



Helpful Reflective Questions

During coaching conversations, reflective questions are used to scaffold the caregiver’s thinking and engage the caregiver in problem-solving and informed decision-making. Below are examples of reflective questions that can be purposefully selected to scaffold the caregiver’s thinking.

	Awareness	Analysis	Alternatives	Action
Hear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What signs does your child give when they need help? • How does your child show you they want attention? • How do you usually notice when your child is feeling upset or happy? • What are some ways your child communicates without words? • How do you typically respond to this behavior? • What is one signal from your child you want to understand better? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think your child is trying to tell you with their behavior right now? • How would tuning in more closely change the way you and your child communicate? • What other circumstances might be influencing your child’s ability to communicate? • When your child uses a behavior you don’t understand, what clues help you make a good guess? • What feelings do you notice in yourself when your child’s message is unclear? • What are the easiest cues for you to recognize? Which ones are harder to read? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some ways you can practice patience when your child’s message isn’t clear? • What are some other cues you can look for to help you hear your child’s cues? • What else <i>might</i> your child be trying to say when they [cry, push something away, throw, etc.]? • How else could you check if your guess about what your child wants is correct? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is one way you will try to listen or watch more closely for your child’s message? • What will you do if you are struggling to read your child’s cues? • What do you plan to do to remind yourself that it’s OK to not get it right every time?

Understand

	Awareness	Analysis	Alternatives	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you usually let your child know you understand how they feel? • What words have you modeled for your child to help them express themselves? • What are some ways people let you know they understand you? • How do you think your child feels when you understand their need? • What helps you know that your child feels understood? • Tell me about a time when your child calmed down after you acknowledged what they were trying to say? • What are some times when you've helped your child feel better by naming emotions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would your child say right now if they could say it? • What signs tell you that your guess about their message is accurate? • What might happen if a child's message isn't acknowledged or is misunderstood? • How do you know that you heard your child's message correctly? • How will you know if your child is understanding the emotion word that you are using? • How do you think your child feels when you put their message into words? • What have you noticed about your child's behavior once you let them know you understand them? • What behaviors does your child use that are easiest, or hardest, for you to connect with a specific message? • What did you learn about how to put your child's message into words today? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some words or phrases that would show your child you get their message? • What emotion words could you use to teach them what this feeling is called? • How might you use your tone of voice or face to show you care about their feelings? • If your child is still upset after you repeat their message, what else might help them feel understood? • What words could you try using the next time your child communicates with a behavior? • How might you say the same message in a way your child is more likely to connect with? • What else could this behavior mean? • What other ways could you let your child know you understand even if you're unsure? • What are some ways you can show your child you are listening and understand? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will you practice this strategy during everyday routines, like mealtime or getting dressed? • What is your plan for letting your child know you understand how they are feeling in the moment? • How are you going to build this into your day even when things are busy or stressful? • What is your plan to practice this when things are going well? • What is something you are going to say to your child when they are showing...?

Give

	Awareness	Analysis	Alternatives	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you typically respond to this behavior? • What are some things they are able to do in this moment? • What type of space does your child need when they are having big emotions? • What choices have you offered? • How have you been using this strategy so far? • What do you know about the difference between <i>give a response</i> and <i>giving in</i>? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might giving a choice or a timeline help your child feel more in control? • What do you think your child is learning when you offer a calm and clear response to their message? • How do you think your child feels when they receive a reason, choice, or timeline instead of just “no”? • What have you observed about how your child reacts when you help name their emotions? • How will you decide which response is the right one for you and your child this time? • How well did your response work? • How is this consistent with what you intended to do? • How does this match what you expected? • What should happen if you are doing this well? • What changes have you seen in your child today? • What changes have you noticed in how you are responding today? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your child uses a behavior you don’t like, what words or actions could you model instead? • How might you use these moments to teach your child a more appropriate way to communicate? • What’s another way you could respond that still acknowledges their message without giving in? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your next steps? • When will you practice these strategies throughout your day? • What will you do if your “give” doesn’t work? • How will you build opportunities into your interactions that incorporate their interests?

Social-Emotional Learning

	Awareness	Analysis	Alternatives	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you were able to help your child calm down. • Tell me about a time you were able to help yourself become calm. • What time during the day has worked well for you to practice strategies with your child/for yourself? • What have you tried to incorporate sensory support for yourself/your child during your daily routines? • When are you using H-U-G-S in your daily routines and activities? • What triggers have you noticed for yourself/your child? • What do you know about realistic expectations for a child of ___'s age? • What have you tried to introduce new emotion words to your child? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you know when you need to try new strategies? • How has the H-U-G-S changed your interactions with your child? • What changes have made the biggest difference in your interactions? • What part of using H-U-G-S do you find easiest/hardest? Why? • Why do you think it is hard to stay regulated during that activity/routine? • How will you know H-U-G-S is working? • What changes have you noticed in your/your child's ability to stay regulated throughout the day? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could you do to keep the progress going? • What could you do/try to find out more about your child's sensory preferences? • What do you think you could do next time to help yourself stay regulated? • What ideas do you have for encouraging other members of your family to use H-U-G-S? • What other emotion words would you like to model/explore with your child? • What ideas do you have about how to handle that behavior differently in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your plan to keep the progress going? • When else during your day could you use these strategies? • What supports do you need to help you remember to use H-U-G-S during interactions with your child? • During what part of your day/routine do you see yourself using H-U-G-S next?