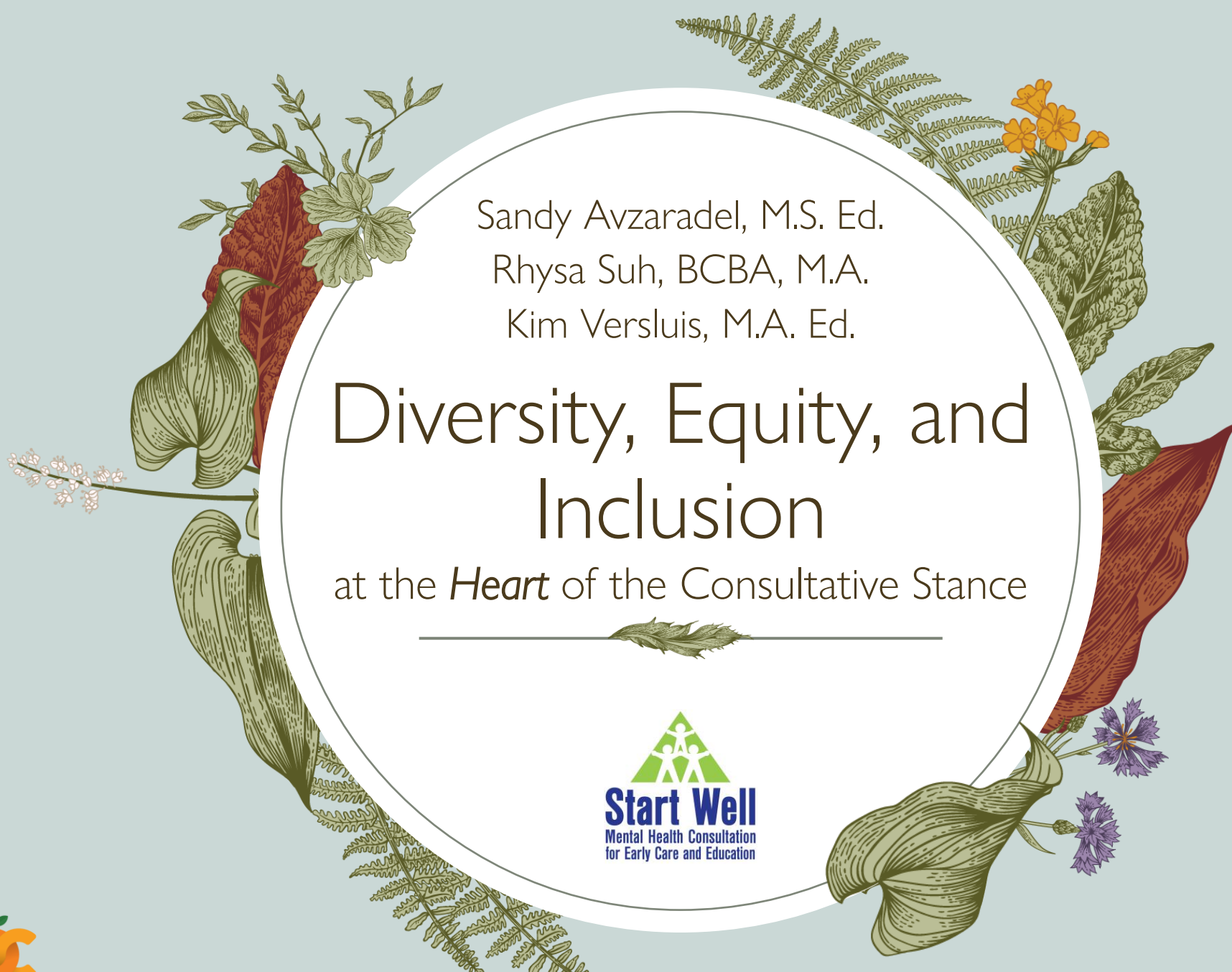




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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

at the *Heart* of the Consultative Stance





Learning Objectives

1. The Consultative Stance: Participants will understand how the use of the Consultative Stance can support consultants' discussions with consultees regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
2. Diversity Informed Tenets: Participants will know how the Diversity Informed Tenets can be embedded in Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC).
3. DEI and IECMHC: Participants will understand how diversity, equity, and inclusion is an ongoing process embedded in Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation.



Introductions

Sandy Avzaradel ~ Director, Start Well

Rhysa Suh ~ Senior IECMH Consultant

Kim Versluis ~ IECMH Consultant





A special thank you to Kadija Johnston for her mentorship and for creating the *Consultative Stance* and describing it brilliantly in the book she co-authored with Charles Brinamen!

Mental Health Consultation in Child Care: Transforming Relationships Among Directors, Staff, and Families

ZERO TO THREE Press, 2006





Background

The Consultative Stance (Johnston & Brinamen, 2006) naturally aligns with the Diversity Informed Tenets (Irving Harris Foundation, 2018) and is a model that infant/early childhood mental health consultants use to practice and model diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work with consultees.

Using the parallel process, consultants embed Diversity Informed Tenets into their interactions and relationships, therefore ensuring all infant/early childhood mental health consultations are the foundation for culturally responsive supports.



The Centrality of Relationships



- Relationships directly shape young children's growth and development
- Relationships between all dyads impact the trajectory of the child
- Awareness is crucial to understand what each brings to the relationship
- Impact on the children and families we work with

Consultative Stance

(Johnston & Brinamen, 2006)



- The consultative stance is the consultant's "way of being"
- How the consultant "is," demonstrations of interest, empathy, respect, and understanding, are all explicitly linked to the success of IECMHC
- The power of the relationship between the consultant and the consultee transforms all other relationships in the child care system
- Caregivers will accept and use the consultant's knowledge in direct proportion to the level of trust and mutual respect established between them

The Consultative Stance Part 1

- **Mutuality of endeavor:** the consultee *contributes to and participates* in the process
- **Avoiding the position of expert:** the work of IECMHC is collaborative between the consultant and providers and parents, therefore the *expert stance* must be abandoned
- **Wondering instead of knowing:** demonstrates to the consultee that understanding is a process, not a moment; slowing down to *consider the myriad of possibilities*
- **Understanding another's subjective experience:** the caregiver holds *expert information* about their own and the children's experience
- **Considering all levels of influence:** *personal histories* of the provider; *interpersonal issues*, and *external influences*

The Consultative Stance Part 2

- Hearing and representing all voices: *hearing about and from each individual*; increasing the adult's capacity to and belief in the *usefulness of communicating directly to one another*
- The centrality of relationships: mental health is promoted by *interactions between dyads* and *is the hub of all progress*
- Parallel process as an organizing principle: the *relationship between the caregiver and consultant and its quality* absolutely *create change in the child-caregiver bond*
- Patience: holding space for *relationships to develop*; individual perceptions and beliefs impacted by experiences of childhood, parenthood, and life, and *changing perceptions takes time*
- Hope: the *consultant holds hope* for the child care providers and parents because they are the only one that can step out of a seemingly static system to *see the possibilities*



Reflection 1

1. How do you or your staff utilize the *Consultative Stance* in your/their work?
2. How can you utilize the *Consultative Stance* to improve relationship building in the work that you do?

Diversity Informed Tenets

“The Tenets”

(Irving Harris Foundation, 2012, 2nd ed., 2018)



- Developed for those that work with *infants, children, and families*
- Provides an *aspirational* set of tools and strategies for *strengthening the commitment of capacity* of professionals, organizations, and systems that serve infants, children, and families
- Building a more *diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce* that holds *each family* at the center of their work.

Embedded Tenets in IECMHC Part 1

Self-Awareness Leads to Better Services for Families

- * Working with children and families requires all individuals, organizations, and systems of care to *continually reflect* on what they bring to the relationship and its impact on ANY system of oppression.

Champion Children's Rights Globally

- * As practitioners it is our responsibility to *understand all levels of influence* and each member of the dyad's *subjective experience* to welcome, protect, and nurture children and their families.

Work to acknowledge Privilege and Combat Discrimination

- * IECMHC's *hear and represent all voices*. We cannot do that unless we understand our position of power, influence, and privilege and *actively model entry points to combat* racism, classism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression.

Recognize and Respect Non-Dominant Bodies of Knowledge

- * Consultants work to *avoid the position of the expert*. This helps to *legitimize the expertise* of each member of the dyad and places the *emphasis on learning and understanding* rather than knowing.

Embedded Tenets in IECMHC Part 2

Honor Diverse Family Structures

* There is not one family structure that is considered “optimal”. The *diversity of “family”* brings out lived experience and helps the consultant consider the *levels of influence* for that person in the dyad.

Understand that Language Can Hurt or Heal

* How we communicate within each dyad will *directly impact the effectiveness of the supports* provided. Understanding that the *parallel process can positively or negatively influence relationships and change*.

Support Families in Their Preferred Language

* Understand that families are best supported when *services are available in their native language*.

Allocate Resources to Systems Change

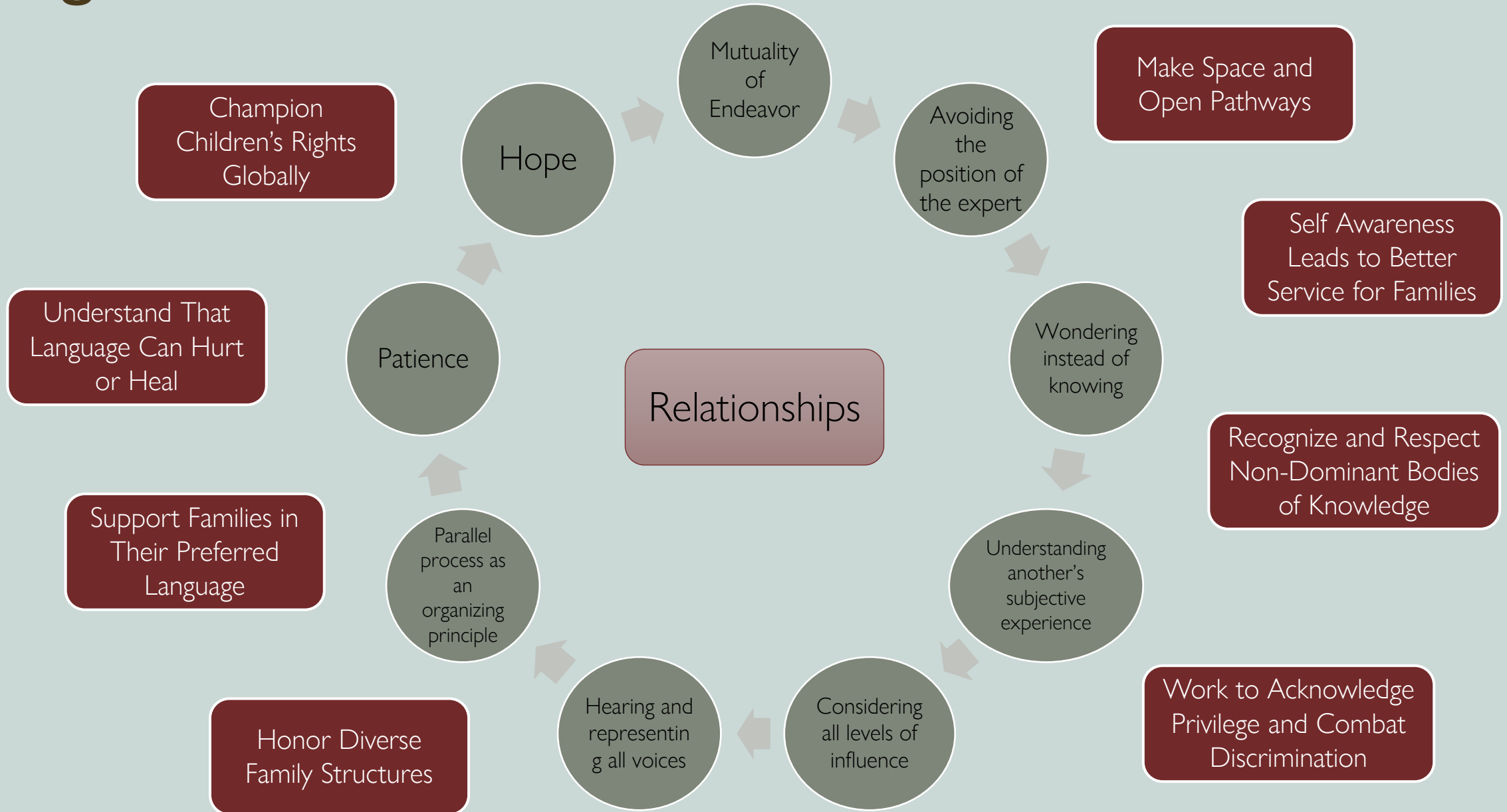
* By using the *consultative stance*, opportunities for *ongoing reflection to identify implicit bias, remove barriers and work to dismantling root causes of disparity and inequity* are provided during each consultative visit.



Reflection 2

1. How do you or your staff utilize the *Diversity Informed Tenets* in your work?
2. How can you utilize the *Diversity Informed Tenets* to improve the consultant/consultee relationship?

Integration of the Consultative Stance and the Tenets





Summary

The consultative stance allows us to practice our “way of being” in our interactions with consultees. Being aware of our own sense of self (where we came from, where we are now, and where we want to be) impacts each relationship and helps us to strive for the highest level of diversity, inclusion, and equity in our work with those who directly impact children and families.



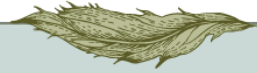


Integrating The Tenets & the Consultative Stance into IECMHC

What will you do or change in your work?



Thank You



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