progress.

[Building Core Capabilities for Life – February 2018](#)



Every day we take on the ordinary, sometimes challenging, tasks of work, school, parenting, relationships, and managing our busy lives. How do we navigate these tasks successfully? What can send us off course? This new 5-minute video explores the development and use of core capabilities—known as [executive function and self-regulation](#) skills—from early childhood into adolescence and adulthood.

[View the video](#)

[What is unconscious bias and what can we do about it? – February 2018](#)

Mavel Morales, Office of Equity and Inclusion, Oregon Health Authority

Most people believe that they are open-minded, fair, and not influenced by differences that do not matter: We evaluate and react to those around us without regard to race, age, gender disability status, or other characteristic. But do we?

Maybe. However, most people do not realize that our biases and preferences—unconscious or not—are part of who we are, the decisions we make, and the actions we take.

What is unconscious bias? As [this article in The Atlantic](#) points out, "it's possible to act in prejudicial ways while sincerely rejecting prejudiced ideas." That's the definition of unconscious bias. The fact that you have unconscious bias does not mean you are good or bad, prejudiced or unprejudiced, fair or unfair.

But the results can be unfair. Studies demonstrate bias across nearly every field and for nearly every group of people:

- If you're Latino or Latina, you'll get less pain medication than if you're a white patient.
- If you're an elderly woman, you'll receive fewer life-saving interventions than if you're an elderly man.
- If you are being evaluated for a job as a lab manager, you will be given more mentorship, judged as more capable, and offered a higher starting salary if you're a man than if you are a woman.
- If your child is obese, their teacher is more likely to assume they are less intelligent than if they are slim.
- If you are a black student, you are more likely to be punished for the same behavior than if you are a white student.

The term itself can trigger reactions. It is sometimes misunderstood or miscast as "political correctness." But everyone has unconscious bias; that does not mean that everyone is prejudiced or a bigot.

The good news is that just because we have it now, doesn't mean we can't address it. We can and should.

Mindfulness of the following actions may have a profound impact:

1. Become aware of one's unconscious bias.
2. Be concerned about the consequences of the bias.
3. Learn to replace the biased response with non-prejudiced responses—ones that more closely match the values you consciously believe and want to hold.

Unconscious Bias Resources Self-Assessment

[What can I do about bias?](#) An "implicit association" test from Kirwan Institute

[Harvard's Project Implicit](#) An implicit association test from Harvard University.

Summer Fun with Vroom! – July 2018



If you're looking for fun, brain-building activities for families to try this summer, suggest giving the free VROOM app a try! VROOM has over 1,000 science-based activities for parents of children ages 0-5 that are perfect for creating fun moments at the grocery store, farmers market, or just about anywhere. VROOM has created a whole set of activities in partnership with WIC that deal with food and playtime, available in English [here](#) and Spanish [here](#), all of which can be easily accessed by downloading the VROOM app today. Check out the activity below and see how a trip to the grocery store or farmers market can be used to

help kids think like scientists! The VROOM app is available for free on Android and iPhone and can also be accessed on the VROOM website at www.vroom.org. Everyone has what it takes to be a brain-builder and VROOM can help!

 Comparison Shopping The grocery store can be a great place to build your child's brain on the go. Give them a banana and an apple to hold. "Which is heavier? Which is larger? Which is softer?" You can do this with any items, in any aisle. Or even in any store! Ages 3-4  vroom.org	 Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making Games like these help your child to think like a scientist because they're observing the world around them and making guesses about how things compare or fit together. Repeat the game a few times with different foods for them to compare. Remember, repetition is how we learn! For more activities like these, check out the free Vroom app! #257
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Learn more about Vroom and WIC [here!](#)

Trauma and Resilience Informed Practices

Talking with children about tragedies in the news – October 2017

We can support our families' resilience by helping them talk with their children about what they hear in the news.

- [Helping children cope: Tips for talking about tragedy](#) (featured on our Facebook page)
- [How to talk to your children about tragedies in the news](#) (JAMA)
- [Talking to children about tragedies and other news events](#) (AAP)

[Brains: Journey to Resilience – January 2018](#)



Can WIC make a difference in a child's brain development?

Absolutely!

One of the things that we are learning from our work with Vroom and Adverse Childhood Experiences is that every positive event in a child's life will help them develop the resilience needed to handle whatever comes their way. WIC can be a positive support for families and WIC staff can model the power of

healing relationships for caregivers.

Alberta Family Wellness Initiative has posted a fun video from *Palix Foundation* that illustrates how this can work.

“Let [Brains: Journey to Resilience](#) take you on an adventure where heroic brains inch across snowy landscapes, where perils lurk in every shadow, and where one community will rally behind a struggling brain—and just might change the world in the process. Learn about the resilience scale in this scientifically rigorous (and cinematically epic) video created by the AFWI in consultation with the FrameWorks Institute and the Harvard Center on the Developing Child.”

[Everyday leadership – June 2018](#)

Drew Dudley's world-famous TED talk shows us how each of us can make a difference in someone else's life in unexpected ways. Watch this to learn about creating [lollipop moments](#).

Strategies for Building Resilience – May 2018

Provided by Cascade Centers EAP



Resilience is the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy or significant stress. Resilient people don't dwell on failures; they acknowledge the situation, learn from their mistakes, and then move forward.

Here are some strategies for building resilience:

- Nurture a positive view of yourself. Develop confidence in your ability to solve problems and trust your instincts.
- Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable

problems. We can't always prevent stressful events from happening, but we can change how we interpret and respond to these events.

- Accept that change is a part of living. Certain goals no longer may be attainable as a result of adverse situations but acceptance can help you focus on circumstances you can affect.
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship report better relationships, a greater sense of strength, an increased sense of self-worth and a greater appreciation for life.
- Make connections. Good relationships with family, friends or others are important. Accept help and support from those who care about you.
- Maintain a hopeful outlook. An optimistic outlook enables you to expect good things to happen in your life
- Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities you enjoy and find relaxing such as exercising, getting enough sleep, eating a healthful diet and limiting alcohol consumption.

RENEW *Review*

January 2018

Renew counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

The goal for the Renew initiative in 2018 is to support WIC staff in providing nutrition-focused services that acknowledge and accommodate the unique circumstances of individual families. We will re-focus on participant centered services (PCS). This year we plan to send out a short Renew Review activity each month, that will give you a chance to reflect on PCS skills that help us in our work. Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

Participant Centered Services Resources on Our Webpage

What PCS skill would you like to improve? Reflections, Summaries? Something else? There are lots of resources on the PCS webpage that might remind you of something to try with participants.

Review Activity:

1. Check out the resources on the [PCS webpage](#).
2. Which resource would you like to review?
3. How will you practice that skill for the next week?
4. Share with a co-worker how that went. What went well? What would you do differently?

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity:

1. Watch a video about bias. Here are several good options:
 - a. [We all have implicit biases](#). So what can we do about it? | Dushaw Hockett | TEDxMidAtlanticSalon
 - b. [Are you biased?](#) I am | Kristen Pressner | TEDxBasel
 - c. [Implicit Bias](#) -- how it effects us and how we push through | Melanie Funchess | TEDxFlourCity

2. Implicit biases are pervasive—we all have them. Our brain creates stereotypes in order to establish patterns which create shortcuts for our brain. These stereotypes can be positive towards certain groups and negative about others. What are some stereotypes that might exist within the WIC world?

3. How might bias impact interactions with participants in these situations?
 - Caregiver who uses marijuana
 - Overweight child
 - Overweight pregnant woman
 - Caregiver who puts soda in bottle
 - Mom who is breastfeeding after age 2
 - Interacting with a person who isn't your race
 - Caregiver who ignores child during appointment. The child is screaming and making a mess in the clinic.

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency. Talk about what you learn with a colleague.

RENEW Review Activity:

Observing the counseling style and skills of others can help us improve our own counseling. A few brave WIC counselors agreed to be recorded so you can observe them. The recordings are of actual WIC appointments, so you will see staff putting their participant centered counseling skills into practice, which is not easy when being filmed! You are encouraged to reflect on skills you can begin to use in your own counseling, as well as things you might do differently, both of which help us learn. As you watch these recordings, let kindness and empathy, not criticism, guide your reflections and discussions.

1. Pick one of these 2 recordings to watch.
 - a. Michelle from Salud: follow-up RD appointment (14:06) <https://youtu.be/PJT2tN45zyM>
 - b. Karrie from Multnomah certifying a 1-year old (20:28) https://youtu.be/2kVPDdvp_9w
2. Use the RENEW Observation Guide on the next page for ideas on what to watch for and make note of examples you heard—or didn't hear.
3. Discuss what you observed and learned with a colleague.
4. Reflect on the following:
 - a. What change talk did you hear from the participant?
 - b. What participant centered counseling skills did you hear?
 - c. What missed opportunities, if any, did you notice?
 - d. Thinking about what was discussed at the recent RENEW training, what might you do differently?

RENEW Observation Guide

Some Skills to Listen and Watch for:	Observations: Specific examples you heard or observed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the participant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introductions ✓ Sets agenda • Focus the appointment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completes assessment ✓ Listens first – before sharing ✓ Open-Ended Questions ✓ Affirmations ✓ Reflections ✓ Summaries ✓ Tracks potential topics for counseling ✓ Prioritizes what topics to explore • Evoke change talk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allows time for participant to talk ✓ Reflects change talk ✓ Explore – offer – explore ✓ Asks permission to share information with participant ✓ Provides nutrition-focused counseling • Plans with participant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Works with the participant to develop an actionable next step/plan ✓ Summarizes the next step for the participant ✓ Documents the plan ✓ Shares hopes for a positive health outcome <p>Other?</p>	

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency. Talk about what you learn with a colleague.

RENEW Review Activity: Key points to writing a good Next Step

1. Nutrition-focused counseling helps the participant decide what changes they are ready to make that will improve their health. Using Explore – Offer – Explore will allow the participant to figure out how they can accomplish that change.
 - a. **Explore** what they already know or have tried
 - b. **Offer** your suggestions
 - c. **Explore** what they think of your suggestions, the barriers to taking the step, and what they want to do
2. Use what you hear from them during Explore – Offer – Explore to formulate a next step to reflect back to the participant.
 - a. The next step should be specific, realistic and include an action (verb).
 - b. A good next step helps address the barriers that might come up and can be accomplished within the cert period. That is the difference between a specific next step and a “goal.”
3. Ask if you got it all, to allow the participant a chance to agree with the next step you reflected or to make changes to it.
 - a. The next step will be from ideas from the participant, but does not have to be specifically stated by them. In other words, you don’t have to ask them what they want you to write as a next step.
4. Document the specific next step in TWIST – including the verb!
 - a. Each next step is a single activity, rather than combining 2 onto one line.
 - b. Documentation helps the next WIC team member when they see the participant at other times during the certification.
 - c. The status on next steps can be updated or new steps added at quarterly nutrition education and mid-cert health assessments.

Example:

Old way: Increase milk and veggies.

New way: 1. Mom will decrease milk to 16 oz per day by offering water in the cup between meals.
2. Mom will offer 3 veggies each day by including them in snack, lunch and dinner.

Practice – watch a video

Watch Leah from Linn Co. – <https://youtu.be/ARa9wGIrGp4> The video is 35 minutes long, and at about minute 16 you will see Leah use Explore-Offer-Explore to set a next step.

- A. How did Leah’s process compare to the key points listed above?
- B. What, if anything, would you do differently?

Practice – write

Take the next steps below and re-write them to be specific, realistic, and action oriented.

BF to 6 months	
Increase yogurt	
Wean from bottle	
Eat more veggies	
Decrease juice	

Practice – five-day focus

Pick 5 days to focus on how you are writing and updating next steps.

- A. Start by looking at the next steps in the TWIST records of participants you see. How well can you understand what the participant is specifically working on based on what is written?
- B. Update the status of that next step if needed.
- C. Write a new next step that builds on what they worked on before and is based on what they talked with you about during today’s nutrition-focused counseling.

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity: Judgment and Assumptions

A basic principle of providing participant centered and trauma informed services is to avoid being judgmental. But why is it so hard to avoid? Sometimes we can't even tell that we are being judgmental. We explored the role of **implicit bias** and judgment in the [February RENEW Review Activity](#).

Making **assumptions** is often another part of being judgmental. The **Ladder of Inference** is one way to look at how our assumptions can lead us to making a judgment that may be inaccurate.

1. Watch a video about the ladder of inference. Here are several good options:
 - a. [Rethinking thinking](#) / Trevor Maber / TedEd
 - b. [Ladder of Inference – listening skills](#) / Christina Gardner
 - c. [Ladder of Inference Tool of the Month](#) / Labor Management Initiatives
2. The Ladder of Inference describes how we take what we see and hear and then tell ourselves a story that makes sense of the information that we have taken in. It is human nature to do this, but it can sometimes lead us to incorrect conclusions. Have you heard the saying “Don’t judge a book by its cover”? Think of a situation where what you assumed was true turned out to be wrong. What led you to make that assumption to begin with?
3. Once you realize that you may have made an assumption, try these 3 steps to avoid being judgmental. Each step might help you climb back down the Ladder of Inference. How would these steps have affected the situation you thought of earlier?
 - a. Ask yourself if there could be any other reason for what you see or hear.
 - b. Don’t take it personally. You probably aren’t the reason for the persons actions.
 - c. Use your PCE skills to explore what has happened to the person.
4. [Watch this video](#) about the internal struggles that may influence how someone acts, then use the activity on the next page to practice checking your assumptions.

Case studies: Checking your assumptions

- A. Kara comes into your office with her baby and her toddler. She is constantly looking at her phone and doesn't seem to be paying any attention to you or your questions. She seems distracted. When you smile and say hello, she asks you how long this will take.
- Thinking of the ladder of inference, what might be your assumption about Kara and her phone? What judgment might you make about her? How might you take it personally?
 - What might be another reason for Kara's focus on her phone?
 - What PCE skill might you use to explore what has happened to Kara?
- B. Silas brings his step-son Bradley to your office for an appointment. Silas is wearing dirty jeans and smells like cigarette smoke. He isn't the second cardholder and gets angry when he is told that we need to contact Bradley's mom to verify information and add him as a second cardholder. Silas says "I'm a lot more of a father to this kid than the deadbeat dad!"
- Thinking of the ladder of inference, what might be your assumption about Silas? What judgment might you make about him? How might you take it personally?
 - What might be another reason for Silas' frustration?
 - What PCE skill might you use to explore what has happened to Silas?
- C. Mindy brings in her 3-year-old daughter Taffy for a certification. This is the third time this certification has been scheduled. Taffy has sticky hands and a messy face, evidence of a recent candy bar. Taffy is whiny and keeps begging mom to give her a drink of the soda that Mindy has with her. Mindy tells her no, but eventually gives her the soda.
- Thinking of the ladder of inference, what might be your assumption about Mindy? What judgment might you make about her? How might you take it personally?
 - What might be another reason for Taffy's face and the soda?
 - What PCE skill might you use to explore what has happened to Mindy?

Quotes from Jodi Pfarr at the 2018 WIC Statewide Meeting:

"If we don't understand, we react or judge."

"James Comer says, 'No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship', and there will be no relationship if someone feels judged."

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity: The Righting Reflex

“Unsolicited advice is the junk mail of life.” Bern Williams

It is a common response to want to “make things right” when we see a problem. As WIC counselors it is normal to see what the participant needs to change to solve their problems. That is called the “righting reflex.” When we understand ambivalence, we understand that participant centered counseling does not persuade, cajole, prod, or try to convince the participant to fix something. Change must come from the participant’s own motivation.

1. Watch a video about the righting reflex. Here are several good options:
 - a. [The Righting Reflex](#) – Change Companies
 - b. [Righting Reflex](#) – William Miller, PhD.
 - c. [What is the Righting Reflex](#) – Mike Noetel, Sports Psychologist
2. Think of a time when you were telling someone (e.g. your mom, or your partner) about something frustrating or hard that happened at work, and they told you what you should do. What was your reaction? How did you respond to their advice?
3. Sometimes during counseling, we think a participant is being “resistant” to the suggestions we offer. It might look like a participant offering lots of “excuses” about why your idea won’t work. Think about a time that happened when you were providing counseling. Consider if your righting reflex (convincing, repeating, arguing, emphasizing) came out in that situation. How can you recognize your righting reflex? What is the difference between providing nutrition-focused counseling and the righting reflex?
4. Read Molly Kellogg’s ideas on how to tame our righting reflex in [Counseling Tip](#). Which strategies might work for you?
 - a. Acknowledge that you have this reflex. (It’s natural! It can be helpful)
 - b. Emphasize that it is always their choice.
 - c. Ask permission before offering advice or suggestions.
 - d. Use a summary or reflection so the participant hears their words and change talk, instead of yours.
 - e. Express confidence in the participant’s ability to succeed. (You’ve got this!)
 - f. What else?

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity:

Time Orientation - *"People living in poverty live with the tyranny of the moment."* Jodi Pfarr

Time orientation is one way of looking at attitudes towards time. While individuals vary, different cultures around the world tend to have similar time orientations. You can think of it as whether a culture focuses on the past, present or future. Besides just geographic culture, Jodi Pfarr pointed out the differences between the cultures of poverty, middle class, or wealth.

Most Americans, and especially middle or wealthy class people, tend to be future oriented. People who are future oriented value time and believe they have control over how they spend time. They believe that they can change the future based on how they use their time in the present. Future oriented people place value on being on time and using time "wisely."

People in certain cultures, such as poverty, are often present oriented and may feel like the past is past and they have no control over the future. They don't view time as a precious commodity. The only time that really matters is what is happening in the moment and how they can survive the present. Being a new parent may make a person more present oriented than they would be otherwise.

People who are past oriented are more likely to feel like it is important to learn lessons from the past, make decisions slowly, honor traditions, and do things the way they always have.

1. Watch a video about time orientation. Here are several options:
 - g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isPj5KgpVqg> Philip Zimbardo
 - h. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2sw-oRR2D8>
 - i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2u3ozvcFwBU>
2. Think about your time orientation. Would you consider yourself past, present or future oriented? Why?
3. How does a participant's time orientation influence the way they perceive the WIC program or interact with your program? How do your agency policies or practices reflect time orientation (e.g. policies around appointment times)?
4. Consider this quote: *"The past, present, future orientation of a culture is fundamental to its existence and almost impossible to reconcile with differently held views. Differently oriented cultures will view each other at best as quaint and foolish and, at worst, with considerable contempt."* Brett Rutledge, The Articulate CEO - What can you do to reconcile your views with those of other cultures? How can we honor those differing viewpoints in the WIC clinic?

RENEW *Review*

August 2018

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity:

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." ~ Nelson Mandela

Resilience and Self-Care Plan - By Melissa Soll, PhD

What is important to you in these self-care domains?

Physical

(Exercise, diet, sleep, hydration, lifestyle, etc.?)

-
-
-

Emotional/Mental

(Mindfulness, self-awareness, acts of self-kindness, counseling, etc.?)

-
-
-

Creative

(What do you love to do? Cooking, parenting, painting, sculpting, writing, etc.?)

-
-
-

Social

(Who provides you with support? Who helps you refill your cup when it is nearing empty? How do you achieve balance between giving and receiving?)

-
-
-

Spiritual

(Can you find some solace? How do you connect with nature? How do you make sense of things outside of our control?)

-
-
-

Other RENEW Resources

Statewide Meetings

- [Neurobiology of Kindness](#) – Maggie Bennington-Davis (September 2016)
- Bridges Out of Poverty – Jodi Pfarr (May 2018) See your conference packet.

Training provided

- [Using Vroom in WIC](#) in-service (March 2017)
- [Food Insecurity Training](#) (August 2017)
- [ACEs Online Course](#) (January 2018)
- [RENEW Regional Training](#) (March 2018)
- [Understanding Parenting Behaviors in-service](#) (June 2018)

Participant Centered Counseling – Strategies and Skill Building

Strategies to build your own resiliency and self-regulation skills

Trauma and resilience informed practice starts with us – we are role models for WIC participants.

- **Self-regulation** – Become aware of your *own* response to stress, so the situation does not escalate. When you remain calm, it helps others to calm down.
 - Identify your triggers and catalysts
 - Come up with a script or game plan for how to navigate situations that are difficult for you
- **Self-check** – What is going on with me?
 - Pause/breathe ...
 - What am I feeling?
 - How is my tone of voice?
 - What is my facial expression?
- **Practice awareness**
 - Learn to recognize the signs of resistance in others:
 - Participant’s face, body language, words and tone all provide clues
 - Participant stops talking or provides minimal responses only.
 - Participant interrupts you.
 - Participant seems distracted (looking at watch, cell phone, etc.).
 - Participant gets defensive.
 - Consider what’s happening in the room – What’s been said? What hasn’t been said?
- **Let go of what you are doing and refocus**
 - Turn away from computer
 - Attention on participant

Strategies that DON’T work

- **Sympathy (versus empathy)**
 - Sympathetic responses lead to *disconnection*. They minimize a person’s feelings, often causing the person to feel judged:
 - “At least you ...”
 - “I know exactly what you are feeling.”
 - “It will all work out for the best.”
 - “That happened to me, and here’s what I did.”
 - Providing unsolicited advice, opinions or platitudes rarely makes things better
 - *Empathy* fuels connection. It is choosing to take the perspective of another person, without judgment, recognizing the emotion present in the interaction, and communicating that understanding.
 - “That sounds really hard.”
 - “I don’t know what to say, but I am here to listen.”

- “I care about you, and what you’re feeling/experiencing.”
- **Righting reflex**
 - This is the desire to correct or change a participant’s situation or behavior, to fix something to make it better or “right”.
 - It can lead to arguing with the participant. Remember, asking a participant to change something usually causes the participant to keep voicing the reasons not to change.
 - In participant centered counseling, the counselor doesn’t try to change the participant’s behavior. It recognizes that change comes from the participant’s own intrinsic motivation.
 - Learn to recognize this righting reflex, override it, and *focus on the participant*.
- **Jumping to problem solving**
 - Although it is common to want to help a participant with a problem or situation, it is generally not helpful to offer solutions early in a conversation.
 - Instead, listen attentively, and let the participant take the driver’s seat. Wait until you are invited to provide solutions, or until it is appropriate to ask for permission to offer some ideas.
- **Telling your story**
 - Although you may have experienced something similar to what a participant has shared, this is not the time to tell *your* story. The intent of the interaction is to learn about the participant’s story, not to get side-tracked with yours.
- **Defending WIC**
 - Participants who are activated or upset may make statements that are not true. This is not the time to correct them.
 - Ignore such statements, rather than getting pulled into a defensive battle. Accurate information can be provided later, after the participant is calm and the stressful situation has been defused.
- **Persuasion**
 - It’s tempting to try to convince a participant to change a behavior or situation by explaining the reasons why they should, or by providing information on how to take action.
 - Persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence and will probably backfire on you. It often *increases* participant resistance and decreases the probability of change.
 - If it feels like you are doing a hard sell, redirect the conversation to the participant.

Strategies that DO work

- **Connect with emotions**
 - Acknowledge the feelings of the other person.
 - Empathy first, then logic. Listen to the concern, without judgment ... then explore further.
 - Why it works: You are connecting with the person’s right brain, which is calming. This brings the person into balance so they can be open to logic, information.
- **Name it to tame it**
 - Reflect the emotion
 - Ask them to tell you their story – “Tell me more.”
 - Why it works: Brings the right and left brain together to make sense of the experience.

- **Engage, don't enrage**
 - Appeal to thought processes to reduce emotional response.
 - Ask open ended questions, ask permission, request alternatives, practice negotiation.
 - Why it works: Engages upstairs and left brain for planning, decision making.
- **Remember to remember**
 - Ask about previous experiences or what they've heard.
 - Ask to recall past successes.
 - Why it works: Explaining one's emotions forces concrete thinking and allows for growth and healing.
- **Backwards planning**
 - Ask what they'd like to see happen in the future. This provides an opportunity for them to share their ideas, hopes and goals.
 - Identify concrete steps or actions needed to meet the goal.
 - Work backward from there to develop a plan of action.
 - Why it works: Uses left brain and memory to build on prior successes. Encourages participants to believe in themselves.

Rolling with Resistance



*There is no way to make people like change.
You can only make them feel less threatened by it.
Frederick Hayes*

- **What is resistance?**
 - Resistance is what happens when we expect or push for change when the participant is not ready.
 - The reasons may not be clear to us or the participant, but they exist, and ignoring them gets us nowhere.
 - Can occur when information presented conflicts with our knowledge or experience.
 - Participants who exhibit resistance are less likely to change.
- **Why does resistance occur?**
 - It arises as a normal, expected part of interacting with others, including our work in WIC.
- **What are some of the types of resistance we encounter?**
 - *Relational resistance*
 - Pertains to tension in the *relationship* between individuals. This could be between you and a participant, or between the participant and another person.
 - You can tell there is discord in the interaction by such comments as:
 - You don't understand.*
 - You can't help me.*
 - I don't like that person.*
 - *Issue resistance*
 - Related to a *specific issue*, such as establishing regular meal times, weight, making a dietary change, weaning a child off the bottle, smoking cessation, etc.
 - *Situational resistance*
 - Occurs due to an activity, event or situation largely out of your control that causes a stress reaction in the participant.

- Often not obvious to others, and may be due to past trauma.
 - Examples include reacting to a door slamming, a negative comment from a staff member (real or perceived), or a delayed appointment.
- **How do we roll with resistance?**
 - Encountering resistance is a sign you should shift your approach.
 - Respect the resistance – don't confront it directly.
 - Reframe it and reflect it in a way that decreases resistance.
 - Always remember to focus on the problem, NOT the participant.
 - Begin with the self-regulation skills described above:
 - Practice awareness
 - Self-check
 - Let go and refocus
- **Next steps:**
 - **Consider what could be causing the resistance**
 - Is the participant reacting to an issue? A situation? Could it be a relationship?
 - Try to figure out any barriers the participant may be facing, or where the communication is breaking down.
 - Separate the behavior from the person.
 - **React with curiosity**
 - Be authentic. Practice active listening skills.
 - Let go of your desire to share knowledge, and focus on understanding, connecting.
 - **Change course**
 - When sensing defensiveness, a shift in course can help defuse the situation.
 - Think – How am I responding? What can I change?
 - **Use reflections and change talk to shift the conversation to a neutral state.**
 - Reflect what you are hearing.
 - Resistant statement: *“You don't like this idea.”*
 - Tone of statement: *“You're not happy about...”*
 - Ambivalence: *“On the one hand you want... and on the other you don't think you can...”*
 - Acknowledge who is in charge: *“Any change is your choice; you know yourself the best.”*
 - Make repairs when necessary: *“I'm sorry, I misunderstood you. Please help me understand.”*
- **How can we decrease the likelihood of evoking resistance?**
 - Reflect what we hear without judgment. This allows the participant to feel understood.
 - Use double-sided reflection. Reflect both sides of the ambivalence – what you hear about the reasons not to change and the reasons to change.
 - Emphasize personal choice and control.

Adapted from motivational interviewing handout developed by the University of Missouri Extension and Wise Woman.TM