Critical Analysis for APS Supervisors

INSTRUCTOR LED TRAINING

TRAINER MANUAL

Academy for Professional Excellence

APSWI
Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations

The Academy for Professional Excellence is a project of the San Diego State University School of Social Work

Funding Sources

This training was developed by the Academy for Professional Excellence's Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations program, with funding from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

Curriculum Developer, 2025

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Consulting, Advocacy and Therapeutic Services, LLC

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Introduction

We are pleased to welcome you to **Critical Analysis for APS Supervisors Trainer Manual** developed by Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations (APSWI), a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence under a grant from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

The Academy for Professional Excellence, a project of San Diego State University School of Social Work, was established in 1996 with the goal of revolutionizing the way people work to ensure the world is a healthier place. Our services integrate culturally responsive and recovery-oriented practices into our daily work to promote healing and healthy relationships. Providing around 70,000 learning experiences to health and human service professionals annually, the Academy provides a variety of workforce development solutions in Southern California and beyond. With five programs, three divisions and over 100 staff, the Academy's mission is to provide exceptional learning and development experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities.

APSWI is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence. APSWI is designed to provide competency-based, multidisciplinary training to Adult Protective Services professionals and their partners. APSWI's overarching goal is the professionalization of Adult Protective Services professionals to ensure that abused and vulnerable older adults and adults with disabilities receive high quality, effective interventions and services.

APSWI partners with state and national organizations and experts in the older adult and adults with disabilities professions to empower APS professionals and those they serve to live safely, peacefully and in a world that is free from abuse and neglect.

APSWI's partners include:

- National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) and the National Adult Protective Services Training Center (NATC)
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Adult Programs Division
- County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC)
- California's Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) Committee

Partner Organizations

Dawn Gibbons-McWayne, Program Director, APSWI

Academy for Professional Excellence

https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/apswi/

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Jennifer Spoeri, Executive Director, National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA)

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Paul Needham, Chair, NAPSA Education Committee

https://www.napsa-now.org/

James Treggiari, Adult Protective Services Liaison, Adult Protective Services Division

California Department of Public Social Services
cdss.ca.gov/Adult-Protective-Service

Jason Kemp Van Ee and Emily Nicholl, Co-Chairs, Protective Services Operations Committee of the County Welfare Director's Association (PSOC)

https://www.cwda.org/about-cwda

Acknowledgements

This curriculum was adapted from the *Critical Thinking for APS Protection Supervisors* instructor-led training, with permission from the Kansas Department for Children and Families. This training is also the result of a collaborative effort between Adult Protective Services administrators, supervisors, staff development officers and line staff across the state and the nation; professional educators; and the Academy for Professional Excellence staff members. APSWI would like to thank the following individuals and agencies:

Agencies

California Department of Social Services Adult Services Division

Kansas Department for Children and Families

National Adult Protective Services Association

Committees

California Southern Regional Academy's Training Planning Committee

Curriculum Advisory Committee

Curriculum Developer

Valerie Smith, LCSW, Consulting, Advocacy and Therapeutic Services, LLC

Additional Expertise

Ali Ernst, Workforce Development Specialist

How to Use This Manual

This curriculum was developed as an instructor-led, in-person **4-hour and 30-minute workshop not including breaks** using the Zoom platform, paying close attention to virtual training best practices. It can be tailored to a different virtual platform (WebEx, GoTo Training, etc.). If necessary, it may also be trained in-person by modifying activity and engagement prompts as necessary. When possible, virtual and in-person prompts are given.

The Participant Manual should be sent ahead of time as a Word Document to allow participants to print a hard copy or take notes online.

- Actions which the trainer takes during the training are written in **bold**
- *Trainer notes are italicized*

Use of language: Throughout the manual, APS professional is used to denote individual staff who may go by various titles. The term client is used most often to describe the individual at the center of the APS investigation. However, if concept or material was directly quoted from copyrighted material, another term may be used.

He and she have been replaced with the gender-neutral they throughout this manual, unless quoted from copyrighted material. This should not be thought of as plural persons, but rather a gender-neutral term describing all humans.

Customizing the Power Point:

- This manual is set up so that the trainer content material is on the same page as the accompanying PowerPoint slide.
- To hide a slide in PowerPoint, on the Slides tab in normal view, select the slide you want to hide.
- On the Slide Show menu, click Hide Slide. The slide number will have a line through it to show you have hidden it.
- The slide remains in your file even though it is hidden when you rune the presentation.

Course Outline:

The course outline, provided in the next section of this manual, is the class schedule used for development of this curriculum. It can be used to help determine how much time is needed to present each section. However, times will vary based on the experience and engagement of the audience.

Trainer Guidelines

It is recommended that this virtual workshop be facilitated by an individual with a solid foundation in leadership or management, and a strong familiarity with the principles of Social Work, Adult Protective Services, and employee engagement. Co-facilitation with an APS trainer or Supervisor is highly recommended.

Suggestions for virtual training when possible:

- Have a moderator or co-host who can primarily focus on the virtual aspects of this training (e.g., monitoring chat box, launching polls, assigning breakout groups, monitoring participant reactions, etc.).
- Test out the use of the breakout room feature prior to conducting this training.
- Log in at least 30 minutes prior to the training to ensure the virtual classroom is fully functioning and that you are comfortable navigating it.
- Your equipment and platform may dictate how you do some activities or discussions. There are times you may not be able to see everyone's faces, names or reactions (thumbs up, mute/unmute, etc.). There is a need for both verbal discussion and chat discussion. At such times, the moderator will fill a critical role monitoring those features you cannot. Practice during a run through how you will use the various functions for each section.
- The optimal size for this virtual training is 25-30 participants.

The following **teaching strategies** are incorporated:

- Lecture segments
- Interactive exercises (e.g., breakout groups, chat box discussion, video demonstration, polling activities)
- Question/answer periods
- PowerPoint Slides

The following **equipment and materials** are needed:

- Trainer Manual
- Participant Manual
- PowerPoint Slides
- Headset with microphone Computer

Virtual Training Tips

Training and facilitation have always been an art. Virtual training is no exception. Below are some helpful tips to remember and implement when training in a virtual environment.

- Assume nothing.
  - Do not assume everyone has the same knowledge or comfort level with technology or has access to equipment like printers, video camera, headsets, or even reliable Wi-Fi.
- Distractions are everywhere.
  - Participants have greater access to distractions (email, phone, others at home) which can take their focus away from the training. Therefore, explain everything and summarize before asking participants to complete an activity and check for clarification.
- Over explain when possible.
  - The virtual room doesn't allow for participants to see everything you're doing as they can in-person. Share what you are doing as you navigate the virtual environment. If you are silent while looking for something or finding a screen, they may think something is frozen.
- Mute with purpose.
  - "Mute all" function can help ensure we don't hear conversations we're not supposed to. However, it can also send a message to the participants that they are a passive participant and may not make them feel comfortable taking themselves off mute when you want them to speak.
- Two screens are very helpful.
  - This allows you to move your chat box or participant gallery view away from your presentation so you can see more of what's going on.
- Rely on practice, not luck.
  - Winging it during an in-person training or facilitation may work from time to time, but doesn't work in the virtual environment. In addition to covering the content, you have to manage all of the technology issues, learning styles in a virtual room, and it will show if you're not prepared.
- Bring the energy.
  - As trainers, we are no strangers to being "on," standing and moving around. However, some of the body language, subtle nonverbal skills we relied on the in-person training room do not translate well in the

virtual environment. While this may make you more tired, it's important to up your enthusiasm, voice, and presence in order to engage with attendees.

- Be mindful of your space.
  - Training virtually brings an entirely new component of what we're willing to share with others. Learners can get distracted with what's in your background, whether what is physically there or if you set your video to use a virtual background.
  - It's important to reflect on questions of privilege, diversity, and equity when thinking of your training space.

Executive Summary

Adult Protective Services (APS) Supervisors face numerous challenges in managing various roles and responsibilities, as well as making complex decisions. Critical analysis provides a framework to support complex decision-making in APS cases, thereby enhancing the professional development and supervision of staff. Critical analysis, also referred to as critical thinking, allows both staff and supervisors to develop a systematic process to guide decision-making.

This training introduces practical tools and processes that strengthen critical analysis skills. Supervisors will learn how to apply these skills during case review, staff coaching, and stakeholder collaboration. By the end of the course, participants will be able to use a framework to support clear decision-making, guide staff, and improve overall service delivery.

Instructor Led Virtual Training

- The following virtual instructional strategies are used throughout the course: a poll, lectures, large group discussions, and breakout groups. PowerPoint slides are used to help participants better define and retain the information provided.
- Participants will need access to a computer with video conferencing capability and be able to connect to the virtual platform being used to deliver this training. A headset or earbuds with microphone and a video camera are highly needed. Participant Manual is a fillable Word document. Participants are encouraged to either print a hard copy or ensure access to Microsoft Word to allow for highlighting and note taking.

Course Requirements:

Attendees should understand the principles of supervision and leading staff. They should also have knowledge and understanding of concepts in Social Work and Adult Protective Services (APS). Throughout the course, attendees will be asked to practice self-reflection and apply concepts to themselves. It is important for attendees to take an active approach to the learning opportunities. Attendees are expected to participate by contributing to discussions and activities and engage in respectful partnership with other attendees and the trainers. Attendees will be asked to apply the concepts to themselves and share their insights. They will not be required to disclose personal reflections or insights to the group.

Intended Audience

This training is intended for new and experienced Supervisors who lead APS professionals.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define critical analysis and why it is important in supervision
- Summarize the five elements of critical analysis
- Examine emotional intelligence skills and how they support supervisory effectiveness through self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal relationships
- Apply the elements of critical analysis to supervisory practices involving staff and stakeholder engagement

Course Outline

CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
Welcome, Course Overview, Defining Critical Analysis	**Slides 1-10**	**Total: 20 Minutes**
Welcome, Introductions, and Course Overview		
Introducing Critical Analysis *Activity: Poll and Large Group Discussion*		
Five Elements of Critical Analysis	**Slides 11-17**	**Total: 25 minutes**
ICETE Elements		
Activity: Self-Reflection and Large Group Discussion		10 minutes
Critical Analysis: Emotional Intelligence for APS Supervisors	**Slides 18-30**	**Total: 1 hour, 45 minutes**
Three Core Skills of Emotional Intelligence		
The Thought Triangle		
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Awareness and Making Mistakes		
Self-Awareness: Growth and Fixed Mindsets *Activity: Growth Mindset*		10 minutes
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Regulation		

CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Regulation and Self-Care		
The H.A.L.T Technique *Activity: Practicing H.A.L.T*	Handout: H.A.L.T Planning Grid	10-15 minutes
Key Characteristics of Vicarious Trauma		
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Regulation, Self-Care, and Vicarious Trauma		
Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills		
Opportunities to Build Interpersonal Skills		
Activity: Interpersonal Skills Scenario Discussion	Handout: Interpersonal Skills with a Team Scenario	10-15 minutes
Managing Change *Activity: Reflect and Share*		10 minutes
Applying Critical Analysis Elements to Staff	**Slides 31-38**	**Total: 60 minutes**
Applying ICETE with Staff		
Information Seeking with Staff		
Considering Multiple Solutions with Staff		
Emotional Intelligence with Staff		

CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
Tolerating Ambiguity with Staff		
Effective Communication with Staff		
Activity: Performance Scenario	Handout: Staff Performance Case Scenario	25 minutes
Applying Critical Analysis Elements to Stakeholders	**Slides 38-40**	**Total: 45 Minutes**
Applying ICETE to Working with Stakeholders		
ICETE and Multi-Disciplinary Teams		
Activity: ICETE and MDT Scenario Groupwork	Handout: Leading the MDT Meeting	20 minutes
Wrap-Up	**Slides 41-44**	**Total: 15 minutes**
Review of Critical Analysis *Activity: ICETE Personal Commitment*		5 minutes
Summary		
P.I.E.		5 minutes
Evaluations		
TOTAL (Excluding Breaks): 4 hours 30 minutes		

Welcome, Introductions, and Course Overview

Time Allotted: 20 Minutes

Associated Objective(s): Define critical analysis and why it is important in supervision

Method: Large group discussion, poll, lecture

Slide #1: Welcome and Introductions



Welcome participants and allow everyone to settle in.

Ask participants to introduce themselves.

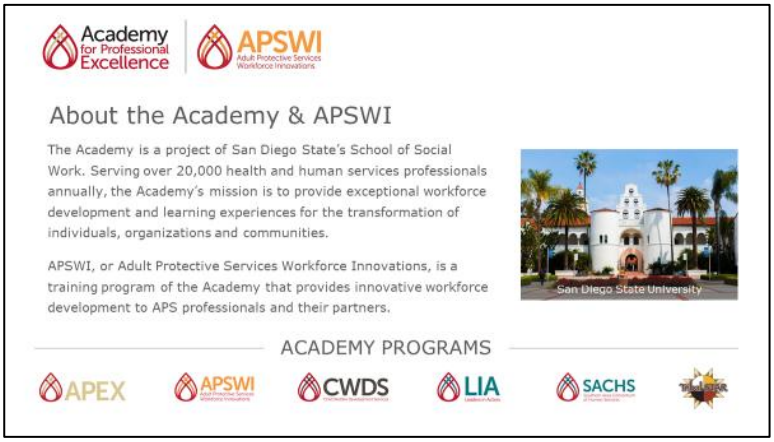
Introduce yourself and background to the participants.

Provide participants with the Participant Manual.

Review any housekeeping, including:

- Review of schedule, including breaks
- Participation norms and agreements
- Format of the course (i.e., polls, small group discussions, large group discussions, individual reflections)

Slide #2: About the Academy and APSWI



Explain that the Academy for Professional Excellence is a project of San Diego State School of Social Work. Its mission is to provide exceptional workforce development and learning experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations, and communities.

Explain that Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations (APSWI) provides innovative workforce development to APS professionals and their partners. APSWI is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence along with others listed on the slide.

Slide #3: Land Acknowledgment Part 1



Trainer note: These slides incorporate a national land acknowledgment to honor the land that anyone who accesses the materials is on. When training, insert the land you're training from.

Share that the purpose of a land acknowledgement is to recognize the relationship of Indigenous peoples to the land. It is multi-faceted in its meaning. It shows respect to the people of the land, to the land itself and to their relationship to one another. They are statements that recognize the dispossession from the land, the harm brought by colonial practices, beliefs and policies. They validate and recognize the continued presence of Indigenous peoples everywhere. Lastly, when offered in earnest and with sincerity, they are the first steps in reconciliation and healing.

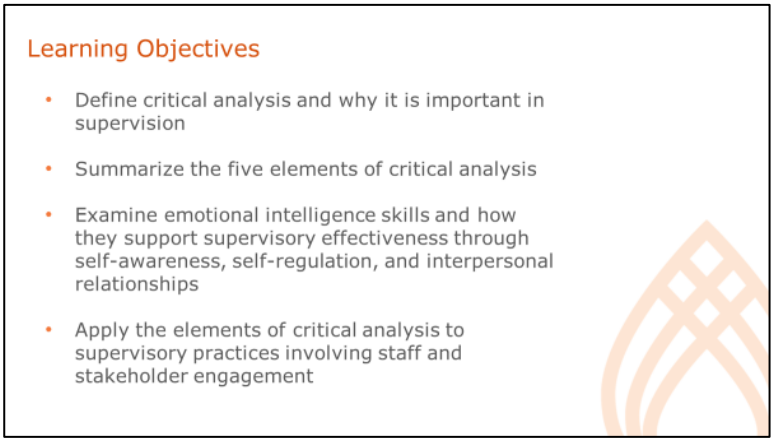
Slide #4: Land Acknowledgment Part 2



Trainer note: These slides incorporate a national land acknowledgment to honor the land that anyone who accesses the materials is on. When training, insert the land you're training from.

Share: For millennia, hundreds of Tribal nations have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected, and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the Academy community, we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land; the land of the original inhabitants of this Nation. Find the tribe(s) in your area: https://native-land.ca/

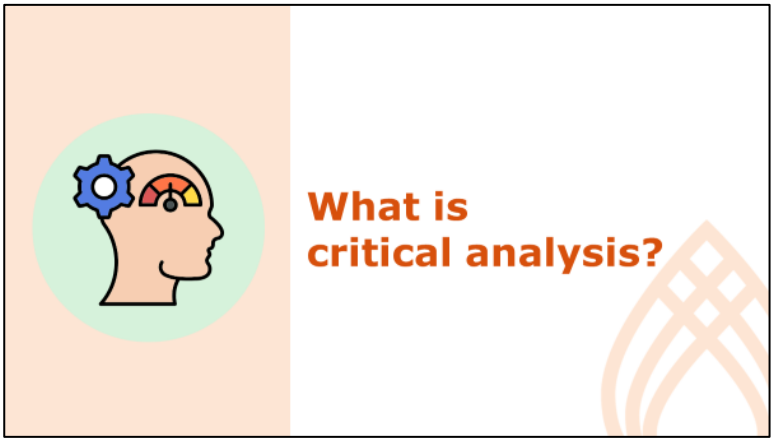
Slide #5: Learning Objectives



Cover any housekeeping items, including virtual technology if needed. Some items may include:

- Length of course
- Breaks
- Expectations and agreements of participation, timeliness, supporting each other as learners and APS professionals
- Location of restroom, etc.

Slide #6: What is Critical Analysis?



Activity: Ideas About Critical Analysis (5 minutes)

Poll, Large Group Discussion

Trainer note: This activity allows you to conduct a poll. The questions animated are on the slide and replace if desired to use a polling option. Consider if an anonymous or general polling modality is needed as well as the available technology for participants, (e.g.: Zoom poll, Mentimeter, Slido, etc.) Insert the type of technology you plan on using below.

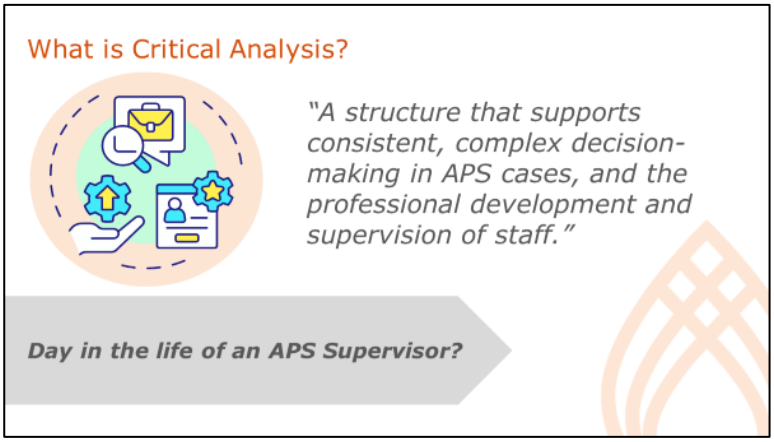
1. **Ask** the large group the following poll question using [insert technology]:
    a. Question: *What comes to mind when you hear the term Critical Analysis or Critical Thinking?* Poll options:
        i. *Basing decisions on evidence and facts so staff know what to do*
        ii. *Paying attention to details so there are no errors*
        iii. *Giving critical feedback to staff or colleagues*
        iv. *Being skeptical/critical or not accepting information when it is presented*
        v. *Making sure you have all the information and asking yourself Who/where else could I get information? What is missing?*
2. **Discuss** the final percentages of each poll answer and ask further questions or make comments.
3. **Ask** the group to type in the chat or verbally to answer question: *Why is critical analysis, or critical thinking, important in supervision?*

Trainer note: Below are possible examples to review.

- *It is a way to analyze information*
- *It is a strategy for problem-solving*
- *It ensures issues are being considered objectively*

- *It supports decision-making that considers any assumptions and biases thorough findings*
- *Learn by example: Encourages staff to think through potential solutions before they ask for an answer*

Slide #7: What is Critical Analysis?



Share the following definition of critical analysis, or critical thinking:

- *The terms "critical analysis" and "critical thinking" will be used interchangeably throughout this training. Critical Analysis is defined as a structure that supports consistent, complex decision-making in APS cases and the professional development and supervision of staff.*

Remind participants that the reason to use a critical analysis structure is that APS work is so complex that it can be challenging for staff and supervisors to find solutions. Case circumstances, limited resources, and pressure to resolve complex situations can affect decision-making and evoke intense feelings.

Share that for APS Supervisors, balancing the needs of staff, administrators, clients, and the community can make the workday full of unpredictability. APS Supervisors have heavy workloads that include many aspects of decision-making.

Ask participants to write some words in the chat or off mute to share some of the tasks APS Supervisors commonly spend most of their time doing.

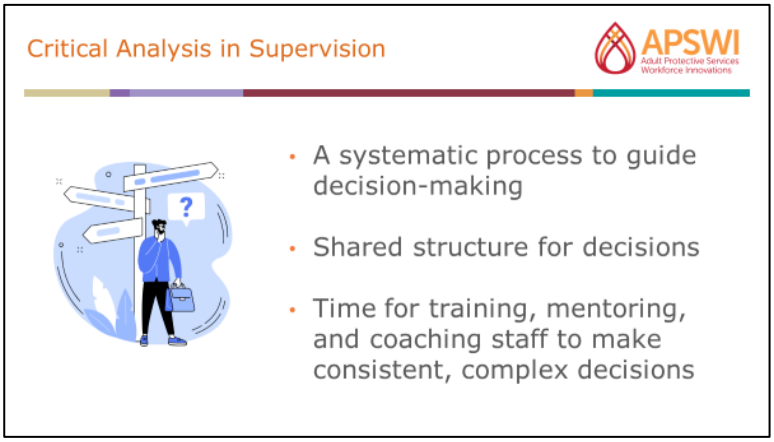
Trainer note: read comments and facilitate verbal responses and share any of the following not provided by participants.

- Quality assurance/case review (staffing cases for findings)
- Meeting with staff and department leaders
- Quality improvement/training or reminding staff
- Managing crises/problem-solving
- Reviewing cases for closure
- Leading staff meetings
- Responding to complaints/concerns from the community
- Backup for frontline staff/managing a caseload (picking up older cases left behind)

- Individual supervision and coaching
- Recruitment and Hiring
- Attending MDTS, workgroups, or committee meetings

Normalize that there is a lot of work for APS Supervisors, and it's not always easy to manage the daily tasks and activities. Workdays can rapidly change, which requires different skills or considerations when making decisions.

Slide #8: Critical Analysis in Supervision



Share that an APS Supervisor's job is multifaceted and includes the responsibility to make so many complex decisions, along with the primary role of leading, mentoring, and supporting APS professionals in providing ethical, safe, and comprehensive services to clients in the community.

Share that utilizing critical techniques can:

- Provide a systemic process to guide decision-making
- Positively impact case reviews when utilizing same type of structure for decisions
- Provides Supervisors opportunities to spend more time training, coaching, etc.

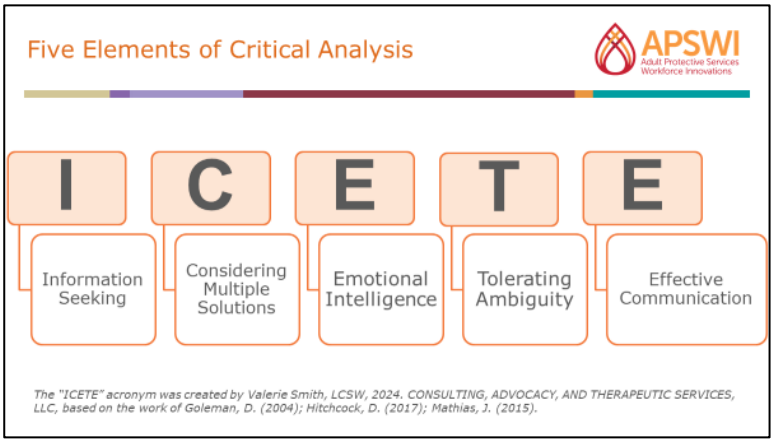
Five Elements of Critical Analysis

Time Allotted: 25 Minutes

Associated Objective(s): Summarize the five elements of critical analysis

Method: Lecture, large group discussion, and individual work

Slide #9: Five Elements of Critical Analysis



Share that Critical Analysis can be broken down into five elements, they are:

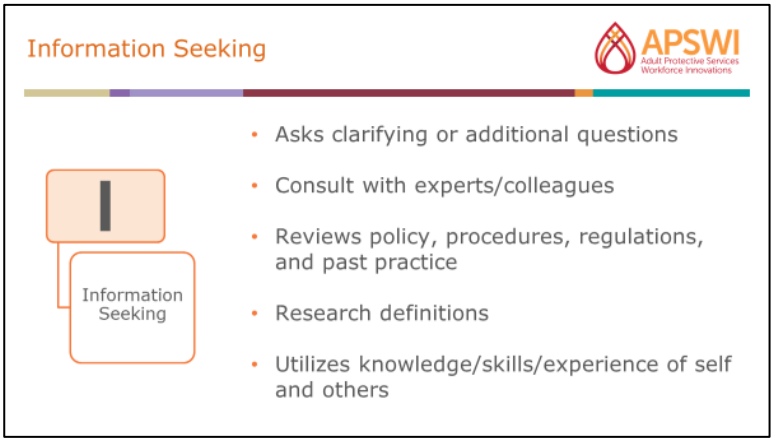
- Information Seeking
- Considering Multiple Solutions
- Emotional Intelligence
- Tolerating Ambiguity
- Effective Communication

Share that to make it memorable, use an acronym by taking the first letter of each of the five elements, which spells out: ICETE (pronounced like Ice-Tea). The "ICETE" acronym was created by Valerie Smith, LCSW, 2024. CONSULTING, ADVOCACY, AND THERAPEUTIC SERVICES, LLC, based on the work of Goleman, D. (2004); Hitchcock, D. (2017); Mathias, J. (2015).

Trainer note: The acronym is not a word; it is not spelled the same way as 'iced tea' and is not intended to be spelled the same way. This is important for people to understand so they don't confuse the acronym with the correct spelling of 'iced tea.' Remind the participants the 'ICETE' acronym is just a way to remember the five Critical Analysis elements.

Note to participants that the use of the Critical Analysis acronym 'ICETE' is not a substitute for any administrative or legal requirements, regulations, policies, and procedures. Rather, it is a structured tool to assist with complex decision-making.

Slide #10: ICETE – Information Seeking

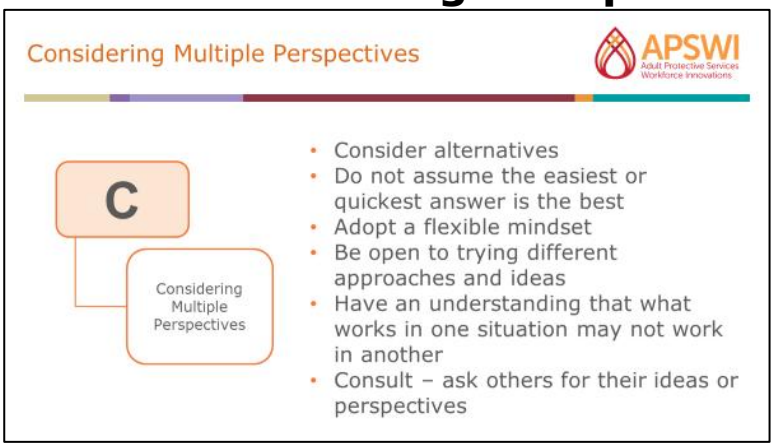


Share that Information Seeking is the first element and is foundational to critical analysis. It involves actively gathering relevant, accurate, and diverse information before making a decision. This helps reduce assumptions, bias, and reactive decision-making.

Share that Information Seeking is the intentional process of gathering facts, perspectives, and context to inform decisions (Jenicek, Croskerry, & Hitchcock, 2011). It includes asking questions, consulting others, and reviewing relevant materials (Dwyer, 2017). **Consider**:

- Asks clarifying or additional questions
- Consult with experts/colleagues
- Reviews policy, procedures, regulations, and past practice
- Research definitions (i.e., medical or legal terminology)
- Utilizes knowledge/skills/experience of self and others

Slide #11: ICETE – Considering Multiple Solutions

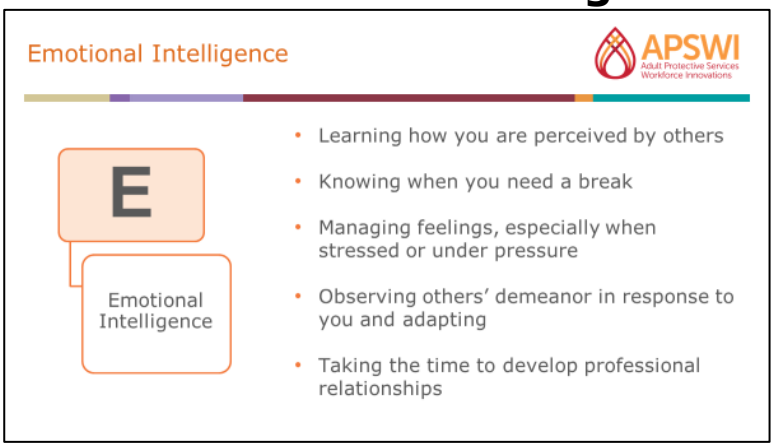


Share that the second element of critical analysis is Considering Multiple Solutions. This means taking time to explore different options before making a decision. It's about resisting the urge to jump to the first or easiest answer and instead adopting a flexible, creative, and inclusive mindset.

Definition: Considering Multiple Solutions is the practice of exploring a range of possible responses or strategies before deciding on a course of action (Liebler, 1988). It involves openness to new ideas, flexibility in thinking, and a willingness to adapt based on context (Liebler, 1988). **Consider**:

- Take time to consider alternatives
- Do not assume the easiest or quickest answer is the best
- Adopt a flexible mindset
- Consult, ask others for their ideas or perspectives
- Be open to trying different approaches and ideas
- Have an understanding that what works in one situation may not work in another

Slide #12: ICETE – Emotional Intelligence



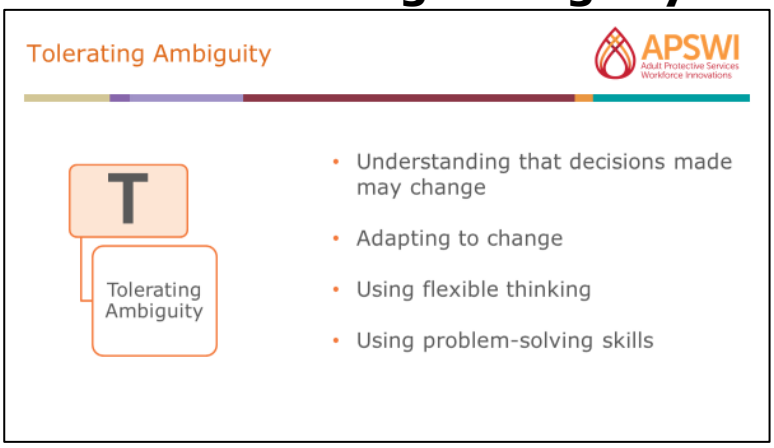
Share that the third element of critical analysis is Emotional Intelligence (EI). This is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions—and to recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others. For APS Supervisors, EI is essential for building trust, navigating stress, and leading with empathy.

Share that Emotional Intelligence is the application of self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills to understand and manage behaviors and relationships and decision making effectively. It's about being intentional with your emotions and interactions.

Understanding and applying a high level of self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills, consider:

- How you are perceived by others
- Knowing when you need a break
- Managing feelings, especially when stressed or under pressure
- Observing others' demeanor in response to you and adapting
- Taking the time to develop professional relationships

Slide #13: ICETE – Tolerating Ambiguity



Share that the fourth element of critical analysis is Tolerating Ambiguity. In APS we often work in situations where information is incomplete, outcomes are uncertain, and decisions must still be made. This element is about staying grounded and solution-focused even when the path forward isn't clear.

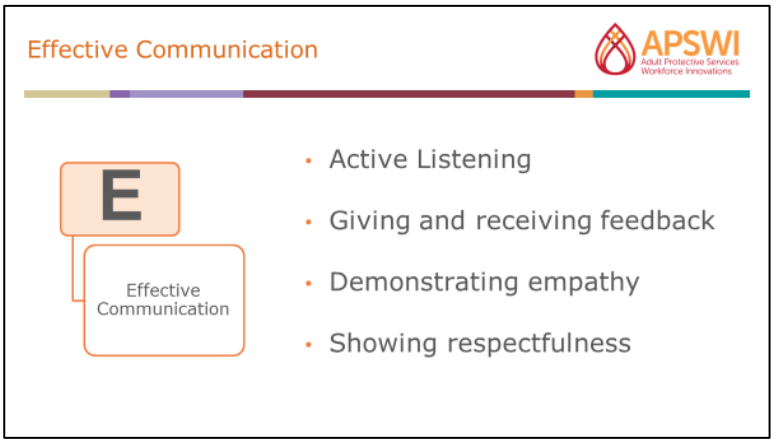
Share that Tolerating Ambiguity is the ability to cope with unclear tasks, goals, or communication by adapting to change and using problem-solving skills to (Editorial Team, 2023):

- Define the situation
- Identify possible outcomes
- Plan for alternatives

Share examples of Tolerating Ambiguity:

- Acknowledging when you don't have all the answers—but still moving forward
- Staying calm when plans change or new information emerges
- Encouraging staff to explore multiple paths when the "right" answer isn't obvious
- Making the best decision possible with the information available
- Reassessing and adjusting plans as new data or perspectives arise

Slide #14: ICETE – Effective Communication



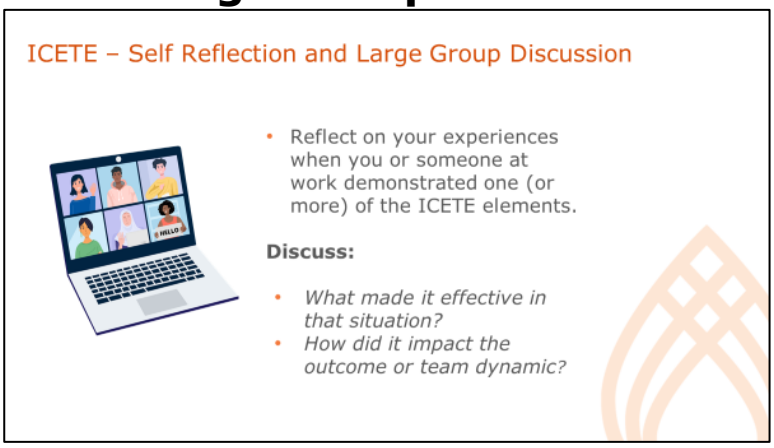
Share that the fifth and final element of critical analysis is Effective Communication. This is the ability to clearly and respectfully convey and receive information—verbally, non-verbally, and in writing. In APS supervision, communication is the bridge between intention and impact.

Share that Effective Communication is the intentional use of verbal, non-verbal, and written communication to ensure clarity, build trust, and foster collaboration. It includes active listening, giving and receiving feedback, showing empathy, and demonstrating respect (Naz, 2023).

Explore verbal, non-verbal, and written communication and employing:

- Active Listening: Giving full attention, using affirming body language, and paraphrasing to confirm understanding
- Giving and Receiving Feedback: Offering constructive input and being open to feedback without defensiveness
- Empathy: Acknowledging others' feelings and perspectives, especially during conflict or stress
- Respectfulness: Using inclusive language, honoring boundaries, and maintaining professionalism in tone and delivery

Slide #15: ICETE Large Group Discussion



Validate that participants have probably already used or seen some or all of the ICETE elements in the work setting.

<u>Activity: ICETE Reflection and Group Discussion (10 minutes)</u>

Self-Reflection and Large Group Discussion

Trainer note: The purpose of this activity is to help participants internalize the ICETE framework by connecting it to real-life experiences in their APS roles. This activity encourages self-awareness, peer learning, and practical application.

1. **Tell** participants they will have a few minutes to reflect on their experiences when they or someone at work demonstrated one (or more) of the ICETE elements. Think about which element stood out the most.
2. **Ask** participants to share which element stood out the most to them.
3. **Facilitate** responses from the participants and provide feedback on the examples of ICETE elements. Ask guiding questions such as:
    a. "What made it effective in that situation?"
    b. "How did it impact the outcome or the team dynamic?"
4. **Share** that next participants will take a closer look at the element of the E in ICE-TE, emotional intelligence as a supervisor.

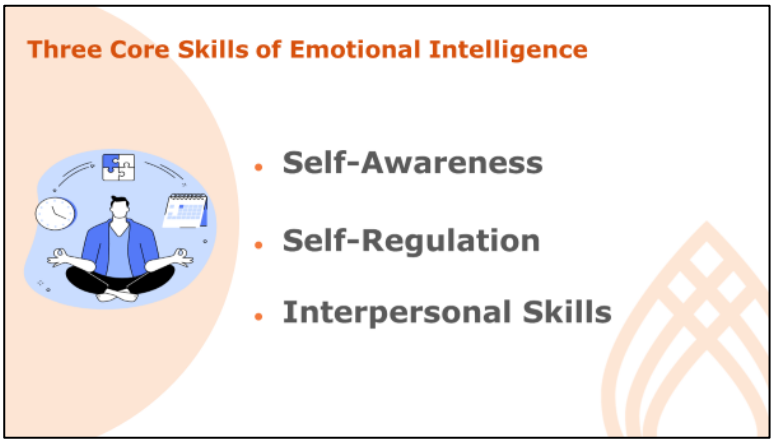
Critical Analysis - Emotional Intelligence for APS Supervisors

Time Allotted: 1 Hour and 45 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Examine emotional intelligence skills and how they support supervisory effectiveness through self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal relationships

Method: Lecture, small group discussion, self-reflection, polling

Slide #16: Three Core Skills of Emotional Intelligence



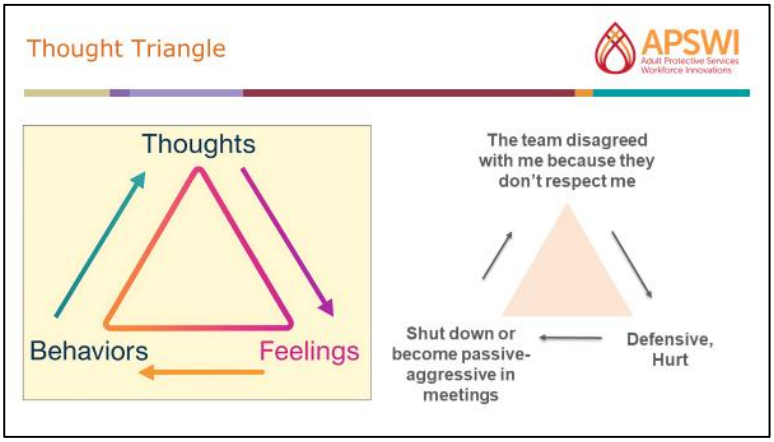
Share that within ICETE, one of the most important factors in the role of an APS Supervisor is developing Emotional Intelligence (EI) skills. EI is the capacity to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions, as well as to recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others. There are three core skills of Emotional Intelligence that we will focus on.

Share brief explanation of the three core skills of emotional intelligence:

- Self-Awareness: the ability to understand aspects of yourself, such as personality, values, beliefs, experience, emotions, and thoughts, and how they interact with your role and response.
- Self-Regulation: the ability to control one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts to pursue long-term goals.
- Interpersonal Skills: Developing an awareness of how you are perceived by others, and understanding the actions and behaviors of staff, administrators, and stakeholders.

Trainer note: Share that the Handout: Additional Resources in the Appendix includes video examples that illustrate Emotional Intelligence skills like self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal communication. These can be helpful tools for supervisors to reflect and practice.

Slide #17: The Thought Triangle



Trainer note: The section on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is not a complete description of the model, and participants should be guided to pursue resources outside this training for more information.

Explain that developing an understanding of the concept that our thoughts influence our feelings, and our feelings influence our behaviors, is the basis of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). It was developed by psychologists Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis. The relationship of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors is often illustrated through the "thought triangle"—a simple tool that shows how these three elements are interconnected. While CBT is a broader therapeutic approach, the thought triangle is introduced here as a reflective tool to support the development of self-awareness and emotional intelligence skills in the framework of Critical Analysis.

Explain that to use the thought triangle, think about an interaction or situation that stands out to you. Use a notebook, journal, or apps on an electronic device such as a cell phone, tablet, or software on a desktop or laptop computer to track your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Then look for patterns to understand yourself better and develop strategies to make changes.

Share an example of how to use the thought triangle is when a team conflict has occurred. The supervisor reflects and identifies:

- Thought: The team disagreed with me because they don't respect my ideas.
- Feeling: Defensive, hurt
- Behavior: Shut down or become passive-aggressive in meetings

The supervisor uses a reframing strategy to change their thought triangle to:

- New Thought: Maybe the disagreement is a sign of engagement, and the team is invested in the outcome.
- New Feeling: Curious, motivated, collaborative

- New Behavior: Engage the team, ask clarifying questions, and practice active listening

Share: Self-reflection techniques can be practiced in many different ways. Find the strategies that work best for you. An example may be to ask a colleague or someone you trust for feedback. Keep an open mind about feedback from others and use the information to generate ideas and identify strategies to address feelings. The goal is self-awareness, not perfection. Using self-reflection techniques like the thought triangle or asking for feedback helps develop self-awareness.

Slide #18: Emotional Intelligence: Self-Awareness and Making Mistakes



Share a common experience that can impact your emotions, thoughts, or behaviors, as an APS Supervisor, is realizing when you or the team you are supervising has made a mistake.

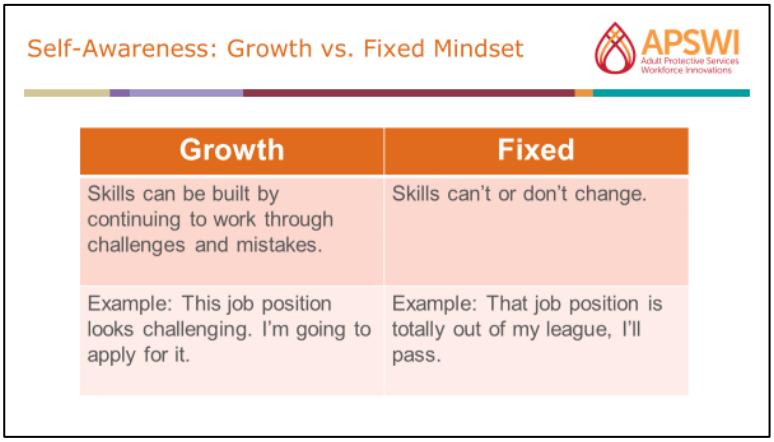
Share:

- This can cause feelings of embarrassment, diminish confidence, and lead to avoidance.
- It can also lead to feeling defensive or a denial of responsibility and looking for others to blame

Ask participants to pause and reflect on how they have felt when they made a mistake at work. **Ask** participants to type what they felt in the chat.

Reinforce that mistakes are also a learning opportunity, and we all make mistakes. Making decisions about APS casework, operations, budgets, supervision/staffing, and resources is highly complex, and any of these decisions can overlap with other work activities. This can lead to a layering effect of stress and responsibility.

Slide #19: Self-Awareness: Growth and Fixed Mindset



Share that recognizing, acknowledging, and managing mistakes through self-awareness is a vital professional skill. It not only supports your own growth but also fosters trust, accountability, and development among the people you lead.

Share that one way to manage mistakes is by using a growth mindset, developed by Carol Dweck, a researcher who studied student learning.

- A growth mindset is the perspective that skills can be built by continuing to work through challenges and mistakes.
- The opposite of a growth mindset is a fixed mindset, which has the perspective that skills can't or don't change.

Activity: Growth Mindset Chat Storm (15 minutes)

Video, Chat Storm

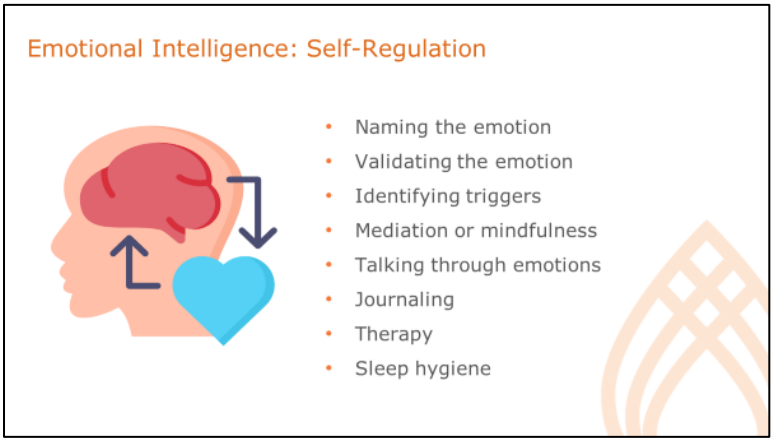
1. **Explain** that the next activity is called a *Chat Storm*. The trainer will post phrases in the chat about growth or fixed mindset, and after each phrase, the participants will answer in the chat if it demonstrates either growth or fixed mindset.
2. When the chat storm has been completed, then discuss how to rewrite examples of a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.

Trainer note: Use the phrases below for the chat storm. Be sure to mix up their order. Also, mention the APS Supervisor Desk Guide as a resource that includes videos demonstrating Growth Mindset concepts in action. Encourage participants to explore it after the training.

Growth	Fixed
I can learn to do anything I want.	I think there are limits to what I can learn
Failures are opportunities to grow.	If I don't try, then I won't fail and won't be embarrassed
That job position looks challenging. I'm going to apply for it.	That job position is totally out of my league. I'll pass.
I can become a great public speaker through practice.	I'm too shy to do public speaking.
Maybe there's a better way to accomplish this task.	I've always done things this way. Why change?
What do I need to do differently?	This isn't working out.
There's a training course I can take to develop leadership skills.	I'm not a natural leader, so I'm not cut out for leadership positions.
I haven't had the opportunity to be involved with strategic planning yet.	No, I don't have any experience in strategic planning.
I should learn more about data, even if it's not my favorite.	I hate dealing with data, I'm just not good with numbers.
I can organize a committee to help me plan an event.	Planning events is not my strength, so I don't even try.
I like doing work that I learn from, even if I make mistakes	When I make mistakes, it makes me feel that I shouldn't be doing the task because I'm not good at it.

3. Use **prompts** to generate a discussion following the Chat Storm:
    a. What resonated with you and why?
    b. Share any examples of growth and fixed mindsets you have observed at work.

Slide #20: Emotional Intelligence: Self-Regulation



Share the second of the three core skills of Emotional Intelligence is self-regulation.

Share the following information about self-regulation:

- Self-regulation is the ability to control one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term goals. In other words, to think before acting or emotional regulation.
- This includes the ability to respond to disappointment, unexpected changes, or outcomes, and maintain your values in your actions or emotions.

Review the following strategies to support self-regulation:

- Naming the emotion
- Validating the emotion
- Identifying triggers
- Mediation or mindfulness
- Talking through emotions
- Journaling
- Therapy
- Sleep hygiene

Ask participants if there are any additional strategies they employ or that they've seen others employ that supports self-regulation.

Slide #21: Emotional Intelligence: Self-Regulation and Self-Care



Share that self-care is a key practice for supporting emotional self-regulation. Prioritizing self-care enhances overall well-being, which in turn promotes more consistent and thoughtful decision-making. Without it, individuals may be more prone to reactive decisions and behaviors that can lead to less favorable outcomes.

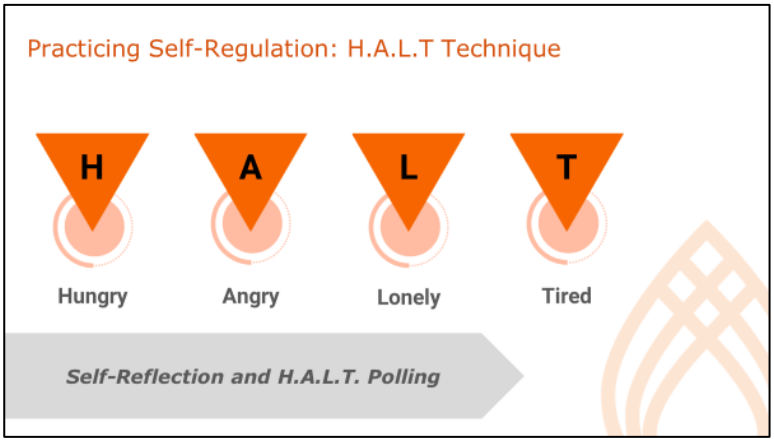
Share that self-care is not just a personal wellness practice, it's leadership competency. **Discuss**:

- Self-care helps you stay grounded, reduce reactivity, and make thoughtful, ethical decisions—even in high-pressure moments.
- Why it matters in APS work: You're often exposed to trauma, conflict, and emotionally intense environments. Without self-care, your ability to regulate emotions can erode, leading to burnout, compassion fatigue, or reactive decision-making. This is called dysregulation.
- Self-care isn't just about bubble baths or vacations. It includes small, in-the-moment practices that help you reset, like deep breathing, stepping outside for two minutes, or using grounding techniques after a tough call.
- Leadership impact: When supervisors model self-care, they normalize self-care practice for their teams. This builds a culture of resilience, not just compliance.

Ask participants, "when you find yourself dysregulated, how do you practice self-care in the moment?"

Remind participants that everyone experiences dysregulation, especially in emotionally demanding roles like APS. The goal isn't to avoid it entirely, but to recognize it early and respond skillfully.

Slide #22: The H.A.L.T Technique



Introduce a self-care practice called H.A.L.T, which stands for Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired. Originally developed within the recovery community, it is now widely used as a self-care tool. H.A.L.T is a quick and simple check-in tool used to support self-regulation and emotional awareness.

The idea is that when you feel off balance, professionals can pause—or "halt"—and check whether one of these four basic needs is being neglected.

- This helps individuals recognize when their physical or emotional needs may be impacting their behavior, decision-making, or emotional regulation.
- For example, when you feel irritable, overwhelmed, or reactive, HALT helps you pause and ask: What's really going on? It might be that it isn't the situation; it's that you skipped lunch, didn't sleep well, or felt disconnected.

Share that using H.A.L.T helps identify and address self-care needs. Review these self check-ins:

- Hungry: Are you physically hungry or lacking nourishment?
- Angry: Are you feeling frustrated, resentful, or emotionally charged?
- Lonely: Are you feeling isolated or disconnected from others?
- Tired: Are you physically or emotionally exhausted?

Explain that APS Supervisors often operate in high-stress environments, managing emotionally intense cases and supporting staff who are exposed to trauma.

Activity: H.A.L.T. Practice (5 minutes)

Self-Reflection and Poll (Option A) or Planning Grid (Option B)

Trainer note: below are two optional activities aimed at helping participants practice using the H.A.L.T technique. Choose the activity most appropriate for your facilitation comfort and based on the pacing of the class.

Option A:

1. **Share** that we're going to take a moment to check in with ourselves using the H.A.L.T framework. This is a private reflection exercise to help you identify how your current state might be influencing your focus, energy, or mood.
2. **Guide** a 1–2 Minute Mindfulness Review. **Encourage** participants to close their eyes or look away from the screen if they're comfortable. **Encourage** people to "Take a deep breath. Gently scan your body and mind. Ask yourself:
    a. Am I hungry—physically or mentally depleted?
    b. Am I angry—frustrated, irritated, or holding tension?
    c. Am I lonely—feeling disconnected or unseen?
    d. Am I tired—physically or emotionally drained?"
3. After completing the mindfulness review, **launch a quick poll** with three (3) questions. Possible questions include:
    a. "After your body scan, are you feeling any of the following":
        i. Hungry
        ii. Angry
        iii. Lonely
        iv. Tired
        v. None of the above
        vi. Not sure
    b. "How often do you pause to check in with your emotional or physical state during the workday?"
        i. Multiple times a day
        ii. Once a day
        iii. Occasionally
        iv. Rarely
        v. Never
    c. "Which of these quick self-care strategies have you used at work?"
        i. Deep breathing or grounding
        ii. Stepping outside or taking a short walk
        iii. Talking to a trusted colleague
        iv. Drinking water or having a snack
        v. Taking a few minutes of quiet
        vi. I do something different to practice self-care at work
4. **Debrief** briefly to share the anonymous results of the poll. **Normalize** the response and reinforce the value of pausing.
5. **Summarize** that the simple H.A.L.T check-in can help you pause before reacting, especially in high-stress moments. As supervisors, using H.A.L.T not only supports your well-being, but it also models emotional intelligence for your team. When supervisors model this kind of check-in, it gives

permission for others to do the same, and that builds a healthier, more resilient team culture. It can also help you prepare for high-stress activities such as meetings and presentations by reminding yourself to take care of your basic needs beforehand.

Option B:

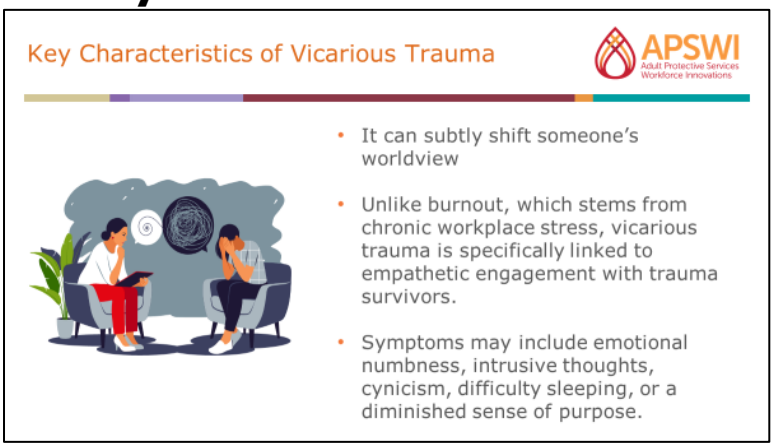
1. **Introduce** the H.A.L.T Planning Grid as a practical tool for identifying personalized strategies to support emotional regulation and self-care in the moment.
2. **Provide** participants with the ***Handout: H.A.L.T Planning Grid*** that includes the four H.A.L.T categories:
    a. Hungry
    b. Angry
    c. Lonely
    d. Tired
3. Each category includes space for participants to list 1–2 strategies they can use when they notice that need arising. **Examples** may include:
    a. Hungry: Keep a snack drawer, schedule lunch breaks
    b. Angry: Take a walk, use grounding techniques
    c. Lonely: Peer check-in, send a message to a colleague
    d. Tired: Stretch, step outside, adjust workload
4. **Ask** participants to complete the grid individually, then invite them to share one strategy from their grid in a large group discussion.
5. **Facilitate** a debrief by asking:
    a. *"Which H.A.L.T category do you tend to overlook?"*
    b. *"What new strategies did you hear from others that you might try?"*
6. **Summarize** that the H.A.L.T Planning Grid helps supervisors proactively prepare for moments of dysregulation and models intentional self-care for their teams.

Handout: H.A.L.T Planning Grid

Use this grid to identify strategies you can use in the moment when experiencing each H.A.L.T category.

HALT Category	What this might feel like	Strategies you can use in the moment
Hungry	Low energy, irritability, difficulty focusing	
Angry	Frustration, tension, short temper	
Lonely	Disconnected, isolated, withdrawn	
Tired	Fatigue, foggy thinking, low motivation	

Slide #23: Key Characteristics of Vicarious Trauma



Highlight that as an APS Supervisor, it can be easy to focus so fully on the needs of others that your well-being takes a back seat. Over time, this can lead to emotional strain, especially in the form of vicarious trauma, where exposure to others' suffering starts to affect your sense of safety, trust, or emotional balance. This is where self-care becomes more than just a wellness buzzword—it's a critical strategy for protecting your capacity to lead, connect, and sustain purpose in your work.

Share that supervisors play a vital role in supporting their team, and they cannot effectively address the issues if they are not aware of the risks and impacts on themselves. Vicarious Trauma:

- Can subtly shift someone's worldview, affecting beliefs about safety, trust, and justice.
- It is specifically linked to empathetic engagement with trauma survivors.
- This differs from burnout, which stems from chronic workplace stress..
- Symptoms may include emotional numbness, intrusive thoughts, cynicism, difficulty sleeping, or a diminished sense of purpose.

Describe that vicarious trauma refers to the emotional and psychological impact experienced by individuals who are indirectly exposed to the trauma of others—often through listening to distressing stories, witnessing suffering, or working closely with survivors. Understanding vicarious trauma is essential for building resilience, maintaining professional effectiveness, and supporting long-term mental health in high-impact roles.

Explain that there are some closely related terms that are often used interchangeably with vicarious trauma, such as compassion fatigue, and burnout. While the definitions can overlap, there are some differences.

- Compassion fatigue is emotional exhaustion caused by the ongoing demand to care for others, often leading to numbness or reduced empathy.
- Burnout is chronic workplace stress and shows up as fatigue, cynicism, and decreased performance, regardless of whether trauma is involved.

Note that definitions of these terms may vary across resources and agencies. For this training, we define vicarious trauma as the emotional impact of repeated exposure to others' traumatic experiences, which can lead to internal shifts in how one perceives safety, trust, and harm.

Share that now participants have explored the key characteristics and impacts of vicarious trauma, let's look at how supervisors can recognize and respond to it, both in themselves and in their teams.

Slide #24: Self-Regulation, Self-Care, and Vicarious Trauma



Validate that recognizing vicarious trauma isn't a sign of weakness; it's a sign of deep empathy. Once a supervisor recognizes the signs of vicarious trauma in themselves or staff, they can take steps to manage it by providing the opportunity to reflect not just on the performance and tasks of a case but also to share their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to their work. **Share** that some examples of this are:

- Practicing or Requesting Trauma-Informed/Reflective Supervision by asking open-ended questions, such as:
  - *What's been weighing on you lately?*
  - *How are you holding up after that case?*
  - *What support would be helpful right now?*
- Getting Support: from peers, colleagues, or others to identify and process emotional responses.
- Practicing Self-care: journaling, creative outlets, or mindfulness.
- Organizational Support: engaging in wellness practices, training and staff development, and utilizing employee assistance programs.

Ask participants if there are other ways they address the warning signs of vicarious trauma?

Validate strategies used by participants and highlight how those strategies can improve vicarious resiliency.

Slide #25: Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills



Share we will now review the third core skill of emotional intelligence for APS Supervisors: interpersonal skills.

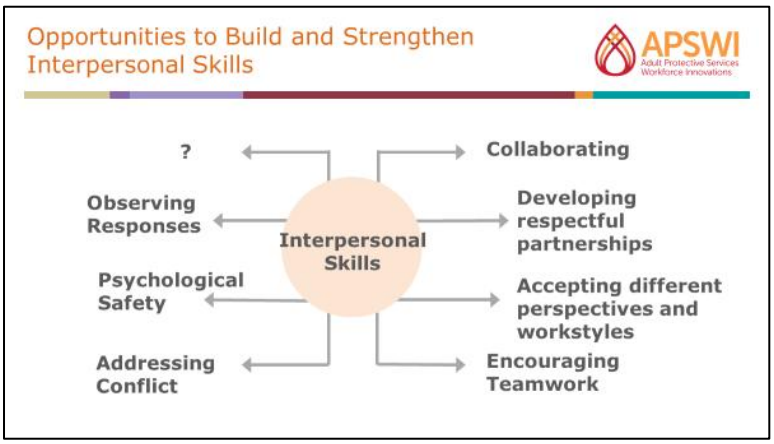
Explain that interpersonal skills involve developing an awareness of how you interact and are perceived by others. It is a critical factor in understanding the actions and behaviors of staff, administrators, and stakeholders.

Emphasize that interpersonal skills are essential for building positive relationships and fostering collaboration in the workplace.

- Unlike interactions with family and friends, at work, interpersonal skills may be more formal and are often shaped by workplace culture, hierarchies, and social cues.
- Getting along with people at all levels and in all areas at work is crucial for professional success because strong interpersonal skills help create a supportive environment, improve teamwork, and enhance leadership.

Note that whether guiding a team, engaging with community members, or interacting with executive management, the ability to connect with others, navigate workplace dynamics, and communicate with professionalism makes a significant impact on career growth and workplace harmony.

Slide #26: Opportunities to Build and Strengthen Interpersonal Skills



Explain that Supervisors should actively seek out opportunities to build their interpersonal skills because they enable supervisors to foster trust, motivate teams, and navigate complex workplace dynamics with confidence.

Explore opportunities to build interpersonal skills, including:

- Working in collaboration and developing respectful partnerships, being open to perspectives and work styles
- Teamwork is emphasizing and encouraging progress towards a common goal
- Active listening is paying attention to what people are saying and their body language, without multitasking
- Empathy is fostering a sense of connection and support for others
- Building trust and rapport is doing what you say you will do and explaining if you don't do something you said you would. Don't make promises that you don't have control over, such as adding more staff, etc.
- Meet with staff individually to get to know them and their work

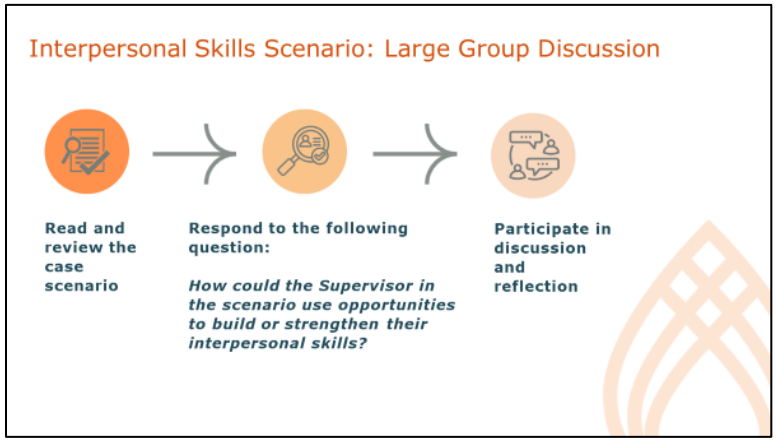
Explore how interpersonal skills can be strengthened by:

- Addressing conflict: Recognizing tension early and guiding conversations toward a shared understanding without rushing to fix it.
- Shifting a conversation's tone, pace, or approach by observing responses and emotional cues of others.
- Creating psychological safety by using validation, modeling curiosity, and listening to different views without defensiveness.
- Establishing boundaries by expressing limits with clarity and compassion.
- Recognition: take actions that recognize others' value, acknowledge staff's contributions in meetings, or follow up on someone's idea.

- Narrative framing: Reframing challenges or feedback in a way that aligns with shared values or growth.

Trainer note: there are handouts that include strategies to build and techniques to manage interpersonal skills including ideas about what to do when your interpersonal skills are challenged. They will not be reviewed in this training; they are provided as a resource.

Slide #27: Interpersonal Skills-Team Scenario



Activity: Scenario Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Large group discussion

1. **Ask** participants to locate the **Handout: Interpersonal Skills Team Scenario**.
2. **Invite** a volunteer to read the scenario below aloud.
3. After reading the scenario, **facilitate** a large group discussion asking the group, "How could the Supervisor in the scenario use opportunities to build or strengthen their interpersonal skills with the team?"
4. **Ask** participants to share ideas and discuss them in the chat or verbally.

Trainer note: Examples of ways to build interpersonal skills may include scheduling weekly one-on-one meetings with each staff member and practicing empathy and active listening during those conversations. To strengthen interpersonal skills, consider creating psychological safety by acknowledging staff members' feelings, validating their experiences, and encouraging open dialogue.

Handout: Interpersonal Skills with a Team Scenario

Lee is a new APS Supervisor who just moved to the area from a different part of the state. They know the state APS regulations well and are excited and motivated to learn how the team they are supervising manages their caseloads and duties.

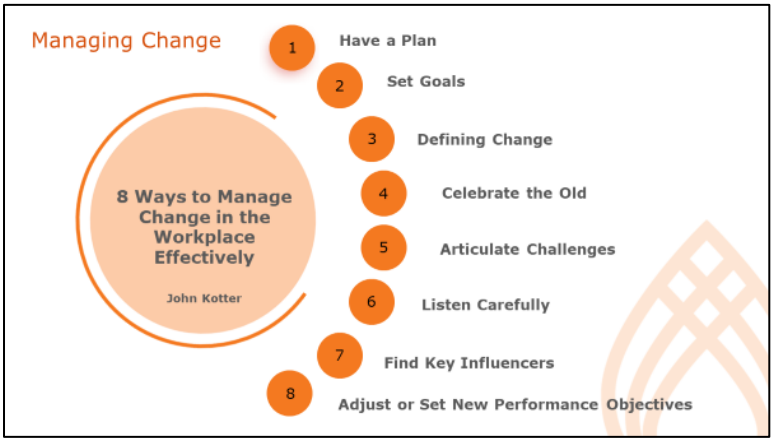
Lee doesn't know that one of the staff members, Terri, on the team, applied for and competed for the supervisor job that Lee now has. Terri is the "go-to" social worker on the team, and the rest of the team considers Terri their leader. When Terri was informed that they were not selected for the supervisor position, they were distraught and shared with the team members that they felt that nothing they did was ever good enough to get promoted.

When it was announced that Lee was hired for the position, the team reacted with anger and frustration toward Lee's boss, the manager. On Lee's first day, the manager shared the team dynamics with Lee and warns that Terri and the team are upset that Lee was hired.

At the first team meeting, which Lee scheduled for case review, the team members were quiet and avoided eye contact with Lee. There was a list of cases for the meeting, and they were asked to present case status updates. The team complied but spoke in very low voices and were not engaged or interacting with each other or with Lee. When Lee asked a question about how the program manages cases where an APS client is experiencing homelessness, one of the team members started frowning and shaking their head. The team member then said in a loud voice directed at Lee, that since Lee is their supervisor, they should know the answer. And then said Terri should be the supervisor, and that Lee must have only been hired because they were from a bigger city.

Discussion Question: How could the supervisor in the scenario use opportunities to build or strengthen their interpersonal skills with the team?

Slide #28: Managing Change



Share that most changes, no matter how well-intentioned they may be, will likely be disruptive to the staff and operational practices. It's natural for people to resist change, often driven by fear of losing control or facing uncertainty. As change becomes larger and more complex, the risks of negative outcomes increase, so it is helpful to have a systematic approach.

Explain that managing change requires more than just a structured plan, spreadsheets, and implementation steps; it also calls for strong interpersonal skills, as team members may respond to change in very different ways.

Share another area to rely on strong interpersonal skills is managing change.

- Some changes are directed by a person or entity in authority, such as an executive director, upper management, or a regulatory system.
- Other changes are made in a more voluntary manner because there is better practice or updated technology.
- Regardless of why the change is being made, APS Supervisors are expected to lead their teams through the changes.

Discuss the concept of "change management," which is a formal process for managing change.

- Popularized by author John Kotter, this is a different concept from traditional methods of change in work settings, which typically were top-down models.

Explain that the concept of change management means working closely with employees and setting clear goals about the change and the steps for implementing that change. This includes:

- Having a clear process for the change, which is key to successful change implementation.
- Look for staff who support change and invite them to be involved.

- Find champions and leaders who can support the change and encourage them to help others adapt.

Share that directives and/or "top-down" models of change still may occur when there are new regulations or operational requirements. But whenever possible, change management concepts are the ideal practice.

The article "8 Ways to Manage Change in the Workplace Effectively" identifies these steps that we will briefly review here. Participants can refer to the ***Handout: Additional Resources*** in their Appendix for more information. The eight steps are:

1) Have a Plan: Change should be intentional and strategic. A clear plan outlines what is changing, why, and how it will impact staff, clients, and stakeholders.
2) Set Goals: Define specific, achievable goals that help staff understand the purpose of the change and their role in achieving it.
3) Defining Change: Clearly articulate what is changing. Revisit and refine this definition as the change evolves to reduce confusion and rumors.
4) Celebrate Old: Acknowledge and honor past efforts. Recognizing what worked before helps staff feel valued and more open to new directions.
5) Articulate Challenges: Be transparent about potential obstacles. Discussing risks and unknowns builds trust and prepares staff for what's ahead.
6) Listen Carefully: Create space for staff to express concerns, ask questions, and share ideas. Active listening fosters engagement and psychological safety.
7) Find Key Influencers: Identify respected team members who can champion the change. Their support can help build momentum and credibility.
8) Adjust or Set New Performance Objectives: Align performance expectations with the change. Clarify how success will be measured and how roles may shift.

Describe how most organizations now adopt a continuous improvement strategy, which means supervisors and staff must recognize that change is an ongoing and inevitable part of the workplace. To guide their teams through these transitions effectively, leaders must be prepared to acknowledge and support the emotional responses that accompany change in order to foster the best possible outcomes.

<u>Activity: Reflect and Share (10 minutes)</u>

Individual Reflection and Discussion

1. **Recap** the concept of change management and the eight steps from the article "8 Ways to Manage Change in the Workplace Effectively." Share that participants will reflect on a real change they experienced or supported as a supervisor.
2. **Ask** participants to individually reflect on the following prompt:

   a. *Think of a change you went through—or a change your staff experienced. Review the eight steps of change management. Which steps were done well? Which were missed? How would you have approached it differently?*
3. **Encourage** participants to jot down notes or use the participant manual.
4. **Invite** participants to share one insight from their reflection in the chat or aloud in the large group.
5. **Facilitate** a brief discussion using guiding questions:
   a. "What made the change successful or challenging?"
   b. "Which interpersonal skills helped you navigate the situation?"
   c. "Were there missed opportunities to engage staff more effectively?"
6. **Summarize** that individual reflection helps supervisors build insight into their leadership style and identify strategies to improve future change efforts.
7. **Reinforce** that managing change is both a strategic and relational process.

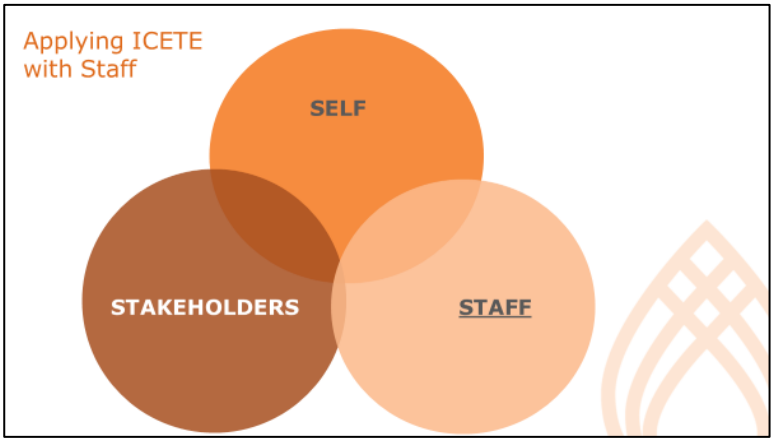
Applying Critical Analysis Skills to Staff

Time Allotted: 60 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Apply the elements of critical analysis to supervisory practices involving staff and stakeholder engagement

Method: Lecture, large group discussion, small group scenario work

Slide #29: Applying ICETE with Staff



Share that now participants have explored how ICETE—especially emotional intelligence—applies to their own self-awareness and leadership, the next step is to expand that lens outward.

Introduce that ICETE becomes even more powerful when applied to two key areas of a supervisor's role:

- Working with staff, where interpersonal dynamics, coaching, and support are essential
- Engaging with stakeholders, where communication, collaboration, and influence are critical

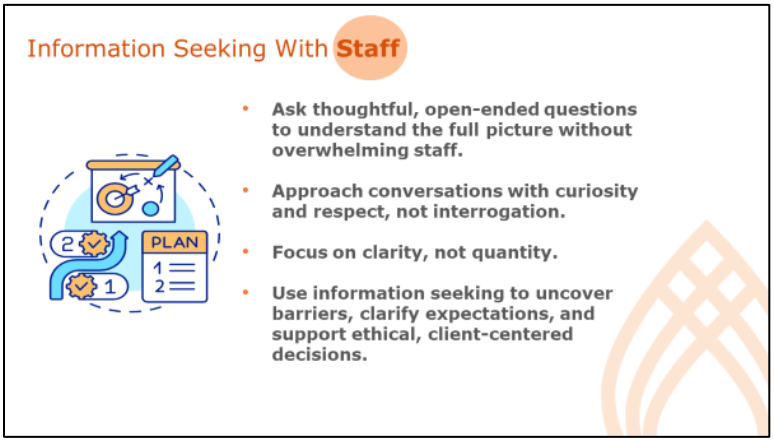
Share that these two areas require supervisors to use critical thinking and ethical decision-making in real-time, often under pressure.

Discuss applying ICETE to supervision:

- ICETE offers a structured approach to decision-making that supports effective supervision.
- When applied to staff interactions, it helps supervisors guide, mentor, and problem-solve with clarity and consistency.
- Each element of the ICETE model can be used to strengthen communication, build trust, and support staff development.

In the following slides, we'll explore how each component of ICETE applies to real-world supervisory scenarios.

Slide #30: Information Seeking with Staff



Review that information seeking involves gathering relevant facts, perspectives, and context to make informed decisions and support staff effectively.

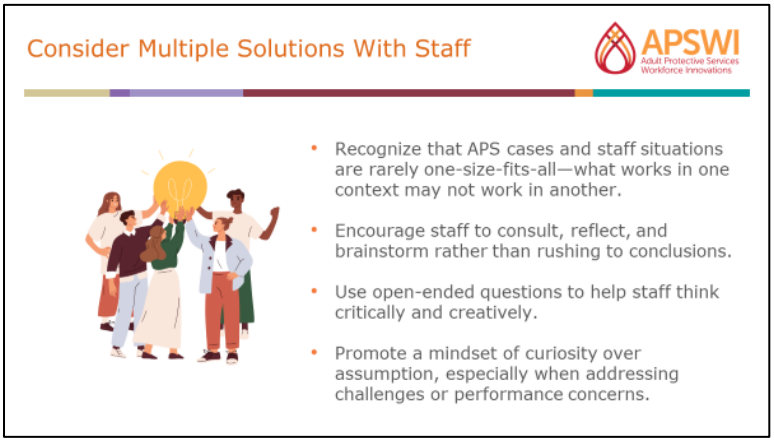
Discuss that in supervision, information seeking looks like:

- Ask thoughtful, open-ended questions to understand the full picture without overwhelming staff.
- Approach conversations with curiosity and respect, not interrogation.
- Focus on clarity, not quantity—seek the right information, not all the information.
- Use information seeking to uncover barriers, clarify expectations, and support ethical, client-centered decisions.

Share the following example:

- *A staff member is struggling to meet documentation deadlines. Instead of assuming the cause, the supervisor asks, "Can you walk me through what's been getting in the way of completing your notes on time?" This opens the door to understanding workload, system issues, or personal challenges without judgment.*

Slide #31: Considering Multiple Solutions with Staff



Review that considering multiple solutions means exploring a range of options and perspectives before making decisions or offering guidance.

Discuss that in supervision considering multiple solutions means you:

- Recognize that APS cases and staff situations are rarely one-size-fits-all, what works in one context may not work in another.
- Encourage staff to consult, reflect, and brainstorm rather than rushing to conclusions.
- Use open-ended questions to help staff think critically and creatively.
- Promote a mindset of curiosity over assumption, especially when addressing challenges or performance concerns.

Share the example: *A staff member is struggling with client engagement.*

Discuss how instead of offering a single solution, the supervisor might ask:

- *"What approaches have you tried so far? What else might work with this client's personality or situation?"*

Share that this opens space for reflection, shared problem-solving, and professional growth.

Slide #32: Emotional Intelligence with Staff



Review that emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions—and to recognize and respond effectively to the emotions of others.

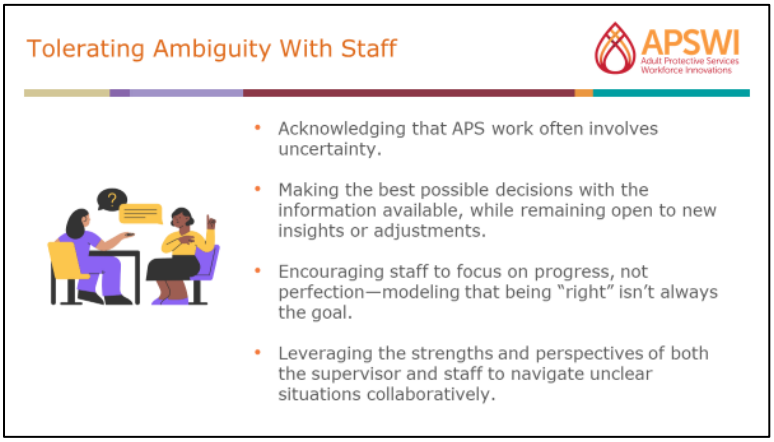
Discuss the following ways EI is applied in supervision:

- EI helps supervisors adopt a strengths-based perspective, especially when staff are facing challenges or self-doubt.
- Core EI skills include self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills, which enable supervisors to lead with empathy, patience, and clarity.
- Emotionally intelligent supervisors are better equipped to build trust, de-escalate tension, and model healthy communication.

Share the example: *A staff member becomes defensive during a performance conversation. Instead of reacting, the supervisor pauses, regulates their own response, and says, "I can see this feedback is hard to hear. Let's take a moment and talk through what's coming up for you."*

Share that this model's emotional insight and creates space for a more productive, respectful dialogue.

Slide #33: Tolerating Ambiguity with Staff



Review that tolerating ambiguity means remaining effective and composed when decisions must be made with limited or incomplete information.

Discuss that in supervision, tolerating ambiguity looks like:

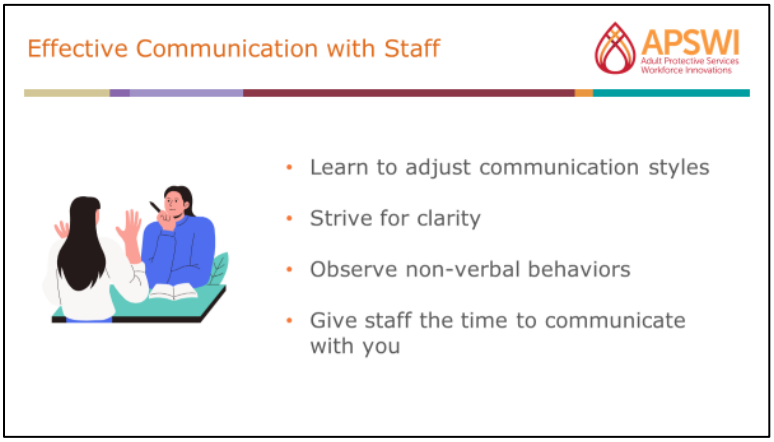
- Acknowledging that APS work often involves uncertainty—supervisors and staff may not always have all the answers or full context.
- Making the best possible decisions with the information available, while remaining open to new insights or adjustments.
- Encouraging staff to focus on progress, not perfection—modeling that being "right" isn't always the goal.
- Leveraging the strengths and perspectives of both the supervisor and staff to navigate unclear situations collaboratively.

Share the following example in practice: A new intake process is introduced, but the full guidance hasn't been released. A staff member asks how to proceed. The supervisor responds:

- *"We don't have all the details yet, but let's work with what we know and adjust as we learn more. I'll keep you updated, and we'll figure it out together."*

Share that this models flexibility, transparency, and shared problem-solving in the face of uncertainty.

Slide #34: Effective Communication with Staff



Review that effective communication is essential to strong supervisor-staff relationships and consistent service delivery. Many workplace conflicts stem from unclear or inconsistent messaging.

Discuss that in supervision, effective communication looks like:

- Using a variety of communication styles to meet different needs and preferences.
- Repeating key messages across different formats to reinforce clarity and understanding.
- Being intentional about tone, timing, and delivery, especially during high-stress or emotionally charged conversations.
- Modeling clear, respectful, and professional communication in both formal and informal settings.

Share common communication styles and how to use them:

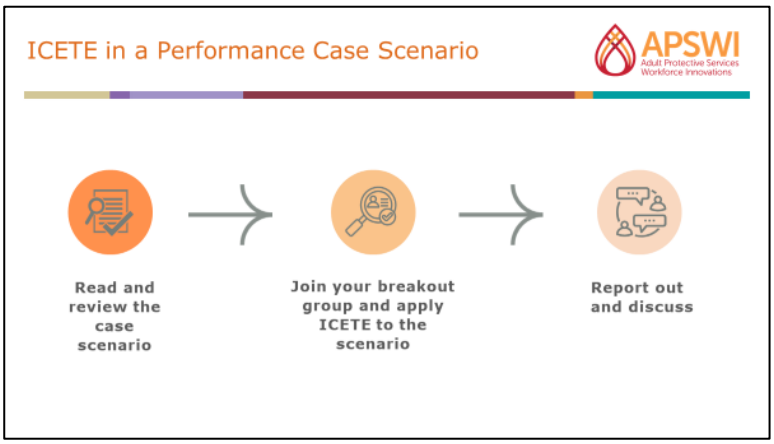
- Verbal: Speak clearly and confidently; practice active listening; avoid jargon or acronyms unless explained.
- Non-verbal: Be aware of body language, facial expressions, and tone—these often communicate more than words.
- Visual: Use charts, handouts, or whiteboards to support understanding; tailor visuals to your audience.
- Written: Proofread for clarity and tone; keep messages concise and professional; use tools like spell check and peer review.

Note for AI-generated content: Always review for accuracy, tone, and relevance before sharing—AI can be helpful, but it's not always context-aware.

Share the example that a supervisor introduces a new documentation protocol. To ensure clarity, they explain it verbally in a team meeting, follow up with a written summary, and provide a visual flowchart. They also check in individually with staff to answer questions and reinforce key points.

Share that this layered approach helps ensure the message is understood and reduces confusion or resistance.

Slide #35: ICETE in a Performance Case Scenario Activity



Activity: ICETE and Performance Case Scenario (20 minutes)

Small Breakout Discussions

1. **Explain** that this activity will take place in breakout groups. The purpose of this activity is to apply the ICETE framework to a real-world supervision scenario involving staff performance, encouraging critical thinking, collaboration, and practical application of each ICETE element.
2. **Direct** participants to the **Handout: Staff Performance Case Scenario**.
3. **Ask** each group to select a notetaker and a presenter, as they will share key takeaways from their 10-minute small breakout group discussion.
4. **Instruct** groups to read the scenario and develop at least two supervisory actions for each ICETE element.
5. **Encourage** groups to think about how each action supports staff development, ethical practice, and effective supervision.
6. **Invite** each group's presenter to share their group's highlights.
7. **Facilitate** a brief discussion after each report-out, drawing connections and key ICETE principles.
8. **Emphasize** that there is no single "correct" answer – this activity is about practicing structured decision-making and exploring options. Highlight how ICETE can be used proactively in supervision, not just reactively when issues arise.

Handout: Staff Performance Issues Case Scenario

An APS professional on your team seems to be having difficulty with case documentation in their case records. Case notes are often entered late (beyond the timeline specified in the policy/procedure, e.g., within 5 days; best practice is within 24 hours). This issue has been occurring for the last 6 months, and you have met with them monthly about the issue. The APS professional has explained they "have a lot on their plate" and has agreed to be more organized and to enter contact notes within the timelines. However, there has not been any noticeable improvement.

An hour before the regularly scheduled supervision meeting with you and the APS professional, you received an urgent call from the family member of a client on the APS professional's caseload. They were angry and wanted to know what was being done to assist their family members because there were still some safety concerns. You listened to the family member's concerns, took notes, asked questions about the circumstances, and explained to the family member that you would investigate their concerns after consulting with the APS professional and call them back later the same day.

To prepare for the meeting with the APS professional, you look up the case in the electronic case management system. There are no contact notes entered in the case that the family member had called you about.

Small Group Discussion Prompt: Discuss and develop at least two supervisory actions for each ICETE element.

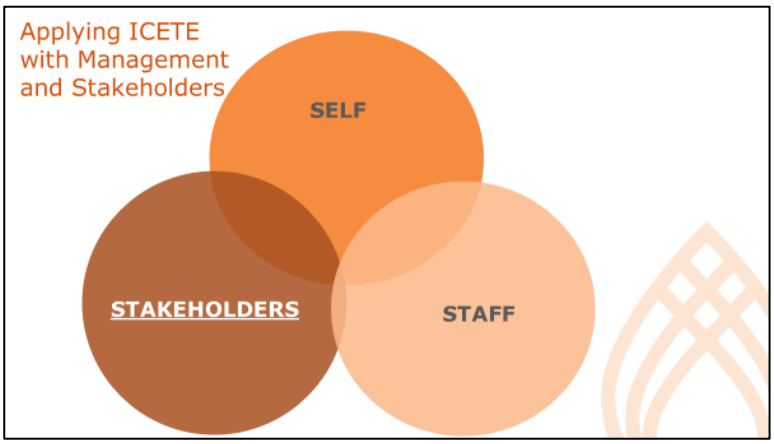
Applying Critical Analysis Skills to Stakeholders

Time Allotted: 45 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Apply the elements of critical analysis to supervisory practices involving staff and stakeholder engagement

Method: Lecture, large group discussion, small group scenario work

Slide #36: Applying ICETE with Management and Stakeholders



Introduce the application of the ICETE framework to interactions with management and external stakeholders, particularly in collaborative settings such as Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs).

Explain that APS Supervisors are not only team leaders, but they are also system navigators. They represent the APS program in broader networks that include legal, medical, financial, and social service systems. These interactions require diplomacy, clarity, and strategic thinking.

Clarify that stakeholders may include individuals or organizations such as state or county agencies, law enforcement, healthcare providers, legal professionals, advocates, and community-based organizations.

Discuss that a common method in which interactions take place with management and stakeholders is in Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs), Interdisciplinary Teams (IDTs), forensic teams, or complex case staffing. Different organizations use different terms, but what they have the common is that they consist of groups of people that can include clients, community members, advocates, law enforcement, community-based organizations, and various other allies and professionals who meet to review and discuss case status, outcomes, or to provide guidance.

Explain that stakeholders may have different mandates, priorities, and timelines. For example:

- Law enforcement may prioritize evidence and timelines for prosecution.
- Healthcare providers may focus on patient autonomy and discharge planning.
- Legal professionals may be concerned with capacity and consent.

- Community-based organizations may be focused on housing or food security.

Reinforce why ICETE matters when working with stakeholders like in MDTs. Supervisors must balance advocacy for clients, collaboration with partners, and accountability to their own agency. ICETE provides a framework to navigate these tensions with professionalism and purpose.

Ask participants to spend a few minutes reflecting on a time when they had to represent APS in a meeting with external partners. *What made it go well—or not so well? What ICETE skills were engaged?*

Slide #37: Applying ICETE with Partners and Stakeholder Meetings



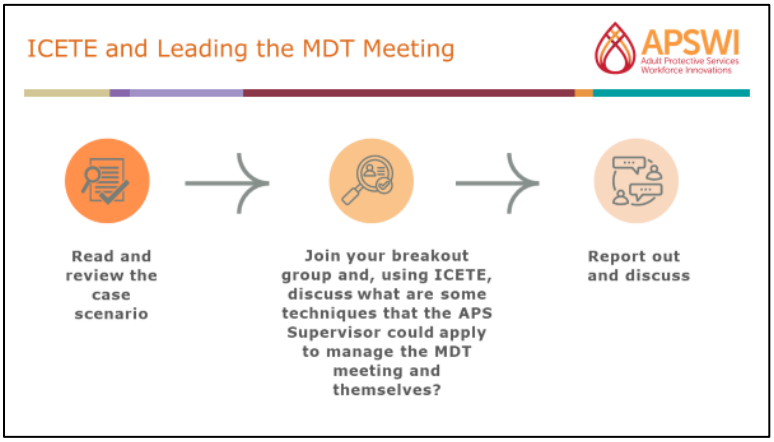
Explain that using ICETE can assist in the understanding and the structure of participants in an MDT or other stakeholder meetings, such as focus groups, town halls, and other organizational events.

- The Information Seeking element of critical analysis can be used to gather and evaluate relevant information about your stakeholders, such as their roles, interests, needs, expectations, and influence.
    - *Learn about each stakeholder's role, authority, and limitations.*
    - *Ask clarifying questions: "What is your agency's process for this type of case?"*
    - *Review MOUs, protocols, or past MDT notes to understand context.*
- The Considering Multiple Solutions element of critical analysis can mean analyzing and interpreting the data and results, and to identify any gaps, strengths, or areas for improvement.
    - *Encourage brainstorming: "What are all the possible paths forward?"*
    - *Acknowledge constraints: "Given your agency's scope, what's feasible?"*
    - *Use structured tools like pros/cons lists or decision trees.*
- The Emotional Intelligence element of critical analysis and skills of self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills can be used to engage with stakeholders, represent yourself and your employer in a professional manner, and build trust and rapport. And to challenge any assumptions you may have about your stakeholders and to seek feedback and clarification from them.
    - *Be aware of your own reactions, especially when tensions rise.*

    - *Use empathy to understand others' stressors or frustrations.*
    - *Build rapport by validating contributions: "I appreciate your perspective on this."*
- The Tolerating Ambiguity element can be used to manage change and weigh the pros and cons of different ideas or initiatives.
    - *Recognize that not all answers will be clear or immediate.*
    - *Model flexibility: "Let's revisit this next meeting after we gather more info."*
    - *Help the group stay focused on shared goals, even when the path is unclear.*
- The Effective Communication element of critical analysis includes strategies to foster partnership and collaboration in meetings and for projects. Messages can be adjusted for various stakeholders, to suit the needs and expectations of different stakeholders, and to address any issues or concerns they may have.
    - *Use plain language and avoid jargon.*
    - *Summarize key points and next steps at the end of meetings.*
    - *Follow up in writing to ensure shared understanding.*

Ask participants which ICETE element they find the most challenging to apply in stakeholder meetings, like MDTs, and why? **Validate** participant experiences and link to ICETE elements.

Slide #38: ICETE and Leading the MDT Meeting



Activity: ICETE and Leading the MDT Meeting (20 minutes)

Small Breakout Groups

1. **Explain** that this activity focuses on applying the ICETE framework to a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meeting scenario.
2. **Ask** participants to locate the **Handout: Leading the MDT Meeting** in their participant manuals.
3. **Share** that the goal is to explore how supervisors can use ICETE to manage both the meeting and their own role effectively.
4. **Divide** participants into small groups and **instruct** each group to select a notetaker and presenter.
5. The group will have 10 minutes to review the MDT scenario and answer the following question:
    a. Using ICETE, what are some questions and techniques that the APS Supervisor could apply to manage the MDT meeting and themselves? Describe why you think your answers would help.
6. **Reconvene** the large group. **Invite** each group's presenter to share highlights from their discussion.
7. **Facilitate** a brief discussion after each report out providing feedback, drawing connections to ICETE principles, and highlight effective strategies shared by participants.

Trainer note: Possible responses for debrief facilitation:

- *Information Gathering: Create a shared understanding by asking each agency for their perspectives.*
    - *"What are the key priorities or concerns from your agency's standpoint?"*

- *Consideration of Multiple Solutions: Engage the group to think of possibilities (outside of the box).*
    - *"Let's map out a few different paths forward—what are the trade-offs of each?"*
- *Emotional Intelligence: Use empathy and active listening for the team.*
    - *"It sounds like there's some frustration around timelines—let's sort that out."*
    - *Use the HALT check-in method for themselves (the APS Supervisor in the scenario) and suggest a quick break from the MTD meeting.*
- *Tolerating the Ambiguity: Acknowledge the work everyone is doing and the complexity of the case.*
    - *"We may not land on a perfect answer today—but we can agree on a next step and revisit as we learn more.*
- *Effective Communication: Use clear communication, take notes, and summarize key points. Create an action plan for next steps.*
    - *Ask team members for input and create an action plan for next steps.*

8. **Summarize** and **review** ICETE in stakeholder engagement including:
    a. Information Seeking: Understand stakeholder roles, mandates, and constraints.
    b. Considering Multiple Solutions: Explore collaborative strategies and shared goals.
    c. Emotional Intelligence: Build rapport, manage reactions, and foster trust.
    d. Tolerating Ambiguity: Navigate uncertainty and competing priorities.
    e. Effective Communication: Tailor messages, clarify expectations, and follow up.

Handout: Leading the MDT Meeting

You are a supervisor in an APS-led Multi-Disciplinary Team (MTD) with a focus on financial abuse/exploitation cases. It is your role to chair the meeting. The MDT partners include:

- APS caseworkers and an APS Supervisor (you)
- Public Guardian/Conservators caseworkers and a supervisor
- Area Agency on Aging coordinator
- Local Law Enforcement Detectives, and the Deputy District Attorney for financial crimes,
- Legal Counsel for APS

The MDT has been in existence for many years, but recently, there has been a lot of staff turnover in all agencies participating. The team works on cases together, APS, Public Guardian/Conservators, and law enforcement make joint home visits to APS clients.

The team meets two times a month to present cases. The APS caseworker, public guardian/conservator caseworker, and the law enforcement detective provide initial presentations on their assessment and investigative findings from the joint home visits and follow-up work. Other members of the team may present additional information they have and ask clarifying questions.

Usually, during the meetings, action steps are identified and assigned for follow-up and are given a timeline (typically two or four weeks). Lately, the team has been struggling with collaboration, and resentment has been building between the agencies. All agencies feel like they are doing the bulk of the work, and the others aren't collaborating enough. Communication has decreased, and tension surfaces in the meeting when reviewing a complex case. None of the agencies think they can do anything more to help the client. But they all think another agency should do something. As the APS Supervisor leading the meeting, you are feeling pressure to resolve the client's situation and are frustrated that none of the other agencies seem willing to help.

Group Discussion: *Using ICETE, what are some questions and techniques that the APS Supervisor could apply to manage the MDT meeting and themselves? Describe why you think your answers would help.*

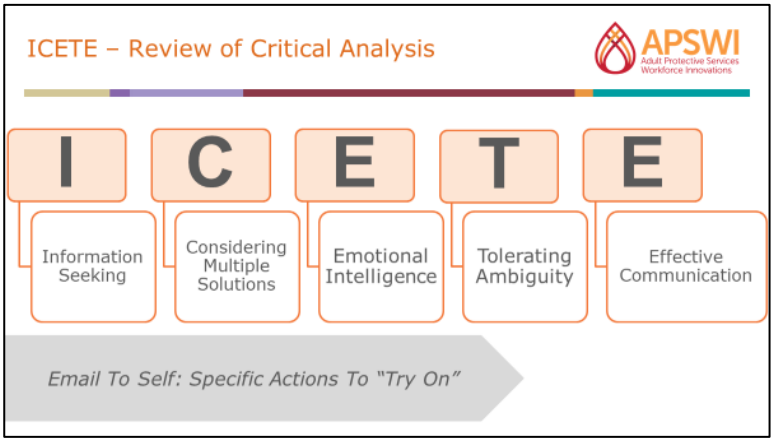
Closing and Wrap-Up

Time Allotted: 15 minutes

Associated Objective(s): N/A

Method: Lecture, self-reflection, and discussion

Slide #39: ICETE – Review of Critical Analysis



Trainer note: This section is designed to consolidate participant understanding of the ICETE framework and its application across supervisory contexts. It reinforces the integration of critical analysis into daily decision-making and leadership practices.

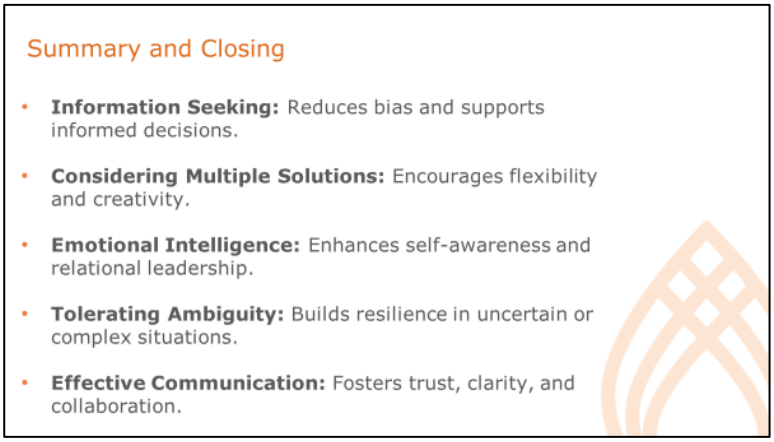
Activity: ICETE Personal Commitment (5 minutes)

Self-Reflection and Writing

1. **Display** the ICETE chart or infographic. Use it as a visual anchor to prompt recall and discussion.
2. **Invite** participants to reflect on each ICETE element. **Ask** open-ended questions such as:
    a. "Which element have you used most recently?"
    b. "Which one do you want to strengthen?"
3. **Let** participants know this is a private, self-directed reflection. **Ask** participants to open a blank email addressed to themselves. This can be done on their work or personal device, whichever they're more likely to revisit.
4. **Instruct** participants to write a short response to the following:
    a. "Identify a real-world scenario in your current role where you could apply one or more elements of ICETE—whether with staff, stakeholders, or in your own self-reflection as a supervisor."
5. **Ask** them to include one specific action they want to try based on today's training. For example:
    a. "I will use the HALT method before difficult conversations."
    b. "I will ask more open-ended questions during supervision to support information seeking."
    c. "I will pause to consider multiple solutions before offering guidance."

6. **Encourage** them to send the email to themselves as a reminder and personal commitment. **Suggest** they set a calendar reminder to revisit it in two weeks.

Slide #40: Summary and Closing



Share that throughout this training, we explored how Critical Analysis—through the lens of the ICETE framework—can strengthen supervision, decision-making, and leadership in Adult Protective Services. Critical Analysis, at its core, is the intentional process of examining information, perspectives, and emotions to make thoughtful, ethical, and effective decisions. It helps APS Supervisors move beyond reactive responses and toward reflective, values-driven leadership. In APS, where decisions often involve high stakes and emotional complexity, critical analysis provides a structure for clarity, consistency, and compassion.

Remind participants we examined how each element of ICETE supports ethical, emotionally intelligent, and effective practice:

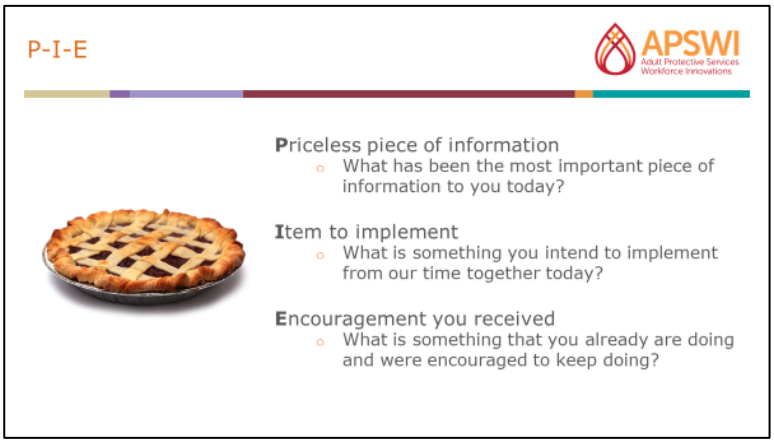
- Information Seeking: Reduces bias and supports informed decisions.
- Considering Multiple Solutions: Encourages flexibility and creativity.
- Emotional Intelligence: Enhances self-awareness and relational leadership.
- Tolerating Ambiguity: Builds resilience in uncertain or complex situations.
- Effective Communication: Fosters trust, clarity, and collaboration.

Remind participants we applied ICETE to:

- Self-reflection and emotional intelligence
- Staff supervision and performance management
- Stakeholder engagement and MDT collaboration

Trainer note: Use this slide to revisit the learning objectives and confirm they've been met. Reinforce that ICETE is a flexible, practical tool—not a rigid formula.

Slide #41: P.I.E.



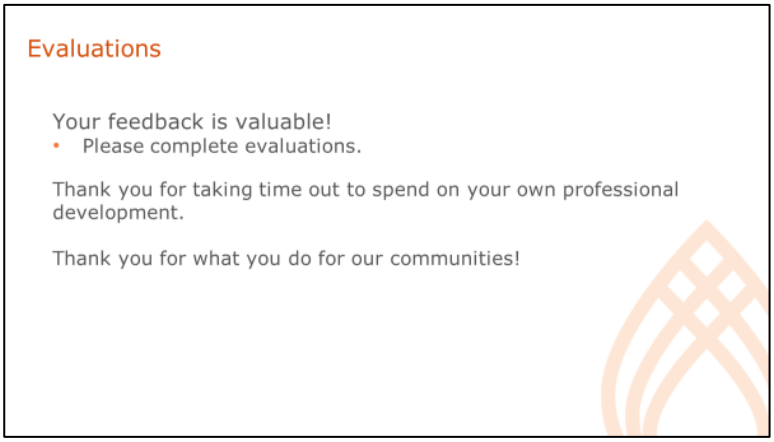
Inform participants that we'll wrap up the day by reflecting on their experience.

Activity: P-I-E (5 minutes)

Large Group Discussion

1. **Ask** participants to silently take five (5) minutes to answer the following questions, on their own. Those who want to share can do so after everyone's had the time to individually answer.
    a. P- Priceless piece of information. What has been the most important piece of information to you today?
    b. I- Item to implement. What is something you intend to implement from our time today?
    c. E- Encouragement I received. What is something that I am already doing that I was encouraged to keep on doing?
2. Once complete, **ask** for volunteers to share what they wrote down for each reflection.
3. If time allows, **debrief** with the following questions:
    a. What are some of the key words that you heard while you shared?
    b. What were the common themes that kept coming up?
    c. What would it mean for APS if we implemented the things on your PIE?
    d. What would it mean for APS if we did not implement the things on your PIE?

Slide #42: Evaluations



Provide information on how to complete evaluations.

Thank participants for taking time out of their day for their professional development and dedication to support older adults and adults with disabilities.

Slide #43: Thank You!



Appendix

Handout: Interpersonal Skills

Strengthening Interpersonal Skills

Supervisors can strengthen their interpersonal skills through intentional strategies and everyday practice. By focusing on key behaviors and seeking out real-time feedback, supervisors can build their emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills to become more impactful and connected.

Strategies to build Interpersonal skills at work are:

- Be aware of your facial expression and body language
- Understand when your reaction may have affected a person or team member
- Take ownership of mistakes and apologize when needed
- Ask for feedback
- Observe other people's interpersonal skills, and make notes of what you admire
- Take the time to develop relationships with your team and colleagues
    - Discuss non-work activities and find common interests
    - Observe the workplace culture, and ask people what they like about working there
    - Organize optional team activities, taking walks, coffee breaks, or lunch breaks
- Consider taking leadership coaching or mentorship programs

Techniques to Manage Interpersonal Skills and Emotions

Supervisors are more than task managers, they are relationship builders, communicators, and culture shapers. Learning techniques to manage and strengthen interpersonal skills is essential because these skills directly influence how effectively a supervisor leads, motivates, and resolves challenges within a team.

Techniques to Manage Interpersonal Skills- Emotions:

- Practice and Pre-Plan: Reflect on instances at work when you have felt frustrated, stressed, or overwhelmed.
    - Try to identify the source of your feelings by keeping a journal to track when you're the most stressed, angry, or upset. Use the thought triangle to look for patterns and precipitating events.
- Be proactive- Instead of waiting for negative emotions to appear, plan how to keep the emotions at bay.

- For example, before a meeting or interaction, think about the points you want to convey, and stick to them!
- Anticipate questions or responses from the team or individual you are meeting with and develop responses to address them.
- Check in with yourself - consider your self-care routine, and if you are experiencing HALT. Address your needs before the interaction.
- Talk to someone- If you have a trusted friend, therapist, or mentor to whom you can express your feelings, you may be able to express your feelings in a safe environment and in a healthy way.
- Consider taking additional training courses.

What to do When Interpersonal Skills are Challenged

When an APS Supervisor realizes their interpersonal approach has missed the mark—whether it's a tense conversation, a misunderstood comment, or an emotional response- the following techniques can help reset these situations:

Techniques to use in the moment:

- Give yourself a "time out" to process the events or events that may be causing strong emotions – ask to reschedule the meeting or conversation
- Take a break, get a drink of water, or step outside
- Don't be quick to judge- Take a moment to think about what is causing negative emotion to make sure that it is the true source.
  - For example, ask yourself, are you upset at an employee, the team, or is there something else driving the emotion?
- Use deep breathing techniques
- Repeat a mantra, such as "Keep Calm and Carry On."
- Check in with yourself - consider your self-care routine, and if you are experiencing HALT

Handout: Examples of Applying ICETE to the Staff Performance Case Scenario

Information Seeking (I): *After the phone call, the supervisor seeks and gathers additional information:*

- *Review the current case and previous case history*
- *Review full caseload for status*
- *Review recent schedule (vacation/sick leave and remote workdays)*
- *Review other job-related tasks or commitments such as training, committee meetings, etc.*
- *In supervision with the APS professional, ask open-ended questions:*
    - *"What are your thoughts (or plan) for this case?"*
    - *"What steps have you taken on this case?"*
    - *"Describe any barriers to making contact with the client."*

Consider Multiple Solutions (C)*: the supervisor considers possible reasons why the case notes are not entered and why the client has not been seen by the APS professional*

- *Is the APS professional writing notes on a notepad or in a document, but not entering them into the system?*
- *Does the APS professional have other cases that are high risk/need that are taking the majority of their time?*
- *Is the APS professional facing some personal stressors, or has been on vacation or sick leave?*
- *Does the APS professional need training or a training refresher?*
- *Is the APS professional's WIFI or other equipment working?*
- *In supervision with the APS professional ask open-ended questions:*
    - *"Tell me how you work through a case, including how and when you enter the required case documentation in the system"*
    - *"Your caseload seems pretty high, tell me what is going on in some of your other cases?"*
    - *"Share your experience using the system"*
    - *"How can I best support you?"*
    - *"How has your (laptop, tablet, etc.) been working when you are in the field (and/or when working from home)?*

Emotional Intelligence (E)*: After talking with the family member, the supervisor is feeling frustrated and angry that the APS professional has not made contact yet.*

- *<u>Self-awareness:</u> The supervisor acknowledges and is aware that when they are yelled at by anyone, it is uncomfortable, embarrassing, and frustrating.*

Also, when there is no case documentation, the supervisor feels like they can't respond with any facts.

- *In supervision with the APS professional, the supervisor shares the details of the conversation with the family member, and how it made them feel like they were unable to respond*
- *The supervisor asks the APS professional what their experience has been with the client/family and how they feel about the case/ phone call*
- *Discuss the need for case documentation to be entered within timelines.*

- *Self-Regulation: After the phone call and before the meeting with the APS professional, the supervisor takes a brief walk outside, to shift the mindset from feeling frustrated to a problem-solving approach.*
  - *When meeting with the APS professional, if the supervisor starts to feel frustrated again, the supervisor can excuse themselves for a moment to get a drink of water, and/or use a small stress/squeeze ball in one hand and continue the meeting.*
  - *If the APS professional has become frustrated/defensive, the supervisor can suggest a brief break, and/or pause the discussion about this case and move to another topic or end the meeting and reschedule the meeting for some additional time.*
- *Interpersonal Skills: The supervisors can consider consulting with colleagues and/or their manager to inquire about strategies for managing difficult communications with people who are angry and also with managing staff who are not compliant with regulations.*
  - *In the meeting with the APS professional, they stated that the same family member who called the supervisor had called the APS professional and left verbally abusive and insulting messages (no threats) on their voicemail. The APS professional says they felt intimidated to call the person back so they haven't. The supervisor can:*
    - *Acknowledge that taking calls and working with people who are angry or upset is never easy and is a common experience for APS professionals and Supervisors.*
    - *Validate the APS professional's skill set and encourage them to call the family member back.*
    - *Empower the APS professional with agency rules about anti-harassment and the process to give 2 warnings that the abusive or insulting language must stop or the phone call will be terminated.*

- *Identify some response strategies with the APS professional to manage communication with people when they are angry or upset.*

***Tolerating Ambiguity (T)**: Despite all the efforts, the supervisor may still not understand why the APS professional has not documented the case notes in the case. However, the supervisor may never know the reasons or circumstances that are affecting the APS professional's compliance with the notes. The efforts to engage and strategize with the APS professional have been successful in other areas, but not in developing an understanding of why the case notes are not being entered.*

- *Shift the focus from trying to engage the APS professional to develop an understanding of the reasons for missing case notes, to a policy-based discussion about case notes, and offer support with training and coaching.*

***Effective Communication (E)**: Continue discussions with the APS professional in supervision and additional meetings if needed, about case notes and the requirements. Review policy, and best practices i.e. using a structure such as a narrative-assessment-plan (NAP); limiting direct quotes, summarizing, and essential elements that should be included (risk of safety or harm, unmet basic needs)*

- *Ask the APS professional to rephrase their understanding of the policy and why it is important (legal, ethical, safety, and risk)*
- *Discuss ideas to support the APS professional*
  - *Scheduling time on their calendars each day to write case notes/documentation in the system for 2 hours each day*
  - *Provide examples of case notes*
  - *Offer to review/discuss case notes before the APS professional finalizes them*
- *Encourage the APS professional to ask for help/guidance*
- *Assign or encourage additional training*

Handout: Additional Resources

See the following additional resources as referenced throughout the training.

Critical Analysis Elements Additional Resources:

- Information Seeking: 10 effective brainstorming techniques for teams
- Consider Multiple Solutions: Essential Guide to the 6 Stages of Decision-Making Process and Problem Solving Strategies for the Workplace [2025] • Asana
- Emotional Intelligence: What is emotional intelligence, and how can you develop it?
- Tolerate Ambiguity: Managing ambiguity is an important skill in both personal and professional life, as it allows you… | by Ahmad J. Naous Ph.D,CPSSE | Medium
- Effective Communication: Active Listening: Communication Skills
- Desk Guide: Frameworks for Engaging in Difficult Conversations

Additional Reading and Resources on Emotional Intelligence:

Self-Awareness

- Thought Triangle: The Positive CBT Triangle Explained (+11 Worksheets)
- Growth Mindset: 15 Ways to Build a Growth Mindset | Psychology Today
- How to Learn from Your Mistakes - ... And Put Those Lessons into Practice (mindtools.com)
- Reframing: Boost Your Mood: 6 Tools for Reframing Negative Thoughts | Health.mil

Self-Regulation:

- HALT: Pay Attention to These Four Stressors
- Vicarious Trauma: What Is Vicarious Trauma? How To Cope
- Emotional Regulation
- Self-Care Plan: Social-Work-Tech-Self-Care-Plan-en-1.pdf (socialworktech.com)
- Self-Assessment: Social-Work-Tech-SA-bw.pdf (socialworktech.com)

Interpersonal Skills

- Empathy: Definition, Types, and Tips for Practicing
- Change Management: The Four Principles Of Change Management – Forbes Advisor
- Sarah Model: SARAH Model Of Change: The Change Curve For Projects | Insights Spotter

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