



**[00:00:00.810] - Kianna Bermudez**

Well hi, everyone. Thank you so much for being here today. We are [MENTOR Maryland | DC](#), and you are joining our Becoming a Better Mentor training on strategies to be there for young people. This is based off of a curriculum called [Becoming a Better Mentor](#) or a resource rather, and we'll be reviewing information from chapter one, which is providing emotional support and empathy. So our host today is Renee Angelo-Mauk. They'll introduce themselves when they are able to come back on. We have a few other members from our team here. My name is Kianna Bermudez, as I am the Program Outreach and Support Manager for the Greater Maryland region. So if any of y'all are Maryland programs, I'm your point of contact. Hello. We have a few other of our staff here today as well. Rebecca, I'll let you introduce yourself, then we can pass it to Andre, too.

**[00:00:49.230] - Rebecca Shipman**

Hi, I'm Rebecca. It's nice to be here with all of you. I am- this is my first week as the Workplace Mentoring VISTA under Kiana's supervision, and I will be excited to learn and hopefully assist you all in the future.

**[00:01:11.830] - Andre Forrester**

Hi, everybody. My name is Andre Forrester. I'm the Marketing and Communications associate here at MENTOR Maryland DC. It is wonderful to see you guys all this morning.

**[00:01:20.390] - Kianna Bermudez**

And we also have Andrew and Daon on if y'all want to quickly introduce yourselves.

**[00:01:25.930] - Andrew Lolavar**

Hello. My name is Andrew Lolavar. I'm the Program Outreach VISTA working with under Daon and MENTOR Maryland | DC. I'm in my second term now as an Americorps VISTA, working with everyone. This is a great training, and I hope you guys enjoy it.

**[00:01:42.690] - Daon Mclarin Johnson**

Hey, good morning, family. My name is Daon Johnson, I am Kianna's counterpart. So responsible for DC, Prince George's, Montgomery County, and even the southern counties just south of Prince George's, Charles and St. Mary's and Calvert. This is an amazing training, just as Andrew shared. And so put your seatbelts on. We're excited that you're here.

**[00:02:10.970] - Kianna Bermudez**



Awesome. Thanks for all those introductions. I'm going to pass it back over to Renee to kick us off with the training.

**[00:02:18.170] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

All right, thank you, everybody, for being patient. The timing was so perfect that they knocked on my door and I forgot that they said they were going to come by either today or tomorrow. So the timing was great. Thank you to my colleagues for stepping in. We are MENTOR Maryland | DC. As you heard from them, we are one of many affiliates to the [National Mentoring Partnerships](#), and our goal is to uplift the urgency of mentoring. And we have been here in Maryland since 2018 and officially expanded into DC with the help of Daon in 2021. And our goal not only here in Maryland and DC, but across the nation, is to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships so we can close the mentoring gap. And now more than ever, we know that young people need caring adults in their lives. So our goal as a nonpartisan organization is to galvanize the mentoring movement to be your community based experts. And you'll hold learning opportunities like this to help you organizations, mentors in the community, get the things you need to do the best work and serve young people. So we are happy to do that, and we do that in a few different ways.

**[00:03:28.580] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So one being connected to the National Mentoring Partnership, who do tons of great things like research, like releasing resources, like becoming a better mentor, which we'll talk about, the [National Mentoring Summit](#), which is coming up in January. We hope you will be there. I'm presenting a workshop there, so if you do come, please come to my workshop. Shameless Plug. But yes, everything that they do, we filter and bring to you. So today is one of those examples of that free, [no cost technical assistance](#) to you. So this is an opportunity to connect with us or one of our amazing consultant experts for one on one support for your mentoring program, on whatever your mentoring program needs, so that's help with recruitment, help with procedures and policies. This is an opportunity that you can apply for. And when you get these slides, all of these are clickable links that will take you right there. Access to the [Mentoring Connector](#). So Andrew, who's on the call you just saw, monitors Regional Mentoring Connector. But the Mentoring Connector nationally is the only database of mentoring programs that you can list your program opportunities for prospective volunteers who are looking for volunteer mentoring opportunities in their community and they can find your program.

**[00:04:45.800] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So it is again, also everything we're talking about is free, I just said in the chat. So yes, we want you to take advantage of the opportunities, of course, trainings like this. We have our public training calendar with at least one training a month. So be in touch. Make sure you get our newsletter so you have the opportunity to join us virtually and in person that time. Promotion of Best Mentoring Practices so again, we've mentioned that the National Mentoring Partnership does a lot of research which we aim to share with you in digestible ways such as today. So that includes the Elements of Effective Practice for



Mentoring, which is on its fourth edition. But the fifth edition is coming out next year. So when it does, we'll be sharing that with you, so we can all get up to speed together on ensuring our programs are implemented in absolute best practices. Speaking of the [National Quality Mentoring System](#), which also is in its newest version, coming out right now, this fall. So this is a national stamp of approval that your program can get via our technical assistance. So again, a free opportunity to essentially audit your program for quality and also get an improvement plan, because we all have room for improvement to get an even higher level of the NQMS.

#### **[00:05:59.370] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So if you're interested in seeing where your program stands as far as national standards, apply for technical assistance and go through the NQMS process with one of our consultants. We aim to keep you abreast of opportunities for funding because we know that's on everyone's mind. So again, [subscribe to our newsletter](#). And if you're just starting a program, please be in community with us. We want to be in touch with our grassroots program so we can support you because we know there are young people out there who are still disconnected and need programs like you and are looking for their niche. This is your first time on a Zoom call. Welcome. No judgment whatsoever. We want to make the most of our virtual environment, so if you can come off video, we'd love to see you. We will have breakouts and conversations today. This is going to be kind of a discussion heavy topic. We're talking about empathy, so it's very person to person and dog apparently included. So if you can come off video, we'd love to see you. Otherwise, there's other ways to interact as well. So we have the chat, of course. Please keep the chat lively and then we have all of our reactions over here as well.

#### **[00:07:08.470] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So please feel free to interact with our yes and stop button, our slow down button. You'll never ask me to talk faster button, but that will be that. Please raise your hand if you want to contribute. I'll let you know if you don't need to do that. So yeah, we hope you will engage with us in a multitude of ways. This is meant to be an engaging topic, but an engaging training for those of us who haven't been in a MENTOR Maryland DC space before. We do have standards for how we hold community in whatever spaces that we are and we believe that you know community is the foundation for learning, for being seen and heard and understood that we know this is what our youth crave from us, so we want to hold that for each other as well. So I'll give you a minute to kind of overview this. But essentially our community is open to all. We hope that you will share openly and listen openly, be generous with positive assumptions, and never be afraid to ask genuine questions. I always say I can never be offended, so please ask a question. I'll be honest when I don't know something.

#### **[00:08:20.180] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

And our aim is always to get you the answers if we don't know something. So no matter your role today, be a host. Like I mentioned, there will be breakout rooms and things like that. So as you move around, let's be generous and open and like hosts for each other, right? We don't necessarily endeavor to create



safer, comfortable spaces, but brave spaces where we can explore our discomfort and our beliefs and practices can be challenged. And we're talking about empathy today. I'm not going to call it a toughie subject, but it's a soft subject, right? We're talking about soft skills an idea that might seem simple, but maybe is a little bit more complex. So you want to be thinking about that. But in the end, this is an experience that you want to be supportive, educational, but we are always trying to have fun and we want your full self to be present as possible. So your absolute, full, authentic self is welcome. So please be present with us. And we say no fixing, saving, advising, or correcting each other. We want people to guide their own learning and not to advise without permission. So if we find that any of these community standards are violated, myself or any of my colleagues will take points to call in these standards. If you feel like the standards are being violated, please reach out to one of my colleagues or myself while on the call or after the call, so we can follow up, because these standards are really important to us.

### **[00:09:54.510] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

A little bit about me, as I like to do this before every training, to call in that there's no such thing as being totally unbiased, because we said we bring ourselves to these trainings right in our authentic self. So I am Renee Angelo Mauk. That's me. This is Butter Beans. He is also a part of me, but a little about me. So I've been working in nonprofits my entire career and in youth development as well. I've been in Baltimore the past ten years, working specifically in mentoring and living here as well. I'm a returned Peace Corps volunteer. I served in Malawi and got back about ten years ago. I'm an AmeriCorps alum as well. Third generation Italian American. I'm a gender nonconforming person. My pronouns are she, they, I'm a queer person in hetero marriage and I am invisibly disabled and neurodiverse.

### **[00:10:48.420] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

And again, I say these things because all these things influence who I am and how I translate information and deliver it to you. My aim is always to decenter myself, of course, but again, there's no illusion that anybody is totally unbiased and has no point of view. So I like to open with that and encourage you to consider your own identifying factors that you bring to any situation and that we bring to our mentoring relationships, right? So if you haven't heard, or if you have heard of the Becoming a Better Mentor resource, drop a one in the chat. So I can just kind of gauge, but just a little bit of information. The Becoming a Better Mentor resource came out- and this is a resource from the National Mentoring Partnership and it was the first resource that they released that was specifically to mentors. Because a lot of the resources that they released are for programs, are for you all. But this was their first mentor facing resource. And the aim is specifically for mentors to be able to go, to download it, to watch videos, there's, audio versions of it, and to just learn. I'm in this mentor relationship. How do I become a better mentor? How do I do this a little bit easier and get some tips? So our aim now with doing these kinds of trainings are to help programs translate this information for mentors, for mentors to come to these trainings and get this information. This information is relevant to anybody who's in relationship with young people, whether you're a mentor or not. Here at MENTOR Maryland DC, our point of view is that mentoring is for anybody who's in relationship, for adults who are in relationship with young people. So we know that takes the role of teachers, of social workers, of healthcare providers. So that goes beyond just the traditional name



mentor. And additionally for our programs, if you are interested in doing this training for your mentors in the future, we can host train the trainers for you all so you can be trained in doing this training for your mentors. So this is just a little trailer about the Becoming a Better Mentor resource. As we are just talking about one chapter of the resource today. There are twelve amazing chapters. But just so you get the scope of what we're pulling from today, I'm going to play this little trailer for you.

**[00:13:11.710] - [Video](#)**

Becoming a Better Mentor. Strategies to be there for young people was developed with you, the mentor in mind. The information will help you fill your mentoring toolbox with helpful skills to be an even better mentor than you are. It offers guidance on topics such as effective online communication, cultivating youth voice, and practicing cultural humility to name just a few. The introduction gives a brief overview of youth development and describes why having a mentoring mindset is important. Your work as a mentor is grounded in love and caring. It shows that you have a purpose beyond your own life and a desire to make the world a better place. We encourage you to embrace that idea and make it part of your identity. You are a mentor. That means a lot, especially at this moment in time. So explore Becoming a Better Mentor and good luck on your mentoring journey. See the full resource@mentoring.org/bettermentor for more tips on how you can be a better mentor.

**[00:14:28.340] - [Renee Angelo-Mauk](#)**

So my colleague dropped the link in the chat. As I mentioned, there are these style videos that summarize the chapters. Each chapter is downloadable separately and you can download the whole resource. You can listen to each chapter in audio version. And I also forgot to mention that the whole resource is also translated into Spanish. So we are aiming to make this resource as accessible as possible and these trainings are kind of the next step to do that. So yeah, this link amazing. I hope you will share that out. But to start as kind of a brain warm up for you all, I'm going to ask you guys in your own words, how would you define empathy? And I'm going to give you two minutes, it's 11:21, to define empathy. And you can write in your notes. And then what we're going to do is called a waterfall, which is where you are going to type your own words for the definition of empathy. You're going to type it into the chat, but not send it until 11:24. And then we'll all send it at the same time. And Chat will be flooded with all of your beautiful definitions of empathy. So I'm going to give you some, until 11:24. I'll queue you and then we'll all hit send for our definitions of empathy. And at this point, there's no wrong answers. We're just getting our brains warmed up for now, where we're all starting from what our definitions of empathy are. So I'll give you some time to do that

**[00:17:13.420] - [Renee Angelo-Mauk](#)**

You have a few seconds if you want to start typing into the chat, and then I'll queue you to suspend the waterfall. Oh okay, I'm going to make my chat nice and big so I can see everybody's, but is everybody ready? Not on video if I can see some people. Okay, if we can all send. All right.



**[00:18:12.630] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

The ability to share and understand feelings with one another. Relating and communicating assertively the expression of the person with whom you are interacting. Wow. Understanding someone's feelings and experiences. Recognize the thoughts and feelings of another person is likely to have to walk in their shoes. Yes. Walking in their shoes. Creating a safe space and open mindedness. Being a listener. Deep understanding and connection to others even if you cannot relate to the exact situation, great. Yes. Seeing some common themes. Being receptive to open to another struggles, challenges, identity, beliefs without condemnation. Love that, Jason. Yes. Putting yourself in another person's shoes. Compassion. Understanding, attuned to another emotions. Empathy to me is the ability to understand, evaluate others feelings from their point of view and not mine. Great. Yasmin, I love that. The ability to understand and connect with the circumstances. Feelings of another. I feel empathy is the ability to share feelings of the person. Putting yourself in their shoes. Great.

**[00:19:32.690] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

You guys are crushing it. You're on the right path. And our hope here was of course, to kind of start here that we're kind of saying something distinctive of sympathy and compassion. Right. Not that those things wouldn't come up when we do the practice of empathy, especially compassion. But you guys are on the right track that we're already kind of distinguishing that empathy is distinct from sympathy. Right. So as I mentioned, if I didn't mention, providing emotional support and empathy is the first chapter of the Becoming a Better Mentor resource and it really lays the foundation for a lot of the other chapters. And at the end I'll talk about what are some of the kind of best chapters to go to next after this that are really connected and kind of the advanced versions of once you have a full understanding of providing emotional support and empathy. But each of the Becoming a Better Mentor chapters are written in collaboration with our researchers at MENTOR National, but with specific researchers who specialize in these topics. And this topic was written by Renee Spencer from Boston University. And when I say research, I want you to know that it's not just you you know we think of academics and universities and things like that. We're not just talking about books and things like that. These are people who have interviewed mentors and mentees. And if you go on to read the resource, you'll see quotes and I'll quote some mentors and mentee interviews today that they use for this research. So we're talking about research in a really holistic and human based mentor mentee based way. And that's always included in the research that MENTOR National does, but really especially in this practical guide because this is really supposed to be a practical guide. So just a snapshot of what we're going to be talking about today and doing. And Andre just dropped the chapter, just chapter one in the chat if you want to download it. But when we're talking about empathy and the goal of this chapter, we're talking about working to understand your mentees experiences from their point of view and how that can improve their reception of your support and create your impact. So there's a lot about point of view in your definitions, which is how we know we're already on the right track. So again, you guys are crushing it. It's thrilling.

**[00:21:54.970] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**



Okay, so what is empathy and why do it? I mean, I'm sure all the very nice people who have come on this call think it is important, which is why you're here. But we'll talk you know, again, the research, what does the science say about why to do? But really, like what is it though? Oh man, I wanted these things to come up separately. Oh well, so empathy is being open.

#### **[00:22:22.410] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Yes, Jason. So yeah, each chapter is in that larger doc, but you can also download chapter by chapter as well. So this is just the chapter one chapter. Yeah.

#### **[00:22:30.920] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So empathy is being open to imagining another person's experiences from their point of view and striving to find points of connection. So not by presuming to feel the same, right, but trying to feel with and be responsive to the other person. So a lot of you again kind of touched on that in your definition. So again, you're doing great. And empathy is an everyday but a profound act of caring that can be all the more so when it requires finding connections where there may be presumed to be none. Right. We often talk about when for those of us who do mentor, matching, that we try to find to match like with like. Right. But when for those of us who do mentor, recruitment and the difficulties of that, it's not always possible to match like with like, right, we might be matching a mentor and a mentee who, when you look at them, there may be presume to be no points of connection, but empathy is doing that work to find those points of connection. Even when you take a look where with your eyes or on paper, there seems to be no point of connection. But the practice of empathy is making the effort to try to find those points of connection and going beyond that. And empathy allows us to see people for who they are and help them to realize their potential, which is so important for young people. When we talk about the impact of mentoring relationships and positive youth outcomes, young people are really what's really important to their development is the experience of being seen and feeling seen, right? That feeling of being seen is really important and the successful practice of empathy is really important to doing that. So the whole practice of empathy is that empathy loop, right? So perceiving what others are feelings, processing the information that we're receiving from our perceptions and then being responsive, going that next step to being responsive to the person's experiences.

#### **[00:24:46.170] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So this is her first step to- let me take a sip of water really quick, guys- what contemporary neuroscience is telling us is that empathy requires thinking and feeling, right? We're thinking about the information that we're getting and we're feeling it as it's coming in and that we're taking that next act to being responsive. So empathy isn't just about emotions. It's not just about that softness that I was talking about earlier, but it requires our brains too. And what we're going to find out is that empathy is something that we can practice, which is why we would do something like a training on it, right? So why practice empathy? The benefits of being empathic in a mentoring relationship are great and notable, right? It helps young people feel emotionally supported by you, to feeling heard, to feeling understood, to feeling responded to and to



feeling respected by you. Right? For any of us who have worked with young people, we know that respect is really important. And what we know from the research of being in interviews, young people respect is one of the most important features of effective adult to youth relationships. From a young person's point of view, young people are reporting that their most effective relationships with adults have to do with them feeling respected.

**[00:26:21.990] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

My husband is a teacher and we talk a lot about some of the other adults in his building who struggle with young people. And my husband, well, he's not just a teacher, he's a great teacher. And he often ponders about why other teachers in his building are struggling. And I remind him, not everybody respects young people like you do. And the ability to do that is part of practicing empathy. The next point I want to make about empathy is that when someone is being empathic with us, it allows us to not only feel comfortable, not only to feel comfortable, but to be safe enough to be open to accepting help, right? And when we think about a traditional mentor relationship, so much of it is rooted in that we want to help somebody, right? A mentor wants to help their community by being a mentor, but just having a new relationship and coming in ready to help probably isn't going to work out. We need to build and practice some empathy first. And what we find that is that studies show that mentors with more empathy are able to develop higher quality relationships, and that empathy promotes better relationships with other types of adult figures that youth interact with.

**[00:27:35.710] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So teachers like I mentioned, social workers, doctors, patients treated with greater empathy are more likely to trust their doctors and have better health outcomes, which those of us with dynamic healthcare experiences like myself can confirm that. And while most people are born with a capacity for empathy, some more than others, evidence shows that there is an effectiveness of empathy training and learning and that it is a skill that can grow with practice. Which is great news, right? Not only that this is important for mentor training, but for our young people who are developing that this is something that we can teach young people and that we can help grow in our young people as well. But again, most of us are born with some capacity for empathy, right? So this is the muscle that we just need to practice and what am I saying? Practice and work out just like all of our other muscles. I'm unfamiliar with saying work out because it's not something that I enjoy doing. I guess I would rather practice my empathy muscles. But the reality is that this is something that we can train into our mentors and help them build confidence into their skills as well. And if this is something that we can build into mentors, what that means for mentor recruitment is that it widens our pool of prospective mentors, right? There might be people who are interested in mentoring but don't know if they have this skill, right? The ability to work with young people who don't have, again, those presumed similarities. But what we know is with practice empathy, that they're able to make those connections and then respond to those connections, those points of connections as well. Any questions so far? All right, we're good.



**[00:29:36.460] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So one of the ways that we can practice empathy, or empathy and practice is with perspective, right? So perspective taking is the ability to step outside of your own experience and take your mentees, right? This is that walking in another person's shoes point of view. And this has also been referred to as decentering, right? As it requires you to set aside your own values, belief and worldview, and centering the thoughts and experiences of another person. And this is something when I used to train mentors directly, that I would always be coaching them when you're coming into a mentor mentee relationship, that it's really not about you. When you work with young people, that is not about you and it's about the young people. I would also say this for when I used to supervise youth development staff, right, that it's not about you. And that I would also say that when a young person is going to say something that offends you, it's also not about you in that situation as well. And it was the opportunity to practice empathy in that situation. So a model of practicing this is the ABC model, is our opportunity to acknowledge our own responses to another person, to breathe deeply, to ground ourselves in the moment and not let our emotions overtake us. And then also to be curious, to continue to be open to the conversation, to learn more about our mentee or whoever we're in relationship with, and to learn more about whatever their experience is and to understand things from their point of view. So I want us to think about, because the reality is that again, I know everybody in this room has empathy and has practiced it before. So when we think about this ABC model, this acknowledgement, this breathing and this be curious, I want us to think about when was the last time you did the ABC model?

**[00:31:35.070] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Because likely you have had a point where you did do it or maybe you should have done it. I always think about something that I used to coach mentors about, was that sometimes a young person is going to say something that is crazy that you have not heard before that might violate your values or something that is totally outside of your experiences. And you're going to have to sit still and decenter yourself and practice something like ABC. So I'm going to have us break into small groups to discuss this idea. And while I set up the breakout rooms, think about this for yourself. When was the last time you did or should have used the ABC model? It doesn't need to be with a mentee. Again, everything about kind of mentor mentee relationships can be really be applied to any relationships, right? We're talking about empathy. We're going to use it more than just our mentor mentee relationships. So this question can be applied to any relationship. And I think a lot when I was creating this slide, I was like, I need to do this a lot with my husband. So maybe you have a relationship that you need, a non mentor mentee relationship that you should be practicing ABC more. So take some time to think about that. And when you get into your breakout rooms, discuss with your group and I'll give you some time to do that. So I'm going to break you out there. And when we get into rooms, I will put this on the screen so you can still see the question. But. Andre, if you could also put this question in the chat for everybody, that would be great. I'm going to pause recording and set up.

**[00:33:11.600] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**



Welcome back, everybody. I hope your conversations with your group were fruitful. If everybody's willing to share, I'd love to hear what memories came up of when you did or should have practiced the ABC model you can drop in the chat. Feel free to just come off mute and share. Love to hear some examples before we move on.

**[00:33:40.500] - Attendee**

My name is Winter Willoughby and I was in a really cool group. But something that came up in the conversation was once something is acknowledged by either party, like something as far as not liking a thing or tone or body language or what have you, not to be defensive just because the other person doesn't like it. You may not agree that, in other words, you weren't being offensive, your intentions weren't to be offensive, but the recipient took it offensively. But instead of defending your stance, just kind of coming to the acknowledgment of I understand that you are upset by what transpired, so just not being quick to defend your intention, but kind of coming with the understanding of they didn't like this thing said you've done and just being open to that.

**[00:34:50.060] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Yeah, that is such a great one and I'm going to call back to it when we go to the next slide. But such a great point and it's hard to do that when we may not relate to why somebody may be offended by something that we did or said. And I think earlier when we were going over our community standards, you heard me say be generous with positive assumptions. And that's honestly another way of saying acknowledge, breathe and be curious, right, is to assume positive intent and to kind of be patient when you may hear something or have somebody having a negative response, make room to be curious. So, yeah, no, that's a great example. Oh, there's a few messages in the chate. Let's see, talking about.

**[00:35:55.920] - Attendee**

Yeah, so I just paraphrase it all. I work as an assistant to a branch in my organization and oftentimes I am put in the leadership position of youth, of our in parents and things of that nature. And so there are tasks that I'm given sometimes where I feel as if I'm very capable of doing this on my own and I don't necessarily need assistance or help from someone. But then it's a part of the fact that I have to take myself outside of my own shoes as an individual and I have to look at from the perspective of what my supervisor is asking me. It's not about whether or not I am capable of doing something. It's more about me developing the skills to be able to ask for assistance from others and then also to have the youth being able to develop skills in a new task that they may not be privy to or something that they may have never done before. So oftentimes I get defensive because it's just like, why are you asking me to ask somebody else to do this? I can do this myself. I'm more than capable. Why are you asking me to do that? But once again, it's not about me and what I can do. It's about me being able to learn something new and also to have to teach somebody else something new at the same time. So it's just one of those things. I have to acknowledge the fact that it's not personal, it's more of professional. And I oftentimes get very defensive about my capabilities. So I'm just like, why is it like this? But this also helps with that, too.

**[00:37:19.830] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Yeah, no, exactly. That idea of decentering. Right. And that there are actually two other perspectives to consider in that situation. And it's hard to decenter ourselves, especially when we are a lot of us feel sensitive about our capabilities and things like that. And another thing for us to explore is, like, why? That's our own personal work. Right. So yeah, no, that's great. Yasmin.

**[00:37:49.400] - Attendee**

Hi, everyone. My name is Yasmin Henderson, and I work with big brothers, big sisters at the Y in Central Maryland. And my group and I didn't really have well, we didn't share specific experiences. One of the things that I did share was that I have a certification in mental health, first aid for adolescents and teenagers, and the theme of empathy is pushed throughout the entire course and in our handbook. So before I was in the training, I already did this. It wasn't just specific like the acronym. It wasn't broken down like this. So when a mentee or even family or anybody comes to me and it's like I'm dealing with this whatever order, just start talking. I have to check in with myself and see if I have the emotional capacity or bandwidth to be able to help this person. And after I check in with myself and I'm not, then I outsource maybe talk to somebody at the school, hey, I have a student. I don't really have the you know, and then a question was asked, how do you know when you don't have it? And I was explaining that it's just something that you know in yourself, especially if you have your own personal boundaries and you know what those boundaries are, you know what your triggers are. You can show empathy even through those, not necessarily just listening, but caring enough to point them into the right direction or bringing in somebody else who you know and trust that can help that person in question.

**[00:40:18.340] - Kianna Bermudez**

Great. No, thank you Yasmine you get so many things that I want to talk to touch on, right. That a lot of us have done this without knowing that this was called, but Sandra also called out in the chat, which I think makes the point that a lot of us, we come here with empathy and things like that. But that writing this out as a tool allows us to move with even more intention and also makes the point that this is something that we can teach and practice and get better at, right? You also talk about how do we know when we're doing it, how do we know when we need help doing it and things like that. And that is kind of the tricky thing about empathy, which this chapter, if you go on to read it, does acknowledge. But it also speaks to a later chapter in *Becoming a Better Mentor on Attunement*, which is kind of like, again, this kind of advanced idea of checking in with yourself and knowing what you're bringing to a situation. So you'll see that in my recommended chapters after this. But no. Great. Thank you so much for sharing.

**[00:41:26.020] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Great guys, had great conversations. Again, right on the mark. And this simple tool, which a lot of us are already doing since I know we're working with young people, you're in the biz. But now this simple thing



that we can give to people who are struggling with this, right, or need to be reminded of it, this little ABC simple way to even remind ourselves, right, to decenter, to breathe and to make space for that curiosity. So the next thing about empathy and practice, which Klaus kind of, kind of talked about this Adaptability and this is the thing about what we do next, right? That responsiveness. And again, to be empathic, we were talking about not just taking in people's feelings and things like that, but we want to be responsive to our young person's experiences. So it includes being responsive and that's where Adaptability comes in. So for a new mentor, for a new mentor coming in, this could be difficult for them, right? They're coming in with expectations and perceptions about what the experience might be. And the researcher has a quote from a new mentor which was "I might have some expectations, but I can't really say it will happen like I want. So I'm just waiting to see what's going to happen and kind of adapt to what I need to for my mentee." And that is a new mentor who's practicing adaptability and empathy. And it's that ability to let go of your expectations, to adjust and adapt, to get to learning more and being respond to what you actually learn, to make those points of connections and respond to those rather than coming in with your expectations and putting those expectations onto your young person. So I mean, Adaptability is simply adjusting your approach and your attitude or behavior in relationship with your young person. For a mentor that might be. You come to your sessions and you're a few minutes late each time and you find that each time you come a few minutes late, your mentee is really upset. And then you come to learn, as you're in a relationship with this young person that they have abandonment issues or something of the like, with another relationship with a young person, with other adults in their lives. So something that you're going to do as being adaptable is that you're going to take more seriously being on time for your sessions. Right. That would be an example of being adaptable.

**[00:44:08.090] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

And again, like I said, for new mentors, it'll be important for them to let go of their initial expectations you're going to be bringing into the relationship so they can adapt to what is actually happening right. What their mentee is going to bring. And that is something that takes patience, which is when I was training mentor as the main function of my job before I came to MENTOR Maryland | DC. I would always talk about how patience was the number one thing you had to have because so much about empathy and the chapter outlines this as well, is that kind of waiting and being patient because you don't always necessarily see those results that, yes, I'm practicing empathy. Exactly right. But it is that being patient and getting to know so you can adapt as things develop in your relationship with the young person. So we won't do breakouts for this, but I'm sure you have examples that you can drop in the chat or if somebody wants to come up. Can you describe a time that you were adaptable in a relationship? So a time where you adjusted based on what you came to learn about the other person in the relationship, whether that was a young person or another person you were in relationship with. And we'll just take one or two examples if I have a more I want us to get through. So can you think about a time where being adaptable in a relationship had a positive effect on a relationship with somebody?

**[00:46:06.360] - Kianna Bermudez**



I think a really small example I have from yesterday. So I am currently onboarding one of our new members who's on the call. And as we were going through some of the material, she was very kind and mentioned that asking her if she had questions actually made her feel on the spot. And then she forgot all our questions. So then we started adapting the way we were communicating to make sure that she was getting the information she needed. She can ask questions when she needed. And today, in one of our check ins, we actually created a space for her to put in any questions she would like for us to get to later, and then she has a space to put in when it comes to her mind. And that was a good way, just as we're getting to know each other, to build that relationship and learn how we can best communicate.

#### **[00:46:54.760] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Great. Yeah. Thank you so much. And again, when you talk about relationships, relationships in the workplace, those count too, especially between managers and those that supervise, which are some of the most important relationships when we think about retention in the workplace and things like that as well. So adaptability is also why you see in job descriptions why adaptability is such a coveted skill, right? Because it is your ability to continue to react to new information and specifically in relationships as you get to know people and young people over time, young people are changing, they are dynamic, they will come to develop and develop into their identities. And identities are dynamic as well. Being open to that idea that your young person will be a new person over time, over the days, months, years. So continuing to be adaptable and practice that empathy with them is really important to, again, that greater goal of them feeling seen, heard, understood and respected. So, again, that adaptability piece is really important.

#### **[00:48:06.400] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So I'm going to show, if you haven't seen this video, it is so good. But Brene Brown is going to talk, share her definition of empathy. And this is where I would say, take some notes, feel free to drop in the chat as well. What's standing out to you? But this is her definition of empathy and a great visual to match.

#### **[00:48:53.640] - [Video](#)**

So what is empathy and why is it very different than sympathy? Empathy fuels connection. Sympathy drives disconnection. Empathy. It's very interesting. Teresa Wiseman is a nursing scholar who studied professions, very diverse professions, where empathy is relevant, and came up with four qualities of empathy perspective taking, the ability to take the perspective of another person or recognize their perspective as their truth. Staying out of judgment is not easy when you enjoy it as much as most of us do. Recognizing emotion in other people and then communicating that empathy is feeling with people. And to me, I always think of empathy as this kind of sacred space when someone's kind of in a deep hole and they shout out from the bottom and they say, I'm stuck, it's dark, I'm overwhelmed. And then we look and we say, hey, climb down. I know what it's like down here. And you're not alone. Sympathy is OOH, it's bad. No, you want a sandwich? Empathy is a choice and it's a vulnerable choice because in order to connect with you, I have to connect with something in myself that knows that feeling. Rarely, if ever, does an empathic response begin with at least. And we do it all the time because you know what? Someone



just shared something with us that's incredibly painful and we're trying to silver lining it. I don't think that's a verb, but I'm using it as one. We're trying to put the silver lining around it. So I had a miscarriage. At least, you know, you can get pregnant. I think my marriage is falling apart. At least you have a marriage. John's getting kicked out of school. At least Sarah is an A student. But one of the things we do sometimes in the face of very difficult conversations is we try to make things better. If I share something with you that's very difficult, I'd rather you say, I don't even know what to say right now. I'm just so glad you told me. Because the truth is, rarely can a response make something better. What makes something better is connection.

#### **[00:51:41.510] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

I'm back. Did anything stand out? I've watched that video a lot of times, but I actually took some new notes. Drop in the chat or feel free to come off mute. Yeah. Thanks, Libria. So again, you'll get these slides. The video will be linked in there. I mean, I'll say she said perspective taking right away, which we were just talking about. And she said not only about perspective taking, but staying out of judgment, which for me speaks to that be curious part of ABC. Right. And I also appreciated the last point that she made, that when you don't know what to say, you can simply say, I don't know what to say. But I'm so glad that you told me, which I think is powerful for mentors and adults who want to show up and always know what to say and always have the answer, I think. And when I used to coach mentors, that it's powerful for young people to see when adults don't have the answers or know everything. Because when young people have that perception, then puts young people in this idea that they one day will need to know everything and have all the answers, which feels impossible because it actually is impossible and adults don't know everything and have all the answers.

#### **[00:53:08.760] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So that's really important and I think that's a powerful tool that we can coach mentors on. So we're starting to wrap up and we want to talk about what to avoid in our practices of empathy. And we have just a few things to kind of cover here, so assuming that similar means same so we talked a lot about finding points of connection and there's this idea that when you share some layers with another person that your experiences are the same, which no, it's not necessarily true. And it's going to be tricky early in a relationship when you're trying to find connections to build a relationship. But we have to be cautious not to overlay our own experiences onto our young person or whoever in our relationship with. Right. We have to do that pausing and continue to be curious to hear about their experience and have the connection that oh, we both had this thing. What's your experience of it? This is my experience of it. Right. So similar and same are different, right? Similar is still great. Same doesn't have to be the same. Similar can be great and can be a foundation to build a relationship on, thinking that you know best a lot of mentors and adults, right.

#### **[00:54:32.560] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**



We fight the urge to fix this, fighting what's referred to as this righting reflex and that can build tension. This is where we want to practice our ABCs, right? We want to pause, be adaptable and listen and learn more about our mentee. We heard earlier we want to be sure that our mentee is even open to receiving help, which typically is not at the very start of our relationship with them. So we want to do a lot of practicing of empathy before we even know that our mentee is open to receiving help and then asking if they want our help. Right? But going in there with a fixing mindset is not going to be productive for our empathy practice. And an important keep in mind that how some of the challenges that are affecting our mentee may also be affecting our mentee's entire family, right? Especially when our mentee's circumstances may differ dramatically from our own circumstances. So we want to be sure that we're appreciating the obstacles that a youth family might be facing and that we're not taking the easy bait of placing the blame of abuse challenges on their parents or their family. We may prioritize things differently than we do. Right. We want to extend our empathy efforts to our mentee's family and strive to see things from not only our mentee's perspective, but from their family's perspective and be open to seeing understanding family's challenges as well as their strengths and resilience in the face of those challenges.

#### **[00:56:13.820] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

And then this idea of drowning in emotions, empathy, we're talking about things that affect our emotions but we want to avoid compassion fatigue which may feel unavoidable, but as best we can. It is hard to be open to fully understand someone else's experiences if we are consumed by our own emotional reaction to somebody else's experiences, right? So this is where that idea of attunement to our own feelings triggers that Yasmin said context of our own lives and experiences are really important to know. So we know where our boundaries have to lie in relationships. So we can avoid compassion fatigue, because compassion fatigue are things that put people out of business, but that can lead people to avoid the work, to avoid opportunities like mentoring, to burn out and things like that. So we have to be mindful of that and to note what our own reactions are when we're coming into these situations. And again foundationally that practice of decentering at the start when we're coming into mentor mentee relationships and then this expectation that there's a way to be perfectly empathic, there's not. It's a practice, it's something that again, it's a skill that you can get better at. So when you think that you may have missed the mark in a relationship with a young person like I was saying earlier, young people respect when adults acknowledge when they've made mistakes and when things haven't gone well. So if you have observed that you've maybe missed the mark in it, acknowledge that and be honest about it with your young person and move on from there. People appreciate that. They will want to know that you are not perfect, and there's no such thing as being perfect.

#### **[00:58:30.150] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So I'll leave these questions for you to kind of address in the chat. There's just a few more things I want to cover before you wrap up. But has your perspective of empathy changed over the course of what we've talked about today? And how is empathy important to our mentoring relationships? As we're kind of wrapping up, I'll give you a minute or two to write in the chat and we'll do another waterfall. But yeah. Any new ideas on your perspective of empathy that have changed over the course of today and moving



forward? How do you see empathy being important to your mentoring relationships? We will drop in the chat at 12:19. Well, my clock is 12:19 and I will let you know when.

**[01:00:23.080] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

All right, we're at 30 seconds. Get your notes in the chat. All right. And then send. How is your understanding of empathy change today? How is empathy going to be important to your mentoring relationships? Moving forward is necessary. Building on feelings of safety and feeling heard. MMM. I thought I'm going to look, but not as much to young people as my peers, but required to be more empathetic, essential to any relationship. But especially in establishing mentoring relationships, hearing about the importance of breathing and ABC, my empathy is getting in the hole with somebody and bringing your experience in the hole with you. You don't have to say something to relate. Just being with them is enough. Great thought, class. I'll let everybody read that. Great point, Justin. Great. You've all done it. You've gotten our few points. Empathy is being open to imagining another person's experiences from their point of view and striving to find those points of connections again. When someone's empathic with us, it allows us to feel comfortable and safe enough to ask for help. And it's a skill that we can grow and learn and practice. So some things I'm leaving for you.

**[01:02:44.820] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So in the back of this chapter, there are recommended readings and resources. There are a bunch of videos and some books. But one of the books I have actually read well, I don't know if I've actually read a book. I read books, guys. This book, I actually saw Liz Murray speak at the National Mentoring Summit a few years ago. And this is her memoir and it memoir. Memoir. All right. This is her memoir. And it is incredible. She was an incredible speaker. And literally, I walked out of her talk and then I borrowed it from the library and started reading it right away. And I would say that her story is also like if you were going to do worthwhile to do a book club, even with teens, because she talks a lot about her story in high school. But this story, how she tells her story, which is an incredible, unbelievable story. It would be impossible to read this story and not practice perspective taking and not be able to see her perspective and point of view from how she tells her story. I mean she really did go through unthinkable things to survive.

**[01:04:00.380] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

She was born to a loving parent, but a parent who was addicted to drugs. She was homeless at 15 and did end up making it to Harvard, but really nobody knew where she was living until, you know, until she turned 18. But this book is truly, truly amazing. It is again a great practice in empathy. So I think it would make a good book club and for those who want to really do that practice of perspective taking and could use that practice. And a reminder, I think this is really great memoir to read, very readable, a great listen on audiobook as well. So I did want to recommend that personal experience from the recommended resources at the end of this chapter and then as far as next steps in the becoming a Better Mentor resource. So becoming a Better Mentor resource, you don't necessarily have to read every chapter in



order. The first six chapters are about building relationships and the last six chapters are about providing youth support. So you can look at them that way, but they don't necessarily have to be sequential. I do think this first chapter is a very good foundational chapter for the rest of the chapters.

### **[01:05:23.500] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

But my perspective is now that you've gone through this chapter, that these chapters are great next building chapters. So chapter two is practicing cultural humility. This is a chapter that here at MENTOR Maryland | DC, we've done multiple trainings on. You can watch the recordings on our YouTube, but this is that practice of even deeper self reflection about our cultural identities, which again you saw me acknowledge at the beginning of our training today. So once we have kind of this form of self reflection in, we can do this practice of empathy at an even deeper level because now we're considering even more perspectives of our mentee as well. So it's that self reflection and that even broader perspective taking for our young people. So great that's chapter two, chapter four is attunement and mentoring relationships. So you'll see this developing a strong self awareness about your own emotional and physical state can make you better equipped to read the cues of your mentee and respond to their preference and needs. So again this to me is really practicing empathy like 2.0 again getting a better I mean practicing attunement becoming more in touch with what you're bringing into the situation physical responses, your emotional responses to your young person and making you again better able to read what's going on with your mentee as well and do that adaptability step of practicing empathy.

### **[01:06:55.460] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Chapter eight again, once you've kind of gotten more advanced in your empathy and attunement, I think this is your next step when you're talking about providing support. The last six chapters of becoming a better mentor. This is where we want to honor youth voice and build power and essentially get to that point where young people know that we are not only hearing them, but that we want to elevate their voice and that we honor their voice and that their voices are important. So that is chapter eight and then chapter eleven, effective Conversations about Behavior Change. Right? So we talked about getting to the point when young people are open to help and feedback. And often we find that young people are referred to mentoring programs because of behavior problems and things like that. We know that a lot of work needs to be put into relationships before we can even have conversations about behavior change. Right? So chapter eleven, again, I think there's a reason that is towards the end of the resource. But again, as you get more advanced in attunement, in cultural humility, in empathy, I think this is when you get to the point about having effective conversations about behavior change.

### **[01:08:09.850] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So I want to put these chapters on your radar as kind of next steps as it relates to providing this emotional support and empathy for our young people. So I'm going to jump past our question slide really quick just to talk about our next training that's coming up next month. It is How to Be an Askable Adult, which is simply how to become an adult that young people will want to come and not only ask for help, but ask



questions for, right. That young people reach out to and feel supported by. So this training is November 16. It will be virtual. It will be facilitated by my colleague Keanu Bermudas, who's been here on our call. It is a wonderful training that we've only facilitated once before. This will be an updated version, which we're looking forward to. But I think, yeah, this is again kind of another step of practicing empathy and adaptability. And how do you make yourself more, for those of us who aren't necessarily in specifically matched relationships but are an available resource to young people, how do you make yourself a desirable adult for young people to seek out when they do need help or resources or support? This training is for you.

**[01:09:26.580] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

So I'm going to thank you so much for being here. If you have any questions, now is the time to ask them. I'm going to ask my colleague Andre to drop our training survey in the chat. When you close the zoom, the training survey should also pop up as well. We have another survey that is just for people from certain counties. I'm going to ask Andre to drop that in the chat as well. Thank you everybody for being here. This recording will be on our YouTube in the coming days. We will also transcribe this as well. So the transcription will be available and accurate captions. I will get these slides to you and the resources and all these things to you via email within a week. I just like to make sure that the video and transcription and all those things are available as well. So thank you so much to being here and participating. I see your thank yous in the chat. Again, if you're interested in bringing this to your mentors and doing a train the trainer, please reach out to me via email. You probably received emails from me and you will receive an email from me, so I'll talk with you all soon about that and thank you for being here and we'll see you next time.

**[01:10:41.160] - Renee Angelo-Mauk**

Thanks everybody. And yeah, Andre just dropped that link in the chat for surveys, but I will send that via email as fall. So thanks everybody. Bye.