

Coaching Corner

Time to Breathe: Using the Practice-Based Coaching Cycle to Manage Time and Stress

Kathleen Artman-Meeker: So again, welcome! Welcome to this month's Coaching Corner Webinar Time to Breathe: Using the Practice-Based Coaching Cycle to Manage Time and Stress. And I'll take a second to breathe and slow down my talking a little bit so that we all can model this process. My name is Kathleen Artman-Meeker, and I'm here with you today from the University of Washington. I'll be one of the hosts for this webinar series, and I'm joined again today, as I have been in the past, by my colleague Kristin Tenney-Blackwell from Vanderbilt University. And I'm so pleased that we get to spend some time together and talk with you about managing the stress and managing the bustle of being a coach and using practice-based coaching. I think this is a really important topic, and I'm glad that we're getting a chance to talk about it together today. And we have great expertise from Kristin about mental health and about ways that we, as adults, can take care of ourselves and help nurture the relationships of the people around us.

So as some of you know, this is an ongoing webinar series, so it will be offered monthly. And each month we introduce a specific topic and together explore practice-based coaching as a form of professional development and a way to build towards that best practice, toward improving the knowledge and practice of those caring for and educating young children. So one way that we want to build this community of coaches is to learn about those of you who join us. But we also want to share about ourselves a little bit so you get to know us a little bit. And each month Kristin and I, or whoever is hosting on different months, try and think about a way to share about ourselves or our experiences in a way that's connected with the content. And so this month I'll start out by saying that the person in the boat in front of you is not me. I am not a fisher, but a while back I made some time to go for a run, and this was my view while I stretched. And it was so peaceful that I couldn't help but be in the moment. I just sat on the dock and looked out at this water and just felt really, really good, and felt really good about that fisherman out there enjoying a peaceful morning. So this resonated with me as I was thinking about this mindfulness and taking time to breathe, that all of us need to take time to breathe and think about our own wellness, and that that's something that we want to really think about today so that we are prepared to do our best work. And I want to introduce you now to my friend and colleague, Kristin Tenney-Blackwell, who has prepared some pictures for us as well.

Kristin Tenney-Blackwell: Oh, thanks so much, Kathleen. Good afternoon, everybody. I often – or at least in the past on these webinars – have kind of introduced myself by introducing my kids. And so as I was thinking, too, about this topic, I was really trying to pull some things out. And one picture that for sure stood out for me is of our daughter, Cerie. She's up in the top left corner, and she is just soaking up the moment. We were hiking in New Mexico. This was not about getting to the next spot on the trail for her. It was just about the moment and where we were. Thade on the right-hand side, you would've thought that this sparkler, this one very sparkler was going to last, like, the whole night. I mean, she just moved around. And while she was doing that, she was commenting on how it sparkled, she was talking about the sounds, the way it looked, the way it smelled. And then our youngest daughter, Kellen, who's on the bottom left, she is just dipping the net in time after time after time, and she's just watching the water drip out and kind of having little conversations to herself. And I don't know, you know, hearing you, Kathleen, talk about your run, I know I sure would like to capture more of these peaceful moments throughout the day, really just tapping into the moments in our lives where – or when all feels well with the world. It certainly also makes me think about, of course, our topic

today and the objectives for our time together today: really slowing down and taking the time to think about ways to organize our time and work as coaches, to manage stress, and really navigate situations in the moment.

Kathleen: That's absolutely right, Kristin. And so we developed three objectives for our time together. And the first is that we want to reflect on the recent coaching experiences that you've had using the practice-based coaching model, and all of us can share some of those experiences, and you've started doing that already through the chat. And we'll bring that back in a little while to reflect on it. We also want to explore the strategies and tools that can support you and help you organize the work of coaching. So tools that will help you stay organized, help you use your time effectively, and help you feel more effective in the work that you're doing. And finally, techniques to help you feel fully present as a coach using the practice-based coaching model. So mindful and in the moment, as Kristin shared with her children. That we can really feel like we're all in the moment and being present in the work that we're doing.

So you are all likely familiar with the practice-based coaching model, and this is the framework we're going to hold in our minds today as we talk about strategies for adult resilience or mindfulness and the tools for staying organized and reducing stress within all of our collective work as coaches. All right, so let's step into our recent coaching moments. So let's go back – keeping that practice-based coaching cycle in mind, let's go back to the question we started with and take some time to review the words we used to describe recent coaching experiences. So as I was reading what you were posting – and thank you all for jumping in and sharing your thoughts and your experiences with recent coaching – I saw a variety of words coming across, and it kind of fell into two camps for me as I was looking at ways to summarize them. One is the opportunity that we have for coaches to really make a difference in the lives of kids and in the lives of teachers, that you find coaching rewarding and you feel impactful, that you feel like a model for other coaches and for teachers, that it's exciting and insightful. You get a chance to really reflect on what teaching is and how to do it well and kind of share your expertise. But on the other hand, it's also a really challenging and intense job in terms of time, in terms of responsibility, in terms of meeting diverse needs. I saw a lot about the challenges of meeting diverse needs, of the time piece of it, and needing to have a focus for your work. And so those are some of the things that have popped up that you've shared. And so we really just wanted to give you some time to think about that and help us use that, those words that you're contributing, as a kind of gateway into our work at being mindful as coaches.

Kristin: Yeah, I mean, when I think about it, Kathleen, I mean, it's how all of the participants, you know, those descriptors and the feedback that they gave, I mean, that's the realness around coaching for sure. And I'm just so thrilled about today. I love this idea of creating a space to really share openly about coaching experiences, how we process different coaching circumstances, and also having an opportunity to share some strategies that can just help us, you know, get through and to build on this realness. In a moment, we're going to listen to some music together. So you may need to adjust the volume on your computer speakers and just certainly make sure that they're on. And as you listen to the music, notice how it reflects the journey of coaching. Really take time, also, to write in the chat box if you can your thoughts and feelings as you listen moment by moment. Be aware of both the sounds and the silence between the sounds and moments that may feel peaceful or hectic, because sometimes the world of coaching can feel like...

Kathleen: That was so much fun seeing the comments that came in. Oops, sorry, I've got to mute my speakers. That was so much fun seeing the comments that came in. So all of you, I noticed, Kristin, as the music was playing, everybody was very excited at the beginning, that anticipation at the beginning of the year, and then... wait a minute, there's a little bit of a snag. Things got a little bit more complex. Maybe we're not hitting the same note. Then we got back into a rhythm and we started layering things on, right? I saw a lot of comments talking about the complexity, we're juggling, we keep moving along, the expectations just changed, lots of irons in the fire. And then no breaks, we just keep going. And then at the end, it can kind of slow down. We made it. So a really nice arc. That was fun to watch that kind of live tweet of those songs.

Kristin: Absolutely. I mean, we certainly find ourselves in such different places, don't we, during a coaching journey? So sometimes that world of coaching feels like it's helpful, we're upbeat, we're moving along, glad I'm a coach, and then the next moment, it does – you're right, Kathleen. It feels like it's complex, what just happened, this whole extra layer just got added here. So we want to take a moment and think about all of those different places, all of those different emotions during a coaching journey. And first you want to start out by looking at this graph here. And we'd love to get some feedback from you in the chat box if you would on what do you notice here? What comes to mind as you look at this graph? Okay, "medium stress somewhat helps people perform better." Let's see here. "The exact opposite of how this cycle of feelings goes for incoming new teachers. They start high, they hit a low in the middle of the year." "High stress and disorganization leads to lack of productivity." Yeah, a certain amount of stress, right, it helps us with our thinking, our planning and implementing. "High stress leads to disorganization."

Yeah, I mean, when we look at this graph, along the X axis we see stress and along the Y axis we see performance. So we know a small amount or a large amount of stress results in low performance. So a little bit of stress isn't a bad thing, right? So think about the butterflies you get in your stomach before, say, presenting in a webinar, right? Right, Kathleen? Or doing something exciting. This small bit of adrenaline helps us perform better. However, when the stress becomes chronic and to a high degree, the result is decreased performance. And these levels of stress lead us to different responses, like moments where we can react emotionally and feel that there is absolutely nothing we can do. And we might even be asking ourselves why does this always happen to me? And this is sometimes referred to as emotion coping, right, when we find ourselves in those places. We know that when we approach situations from an emotion-coping view, we tend to feel more overwhelmed, which can lead to burnout, or we can disengage more quickly. And this can then certainly lead to feeling less empowered to make any change, it can lead to stress and burnout. We get caught in our emotional reactivity to difficult situations as opposed to what, you know, we might actually be able to change or ways that we can make a situation better.

Kathleen: And, you know, we know that one of the biggest predictors of well-being and the willingness to continue in the face of stress and difficulty, essentially being resilient, is the ability to feel that there's something that we can do to help balance the scale and to feel like we are effective in our work.

Kristin: I don't know about you, Kathleen, but I'm thinking you know, we've all likely been there, right? We've had those moments, and it's not always easy. And so we really try to learn different strategies and things that can kind of help get us through. And we recognize that one, I think, of our best starting

points really can be to first think about, well, what does calm, peaceful, organized, purposeful, and meaningful coaching actually mean to us? So Kathleen and I thought we would pause here for a moment to explore exactly what this type of coaching means to us by using our senses. So you can pull out – if you were able to download your handout, you can pull out the handout Sensing "Calm Coaching." Or you're welcome just to grab a blank piece of paper and maybe create some circles there. We want to take a moment just to fill in one or maybe two of these circles. So as you think about calm coaching, what does it look like, smell like, taste like, feel like, or sound like? So take a moment to fill in one or two of those circles. You can write words, you can draw pictures, or you could do both.

[Music]

Okay, so we have this idea now about what calm coaching feels like, what it smells like, tastes, looks like, and sounds like. However, it's not always easy to be in that place. The coaching journey can get hectic, it can get stressful. And, you know, we have a tendency to constantly think. And we also have a tendency to believe that – well, actually believe all of our thoughts as if they're really telling the truth. And then we can react emotionally rather than rationally, and we can get stuck thinking about past and the future. We can get caught in the snowy whiteout. So if we look at this snow globe here, you know, when we just hold a snow globe, we can still see clearly what's inside it, right? We can see through it. I could even see possibly a person sitting across from me. However, when I shake up the globe, it's way more difficult to see what's inside. I can't see what's inside clearly anymore. And we can think of this snow swirling around as a metaphor for stress. When things are really stressful, it's like the snow is swirling all around us, and it becomes difficult to see what's important to us as coaches, to see and really experience the practice-based coaching cycle in action. However, being a mindful coach, right, is actually holding the globe still when it's all stirred up, taking three or four deep breaths and really allowing the snow to settle. And we really didn't do anything. No, we just – we simply held it in our hand, we held it still, we breathed, and we watched. And that's mindfulness. It's actually more about non-action than it is about action. It's about stopping, slowing down, and observing what's happening in a non-judgmental way and waiting for the snow to settle so that we can, again, see our values, we can see the practice-based coaching cycle, and we can continue to act in ways that really, truly reflects what matters most. And I don't know about you, Kathleen, but I can think of many snowstorms I felt like I was in the middle of as a coach.

Kathleen: I know, I know. I can feel you. And I think the hardest part is thinking about that non-action. For so many of us, when you think about that music we played, and it's just, you keep going layer, layer, layer and reminding ourselves to just think about non-action. That can be challenging. But the best part is that there are strategies we can learn and strategies we can use to support those very moments. And one strategy that comes to mind to me is the mindful STOP.

Kristin: I know. I hear you with this. It's definitely something I could learn how to practice a little bit more.

Kathleen: Mm-hmm. It's something that I can practice many times throughout the day without feeling like I have to set aside specific time to do something new. So this mindful STOP, it fits within my daily natural routines, like driving to work or taking the bus. It's just something that, right in the middle, you can do.

Kristin: That's so perfect, because today we're talking about managing our time, right? Not really wanting to add to our already full plates. And I love this idea about practicing, too, because it strengthens a way of being and ultimately helps us create a habit. So it's like the more I practice, the easier perhaps I can discover how to find that calm place in my work as a coach, regardless of what's happening around me. And these are really clear steps, knowing that we usually experience stress reactions, right, in response to different thoughts. So if I'm actively worried about having a perfect coaching session, then, presto, my stress reacti-- or my stress reaction just automatically activates.

Kathleen: Right, and so creating that space in the day to stop, to focus on the present, and to move away from the worried mind has been shown to be really helpful in mitigating those negative effects of our stress response. So when we find ourselves focused on the present, we're more likely to gain perspective and see that we do have the power to regulate our response to stress or pressure. So we have the power to change our thoughts. Stopping, taking a breathe, observing, and proceeding.

Kristin: Yep, one of the most powerful lessons, isn't it? We actually have the power to control our thoughts. In fact, science has even confirmed that positive thinking is a learned trait, and the more we practice it, the stronger our connections become. Those patterns in our brains, they strengthen. So what – how about we take a minute here just to pause and maybe even go back to the beginning of the webinar so we can see that in the chat box some of our original words that we used to describe recent coaching experiences. And, you know, some of these words that came up for folks, they may have been describing a stressful experience. And, you know, if we go back to those original thoughts and descriptions, we could ask ourselves, what is something positive that came of this experience, even if it was stressful? Or perhaps we could just think about a recent coaching experience that was difficult and challenging and ask ourselves what's something positive that came out of it? So let's take a minute and please share with us and write your responses in the chat box.

[Music]

Kathleen: All right, so what I see in the comment boxes here is that many of you from those maybe perhaps stressful situations saw improvements in children's outcomes. You get to know the teacher better through that potentially stressful time. You saw the teacher really get it. Maybe you saw an increase in the coaching partnership. So there was a trickle-down of positive coaching relationships. And I noticed something, that you as a coach improved through it. You learned how to listen or how to observe with a focused vision, how to self-reflect for yourself and deeper understanding for yourself and how for teachers to self-reflect and have that experience. So really nice reframing of those stressful situations that I think all of us as coaches have gone through.

Kristin: Yeah, it's so real, isn't it? It's so real for all of us, and we know that it takes practice. And so we've included a website address in a resource that will follow this webinar. It's called Talk Back to Your Unhelpful Thoughts. So that's a great thing for us to look for. We also know there's other strategies, like practicing gratitude, that can really help us see our situation in a way that can lessen stress and open our thinking to new solutions. It can help us put things in perspective, and when we see the good with the bad, I think it makes it harder for us to stay stuck, right? And practicing gratitude really helps us focus on what we have. It helps strengthen relationships, reduces stress. I mean, in general, it just makes us feel happier.

Kathleen: Exactly, which is why we definitely don't want to reserve this strategy for just the big, momentous occasions, right? We want to do it all the time.

Kristin: Oh, I'm following you. Like, I'm going to be thankful for that delicious piece of cheesecake I had last night for dinner.

Kathleen: Right, so the regular reflections on moments for which we're thankful, those moments like Kristin shared at the beginning or like I shared of watching the boat out in the water.

Kristin: And we can do that in a multitude of ways. I mean, for some of us, you know, we like to capture these things in journals. We can write thank-you notes to ourselves. We can write thank-you notes to others. We can create grateful calendars and really track three things that we're grateful for for each day and see those parts of our day as true gifts. And, you know, there's this other piece, too, that comes to mind for me is how easy it is to get really jazzed up and excited about an idea, but then, you know, it kind of fizzles out a little bit. So I remembered somebody sharing with me that reflections needed to be more than just, "I'm grateful for my friends," as an example. They mentioned to me, you know, you need to keep your brain alert for really fresh grateful moments like, "My friend Sally invited me over for dinner so that I didn't have to cook after my three-day business trip." And I've also learned from others that we've got to be really mindful of and really pick that time of day where we're doing our best learning and probably we're awake the most, right, because I know for me it's difficult for me to think about inserting a new habit such as writing in my gratitude journal in the evening. So if I really want things to stick, I need to find a different time of day to do it. And I was also thinking, you know, with the new year rolling around, maybe instead of a journal, it could be fun to create like a gratitude jar and really just, you know, write down when good things are happening. And then maybe at the end of each week or the end of each month, I get to review those things that I wrote. And let's not forget mirror talk, right? Another strategy. Those things that we want to tell ourselves, remind ourselves of each day. I mean, notes to really help you be yourself and live the story that nobody else can.

Kathleen: All right, so these are great strategies to support our work as a coach and to help us find and create that calm coaching. And I was thinking as I was listening to Kristin talk that these are great things to do personally, but they also feel to me like great things that could kind of model some of this process in a program, you know, in a Head Start program, having a gratitude jar as part of coaching or having positive mirror talk Post-It notes around in bathrooms or things like that. So let's find out how many of us are already incorporating these and other strategies into our daily lives through the polls that you see there on the bottom of your screen. What strategies are you already using? And the numbers are fluctuating, but it looks like a good number of you are already using especially gratitude and mindful thoughts. All right, it looks like a few people are still typing, but it looks like just around 80 percent of folks on the call practice gratitude, use some of those strategies that we saw there, whether it's a gratitude journal or gratitude jar. And about 70 percent already use mindful STOP. And then a smaller number with helpful thoughts and mirror talk. And lots of conferring and reflection with coworkers and attending a professional learning community.

Kristin: Right, so many strategies. It's just clear that, you know, something like mindfulness certainly supports our readiness in our work as a coach. It brings our attention to the present moment. I think it allows us to let the snow settle and really helps us focus on what's important, what's valued. And that way we can also stay connected to the practice-based coaching cycle. So how about we go ahead and

walk through the components to get a better sense of how the practice-based coaching cycle can help with these very things? What do you say, Kathleen?

Kathleen: Sounds good. Let's dig in. All right. So within practice-based coaching, we see a collaborative partnership, referring to the work interactions between a coach and a teacher. So those of you who are familiar with practice-based coaching know that practice-based coaching is a safe space for teachers to ask questions, discuss problems, get support, gather feedback, reflect on practice, and try new ideas. And so to do that, we have to think deeply about what that partnership means and how it can help us be mindful coaches again, tying it all back. So part of the collaborative, calm coaching partnership is that you have a posture of support and trust. You're someone a teacher can lean on. Coaching isn't evaluative. A teacher can take risks and experience those impactful rewards that are so important and that are a big part of coaching.

Another part of it is that teachers have a choice in how and when to participate. They collaborate in choosing goals and developing action steps and so on throughout the process. So that they feel a strong sense of ownership over the process as well. Another characteristic is open, frequent communication, ongoing between the coach and the teacher. There's an emphasis on asking openended questions, providing opportunities for reflection, using active listening techniques, and really stopping and listening and hearing someone. Really connecting so that you get to know that person better, they get to know you better, and it feels like a partnership. And finally, we also have celebration as part of this partnership, that teaching is hard work and we take time to celebrate the effort that teachers are making and that you're making as coaches, and that we really celebrate those wins that happen on a daily basis. They can be small little victories, or they can be really big events and changes. But we take the time to notice them and to notice effort.

Kristin: And so I'm wondering, too, if here, this would be a nice place for us to pause and go back, you know, when we thought about using all of our senses to think about calm coaching. So let's practice being in the moment, noticing our thoughts and feelings in different ways as we kind of enter into a coaching situation. So let's take a moment, read through the example, and then just share your thoughts and feelings by typing your responses in the chat boxes.

[Music]

Kathleen: Okay, so this is so interesting. So many of us can really feel and see this teacher. Okay, we can feel and see Marjorie. We see her rolling her eyes or crossing her arms. We see her kind of closedmindedness. We feel that she's resistant or cautious or guarded and doesn't want to necessarily bring these new things in. You might hear her talking skeptical. We might hear her belittling some input. We taste some bitter. We smell fear. So this is really an exciting way to think about using all of our senses to be in that moment in coaching.

Kristin: Yeah, I think that these responses show us how many different thoughts and feelings we experience through our different starting points that we have and just all of those ongoing moments of coaches while remembering it's really the collaborative partnership that holds the work. So it makes sense to build in opportunity, to step back and drop ourselves into the present moment, to be aware of how we're making sense of a situation and how we're making sense of interactions and to

remember that, you know, those strategies we talked about earlier in the webinar that can continue to help us flourish as coaches as we're focused on the collaborative partnership.

Kathleen: Right. And so finding calm in that collaborative partnership, the first thing that you can do as a coach to build your own kind of strengths as a partner is to really think about the strategies that you can use. And remember, coaching can be hard work. Just like teaching is hard work, coaching is really hard work. You can invest all of yourself in the classrooms and programs, and the stakes can feel really high. You feel really accountable for progress in those classrooms and programs, and it can be very challenging if progress is slow or it's hard to come by. So it's important to build your own support network of people who listen and care about you, and this can be unrelated to work. Take some time to nurture your own relationships with friends, with partners, family, and others. Call a friend on your ride home. Volunteer in your community. Do something to help you feel like you have a strong social support network around you.

And then, second, to engage with other coaches. Coaching is hard, and coaching can also feel isolating. You might spend the bulk of your day in a car, driving between classrooms or sitting in traffic. Or you may feel like you don't have a home base. You may work out of your car. You might work out of a bag that you move around. You might not have a desk. So you may even miss your role as a teacher or miss working directly with children, and you're struggling to find your role. So take time to talk to other coaches and get a sense that those feelings are typical and that you can have strategies to work through those. Talk to other coaches, go to conference sessions or events that interest you, meet through Google Hangout once a month or go to a happy hour with other coaches. And in a professional sense, participate in a community of practice around coaching. Take some time to nurture your own professional development by entering a learning community. We talk a lot in practice-based coaching work about the importance of a community of coaches. I think this has been critical to me in my own work as a coach, and I know a lot of us really value having someone that we can talk to about our work and someone that gives us feedback on our work and helps us problem-solve. And so this community of practice could be a reading group. It could be a group that meets regularly to talk about the practice of coaching or to dig in to how to use video or how to give meaningful feedback, how to problem-solve with a teacher. So take some time to remember your own professional development and fill yourself back up.

And finally, working with a mentor coach. A reminder that your own professional development is important. It's important to work with someone who can help you build your skill and your confidence as a coach. So let's move forward and talk about shared goals and action planning.

Kristin: Great. And perhaps we can actually start this part out by thinking about the experience of a caregiver or a teacher, and then that will help us move into how we can see this area as support for ourselves. I mention this because I think sometimes it's helpful to first put ourselves within the experience we are being asked to support as a coach. And, you know, it's like a mirror effect, and I find that the things we often can do to support ourselves as coaches are certainly quite similar to the strategies we're offering and extending in our work with coachees. So if we use this example, we're a coach, we're working with this infant/toddler caregiver on goals and action planning, and she comes to us or approaches us with, "Help me. I want to be able to better explore books with infants and toddlers." So as a coach, I mean, how would we respond to this? Where do we start? What kind of support would we offer? And it's likely that all of us are a little bit uncertain, because we're unclear

about her focus, her intention, and in essence, what's her goal here? It could be all of these things. And we know that the goals and action plan truly provide a road map for the support and the feedback that occurs as part of the other components in the coaching cycle.

Kathleen: Right, and we can think about these very things as we identify our own strengths and needs and set goals for ourselves as coaches. So if you are in a moment where you're thinking, "Help me," what is your goal? What do you need, what do you want to develop? And one strategy that many of you are probably familiar with from practice-based coaching leadership academies, if you've been able to attend one of those, is the PATH process. This is a strategic planning process where you really set a vision for your future. And we work with teams from Head Start programs to set a vision related to coaching, what they want coaching to look like and feel like a year from now, and then how they're going to get there.

And what I've found for myself is that using this same process really helps manage stress on a personal level. So I did this process for myself on a Southwest Airlines cocktail napkin a year ago when I was feeling a little bit overwhelmed, visioning where I wanted to be a year from then, so where I wanted to be right now, and what I would need to be able to do, you know, next week, a month from now, six months from now to get me to that point a year later. And so I think this can be a really valuable process for any of us to just sit down and say, "Wait, if where I am right now in terms of how I feel or how I'm balancing my schedule or my time doesn't feel right, where do I want to be and who do I need to enroll to help me? What is going to help me do it and what are the barriers or roadblocks that I need to make a plan to overcome?" And that can be a really empowering process. And it really was for me, and I got off that airplane with my cocktail napkin written all over – I still have it! And it's a really valuable process, so I recommend that any of you, if you're feeling a little overwhelmed, thinking of that as a tool that you can model yourself. And thinking about it in terms of what are your visions, what is your path? So these are examples of visionary statements you might make when you look into the future six months or a year as a coach.

So this visioning process can be really helpful for goal-setting. You reflect on where you currently are, and that tension between where you want to be and where you are is what pulls you forward and gives you that momentum to get going. And you can identify the people you need to enroll, the things you need to do on Monday, and so forth. And so your goals might be around relationship building. You might see yourself a year from now an expert on a certain set of strategies. You might see yourself as being really well organized and having a very well designed online calendar that you're setting up or taking notes at every meeting and things like that. So take a minute to think about yourself. We won't pause here, but vision yourself a year from now as a coach and use that sensing activity that we just did to think about what do you see, feel, think, hear, smell a year from now? And what do you need to do to get yourself there? And that can be a really powerful process.

We also have tools to help you get where you want to go in terms of setting this vision and this action plan for yourself. Becoming more familiar with Tools for Supervisors that we're going to talk about monthly in these webinars. Being more familiar with CLASS data and how to talk about that with teachers. These are all resources that you might have to be able to help you set goals and action plans with teachers, so kind of jumping back and forth, and the Coaching Companion as well. So these make your life easier. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. And after thinking about your goals for your own coaching skills, maybe you make a plan to learn more and try out using some of the skills here. And so I

just wanted to share a few slides from the Coaching Companion, which is an online tool that lets you create and store needs assessment data, get specific CLASS scores for a teacher, or complete a supervisor's tool. You can upload it online. You don't have to worry about forgetting papers somewhere. You can share information easily with a teacher. We'll be happy to answer questions about this after the webinar as well.

Kristin: Yes. Oh, my goodness. Such great resources to support us in multiple moments as a coach. And it reminds me of that idea that, you know, in addition to our goals and the action steps to help us reach our goals, we can set our intentions, really, for what we do. It's that guiding principle for how we want to be and how we want to show up in the world. And Wayne Dyer said our intention creates our reality. So if we focus our minds on a particular intention, we're bringing it to our thoughts and, in turn, helping to bring it into reality. So an intention isn't a goal, but it's – it's not something that we have an expectation to, right? It's an attitude that we're proud to commit to.

So let's move now to the next component, focused observation. And when I think about calm coaching and developing habits that can really help us be resilient as coaches, that can help us manage our time and stress, I find myself thinking about self-monitoring and self-awareness, both of which really characterize mindful practice. I mean, in other words, we're talking about observing the observer observing the observed. And we can pay attention to all the available information in a given moment. And that includes thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Kathleen: Right. And so we observe the ways you respond to stress. We observe how long you spend time in different parts of your job. We might videotape coaching, we might observe and track progress. All these different ways that we can really be focused in our observation. And another way to think about it when I mentioned sharing how you track your time, I'm a bit of a nerd myself, so I practice graphing my time when I feel overwhelmed. And the idea is to really look at how you're actually spending your time. So seeing what you're missing and where your time is going and being really realistic. Just seeing your time put into a pie chart in front of you helps you say, "I think I'm always working on X, Y, and Z, but I only spent 10 percent of my time on it this week." That little dose of reality helps me stay calm. It also helps me advocate for myself and my time. So seeing that only, say, 3 percent of my time was spent on health can be a wake-up call to go for a walk during the day, for example, or to take a minute to stop and breathe. And as a coach, you might track how much time you spend in transit, with each teacher, on prep work and meetings, or in non-coaching related tasks. And seeing it this way helps you set some goals for how much time you want to be spending in different parts of your work.

Kristin: Nice.

Kathleen: And then the final component of the PBC cycle that we're going to highlight today is reflection and feedback. Whoa, sorry!

Kristin: It's so important, reflection and feedback. I – you know, it's not just about having the vision of the practice we want to use but to remain engaged in the positive action steps that really serve that vision.

Kathleen: Right. So you might think about, "What am I thinking and feeling? How do I commit to strengths?" And you choose where to focus your attention to stay positive. You reflect on what did or didn't work. So, again, you make up your mind about what you believe in terms of where to focus your positive attention. And again, shifting to some concrete strategies and resources. The Coaching Companion is another great way to help you stay on top of the things and the work that you're doing and keep everything organized in one place in terms of reflecting on your own work. You can maintain information about how you interact with teachers. You can also get access to the resources that you might need. You can search for NCQTL resources easily to share with teachers. You can find videos to share as well. And again, great strategies that you can find right there.

Kristin: Oh, my goodness. Great strategies and reminders of the many resources that are available for us as coaches. And I'm just sitting here thinking, "Where did all of our time go?"

Kathleen: I know, it went so fast! I can't believe it came to an end again. So I think we need to continue to support one another as we move forward and give some of these things a try that we've talked about today. Practice taking deep breaths using the mindful STOP. Coaching gratitude journal, using the Coaching Companion and other organizational tools to manage your time. All of those things can make a big difference.

Kristin: Absolutely. I love the idea of, like, using our own wisdom, right? Our own wisdom of our mind and body to really help us stay calm, focused, and intentional in our work as coaches. And practices that really can easily be woven into and cultivated in just our everyday life. And it's not about a prescription for how to coach, but really an invitation to listen to and trust ourselves and coach with greater awareness and balance.

Kathleen: Absolutely. These have been great reminders for all of us. So thank you very much, Kristin, for helping coordinate all of this.

Kristin: Oh, goodness, Kathleen, it's been a pleasure. And certainly the feedback that we got from participants, as we both know, is what really made this webinar what it was. So thank you so much, everyone, for joining us today, for sharing your information to – you know, on ways to support ourselves to stay calm and coach on. So as we wrap up our time together, we certainly want to invite all of you to join us for our next Coaching Corner webinar. It's scheduled for January 15th, and the topic will be coaching support specific to young children's problem solving skills. And so thanks again, everybody. Happy holidays, and we'll see you in January.

Kathleen: And please remember to take a minute to fill out the evaluation link that has been posted in the chat so that you can let us know how we're doing. So I second Kristin's thank you and appreciate all of your time and your engagement today in this webinar. So enjoy the rest of 2014, and we will see you in the New Year.

Kristin: Sounds good. Bye-bye, everybody. - Bye, Kathleen. Thank you. -

Kathleen: Bye, everyone.

[Music]

[End video]