

A COMMUNITY EXPLORATION

Reimagining Reflection

*Uplifting Dreams, Harvesting Wisdom,
Birthing New Possibilities*



HELD, WOVEN, AND OFFERED BY

DR. BIREN (RATNESH) A. NAGDA, IDEALEADERSHIP LLC &
THE CENTER FOR EARLY RELATIONAL HEALTH



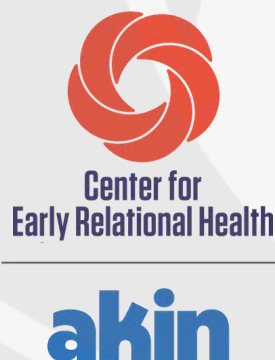
Center for Early Relational Health
Community and Connection

A Collaborative Cultivation

Reimagining Reflection grew from a collaborative effort among community partners, the Center for Early Relational Health (CERH) at Akin, and IDEALeadership LLC. Our work together reflects what becomes possible when practitioners share their experiences, wisdom, and dreams with compassion, courage, and connection.

CERH conceived this project and co-designed it with Dr. Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda, Principal of IDEALeadership LLC. CERH/Akin resourced the work, including compensation for each partner's time and expertise. Dr. Nagda facilitated small and large group conversations, led the analysis and synthesis of themes, and served as lead writer of this publication.

The community partners are the heart of this work. Our partners' stories, insights, and visions shaped every theme in these pages. We are grateful for their wisdom, generosity, and trust.



The Center for Early Relational Health

The Center for Early Relational Health is proud to be a part of Akin.

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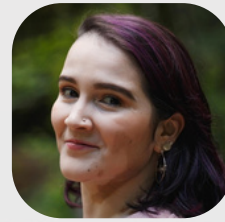
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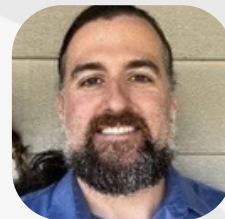
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING INVITATION

Welcome	1
Our Shared Language	2
Our What	3
Our Why	4
Our Way	6

OUR EMERGENT WISDOM

10

Theme 1: Nurturing <i>Being</i> : From Transactional Reflection to Transformative Reflection	14
Theme 2: Cultivating <i>Being With</i> : Holding to Healing in Relationship	17
Theme 3: Empowering <i>Being For</i> Transform-Action: From Fear and Pain to Love and Hope	21
Weaving Across Themes: Honoring the Emergent Thread of Spirituality	26

REVEALING THE LAYERS OF REFLECTION-IN-RELATIONSHIP: BELONGING, HEALING, AND PROPHETIC COMMUNING

28

Feeling Gratitude for Connectedness	29
Bearing Witness to Wisdom in Connection	32
Growing Courage Through Connectedness	36
Coming Home to Ourselves, with One Another	40
Holding Transformation at the Intersection of Reflection-and-Relationship	44
Carrying Forward All That We Hold	60

CONNECTING POSSIBILITIES TO PRACTICES	63
Deepening Reflective Practices	66
Expanding Access to Reflective Opportunities	69
Building Capacity for Reflective Partnership through Transformative Learning in Trainings	72
Resourcing Communities of Learning and Practice for Reflective Partners	76
Cultivating a Thriving Ecosystem across Policy and Systems Contexts	79
Translating Wisdom to Impact through Public Dissemination and Engagement	86
Summary of Connecting Possibilities to Practices.....	90

CLOSING OFFERINGS

Ripples of <i>Reimagining Reflection</i>	91
Our Gratitude	93
Resources	94

Welcome

We welcome you to join us in *Reimagining Reflection*, a living testament to the power of collective dreaming and communal wisdom. This document is an invitation to pause, to dive deep, and to imagine alongside us what reflective practice can become when we center belonging, healing, and transformation. Like the bird in our community partner's dream who dove into stormy waters to find the quiet needed to know where to go next, we too have taken a collective dive, not away from our work but deeper into its meaning, purpose, and possibility.

Over six months, nineteen community partners from across Washington State gathered in brave and tender spaces to ask: What is and what can be reflection? How are we connecting and how can we connect provider reflection with family well-being and healing? What does and what can reflective practice look like at the agency, community, and policy levels?

What emerged was profound. We moved from transactional reflection to transformative reflection. We shifted from simply holding babies in mind to holding babies, parents, and caregivers in our hearts. We journeyed from fear and pain toward love and hope.

And we discovered that reflection is not just something we do, it is who we are.

This offering captures the emergent wisdom from our collective exploration. You will find themes that honor both "what is" and "what can be." You will encounter the voices of practitioners who dared to be vulnerable, to share their truths, and to dream boldly about a future where reflective practices are accessible, equitable, and healing for all who touch the lives of young children and families.

We invite you to read these pages with your wholeness—with your mind, with your heart, and with your spirit. We invite you to feel the words and wisdom in your body and soul. Let the stories resonate. Let the questions linger. Let the possibilities spark your own imagination about what we can create together.

As you journey through this offering, know that you are joining a growing community of practitioners committed to reimagining reflection as a practice of coming home to belonging, healing, and liberation.

With deep gratitude and hope,
Dr. Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda &
Center for Early Relational Health

Our Shared Language



What do we mean by reflective practice?

Reflective practice is characterized by the use of self-reflection to consider one's own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that arise when working with expectant parents, infants, young children, and their families, and professionals. Reflective practice is fostered through activities such as reflective supervision/consultation, reflective journaling or dialogue, mindfulness exercises, and other practices. Research shows that engaging in reflective practice can decrease symptoms of burnout, enhance self-awareness, and improve relational and reflective skills.

What do we mean by Reflective Supervision/Consultation?

RSC (Reflective Supervision/Consultation) is a collaborative partnership between a supervisee and a supervisor/consultant who meet regularly to engage in reflective practice.

Our What

The *Reimagining Reflection* project invited statewide community partners to develop a collective vision for reflective supports and practices that enhance the well-being of the prenatal through five workforce and the children and families they support. The project was guided by three goals that informed both the outcomes and the methodologies for our fuller visioning.

Our Goals and Objectives

- **Build and Strengthen Connections** across our Washington community, bringing together individuals and organizations with a shared interest in advancing anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and trauma-informed reflective supports and practices that promote well-being and healing.
- **Elevate and Share Community Wisdom** by holding a space for connection and dialogue around reflective practices that center the diverse experiences and perspectives of lived experts, enriching our collective understanding for responding to provider and family needs and elevating community strengths.
- **Explore and Co-Generate Possibilities** that can seed the next steps in growing and sustaining a statewide culture and practices of reflection that are embedded throughout individuals, organizations, systems, and policies in Washington.



Our Why

The *Reimagining Reflection* project emerged from a convergence of factors. A statewide needs assessment, along with national and international efforts to rethink reflective practices in the context of persistent social inequities and collective trauma, highlighted the limitations of prevailing professionalized approaches to reflective practice. At the same time, emerging frameworks, such as healing-centered engagement, offer hope and new possibilities for more equitable, inclusive and transformative reflective practices.

In Spring 2024, the Center for Early Relational Health (CERH) conducted a statewide survey to better understand the experiences, needs, and opportunities for reflective practice in Washington State.

9 in 10

Professionals rated Reflective Practice as valuable or extremely valuable.

Within this overwhelming value for reflective practice there were, however, challenges related to class, race and ethnicity.

1 in 5

Professionals pay the financial costs associated with reflective practice.

2 in 3

BIPOC providers noted a cultural mismatch between themselves and their reflective consultant.

Reflective Supervisors/Consultants (RSCs) also voiced needs for accessibility and affordability for deeper and sustained training, a desire for decolonized/decolonizing reflective practices, and a community of practice for RSCs.



The Statewide challenges parallel local, national, and international research and change efforts in the field of reflective practice. Locally, recent analysis of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) in King County, Washington State's most populous county, highlights significant cultural and linguistic mismatches between providers and BIPOC families. While the population grows more diverse, the IECMH workforce remains predominantly White, resulting in implicit and explicit bias. Furthermore, only half of the providers surveyed report access to reflective supervision. And, practitioners interested in gaining endorsement in professional reflective supervision and consultation face persistent systemic barriers (King County Best Starts for Kids, 2021).

National studies reveal stark racial and ethnic mismatches in supervision relationships. While most White providers matched with White consultants, Asian, Black, Latine, and Native American providers are much less likely to have racially matched supervisors. Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) providers also report less comfort discussing race and culture in supervision, underscoring the need for greater critical self-awareness and authentic racial engagement in reflective practice (Shivers, et al., 2022).

Internationally, the field is at a pivotal "touchpoint," moving from Eurocentric models toward more inclusive, equity-centered approaches. The future of IECMH depends on integrating social justice and anti-racism into practice, policy, and research at all levels (Meuwissen, et al., 2022).

The IECMH field has a prime opportunity to integrate principles of social justice and anti-racism into practice, policy, and research to promote healthy early relationships for all infants, young children, and families. Reflective supervision, consultation, and practice should be the vehicle to advance these efforts. It is not enough for individual IECMH supervisors to be open, curious, consistently available, and emotionally safe for their supervisees in order to ensure a safe, nurturing, and just society for all babies and families. Organizations and institutions need to integrate these characteristics into operations and relationships from the top down so that socially just, empathic, equitable principles rooted in reflection, collaboration, and predictable regularity will be embedded throughout ... The babies and families we all serve deserve nothing less. M. Meuwissen, et al. (2022, pp. 408-409)

The *Reimagining Reflection* project, therefore, arrived at a critical moment in a growing collective movement to reflect on past and present practices and to envision an equitable future focused on the well-being and healing of babies, children, families, and providers.

Our Way

Reimagining Reflection was termed such to respond to the call of the statewide community not only to critique and fix a broken or dysfunctional practice, but to deepen reflective practices and elevate their impact. It was a call to give birth to collective dreams and possibilities—braiding equity and healing, harnessing the power of parallel process of relationships, deepening individual and group engagement, and strengthening ripple effects.

Our commitment to *Reimagining Reflection* held us accountable to dream anew about both what would be possible *and* how we would make it possible, rather than simply reverting to familiar tools. In other words, we wanted to embrace in real time a deep reflective approach to both what we wanted and how we would get there. We designed a structure and a process of engaged collective reflection and meta-reflection. We put into practice a reimagined liberatory process while radically reimagining reflection for healing and liberation.

“Radical reimagination entails stepping outside the confines of the now and into the expansiveness of what could be. It has been described as the ability to dream of possible futures and bring these possibilities back to the present to drive social transformation.”

~ Tanisha Hill-Jarrett



The *Reimagining Reflection* project spanned six months from July through December 2024. It involved 19 community partners from across Washington State who represented a diversity of racial/ethnic backgrounds, practice settings, and regions. All the partners had experience as recipients of reflective practice, and most of them (90%) provided formal reflective consultation/supervision.

We conceived of our partners not simply as key informants but as co-creators of new and impactful wisdom. We were committed to challenging one-way, extractive processes that primarily benefit host agencies and performative interests, and co-creating new possibilities to benefit infants, children, and families in Washington.

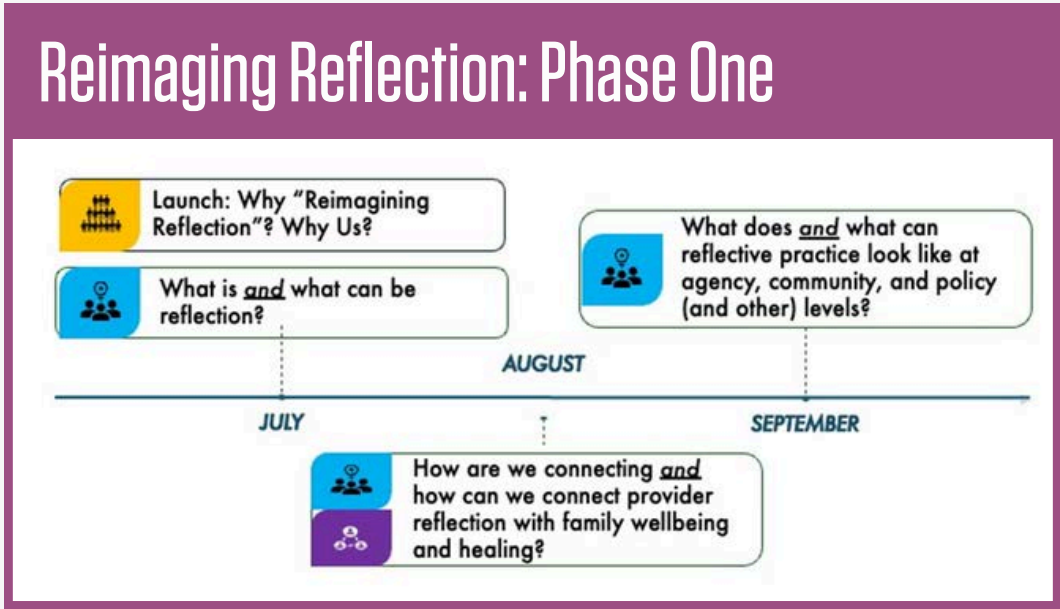
The engagement design of *Reimagining Reflection* both paralleled reflective practice and stretched reflective practice with its explicit focus on dialogue, equity, reimagination, and collective liberation. While we were reimagining the future of reflective practice, the design itself was an *in vivo* experience with what a possible future would look and feel like. While we reflected on “what is,” we imagined and practiced “what can be.” And, we reflected and learned from this very practice. We were committed to cultivating a collective process that allowed for rich storytelling and story listening of lived experiences, honest dilemmas, and felt callings.

- **Large Group Gatherings** with all 19 participants convened three times, once to set the stage for the project and twice to harvest emergent lessons and themes
- **Small Group Dialogues** for more intimate conversations, comprised of 5-7 participants each, met four times over the course of six months.
- **Affinity Groups** offered a space for focused reflection from a personal or professional standpoint. Participants were invited to self-select into different affinity groups: BIPOC, Trainer, Direct Practice and Systems/Policy. Each affinity group met one or two times over the six months.

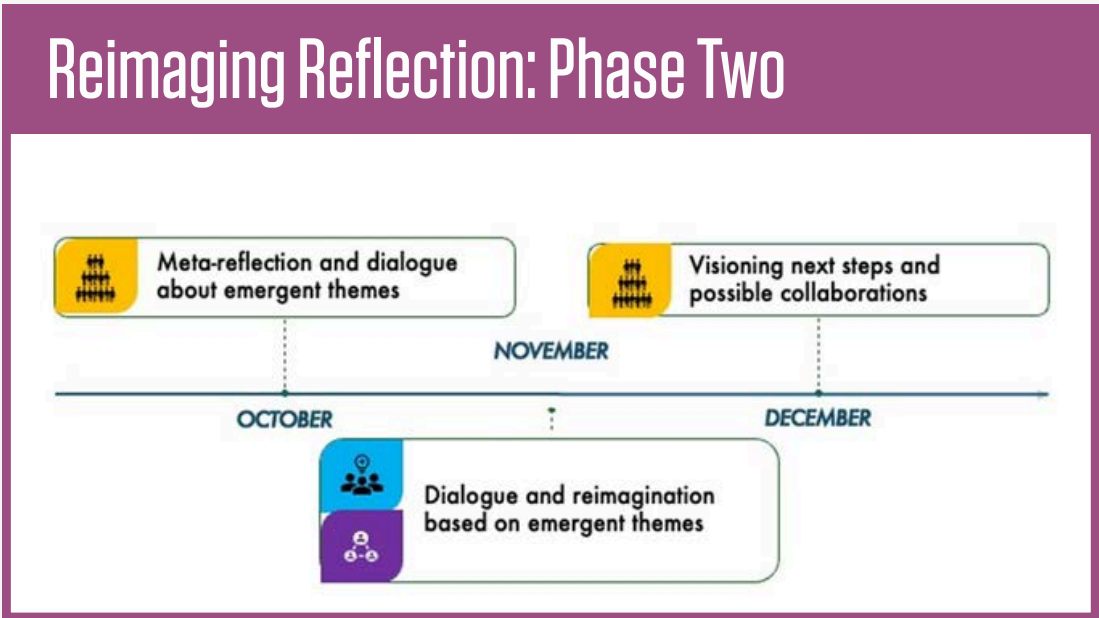


The six-month process was divided into two phases.

Phase 1 (July-September) included an invitation to and intention setting for the project and conversations exploring different contours of reflective practice.



Phase 2 (October-December) focused on collective meaning-making and harvesting wisdom to map future steps.



 Large Group

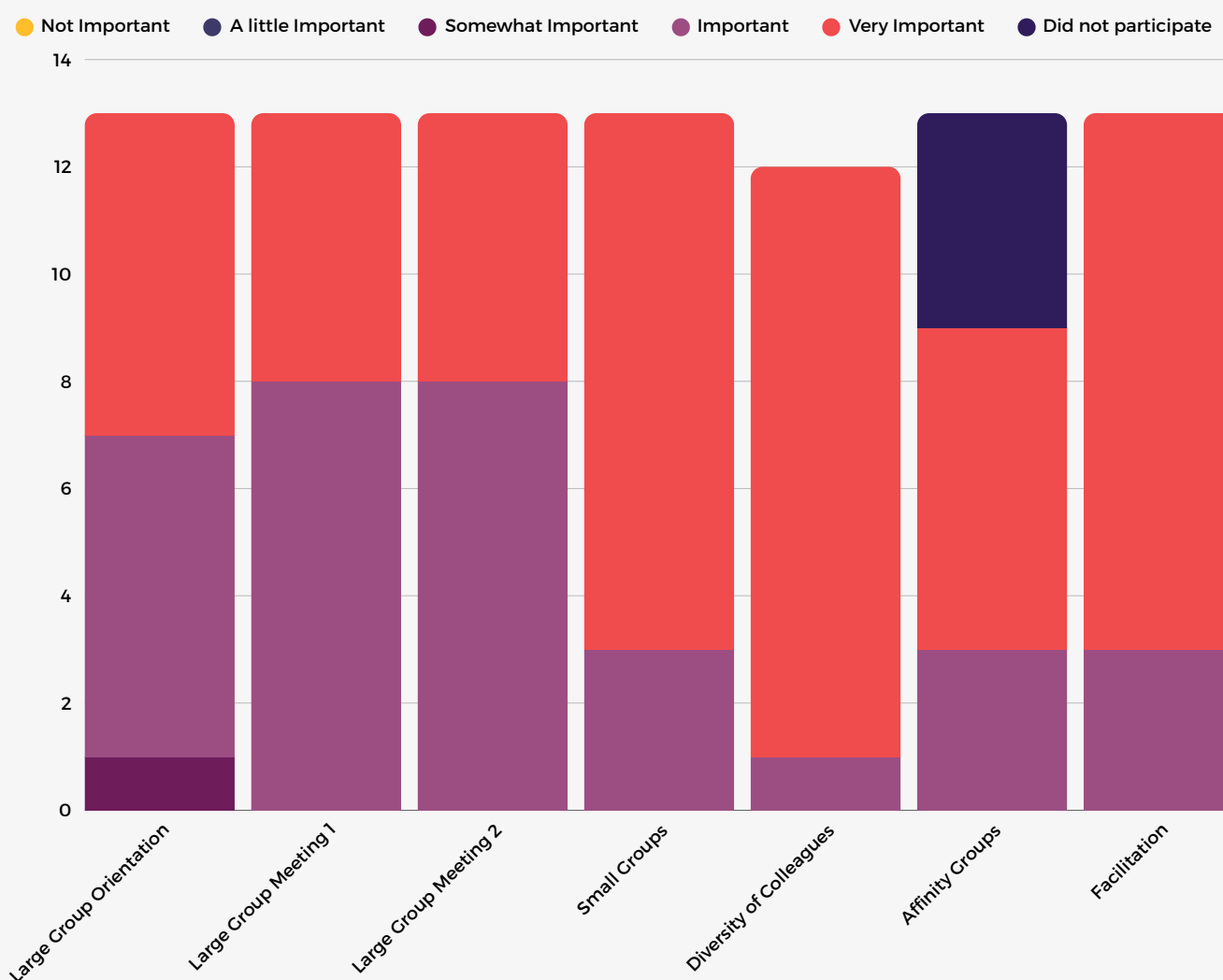
 Small Groups

 Affinity Groups

Dr. Ratnesh Nagda facilitated all meetings (large, small groups, and affinity groups). He provided introductory notes with reflective questions prior to each session. He then followed up with post-session summary notes highlighting within-session themes and emergent wisdom.

Our partners, in a post-project evaluation, rated all the conditions and design elements of the project as important or very important. Specifically:

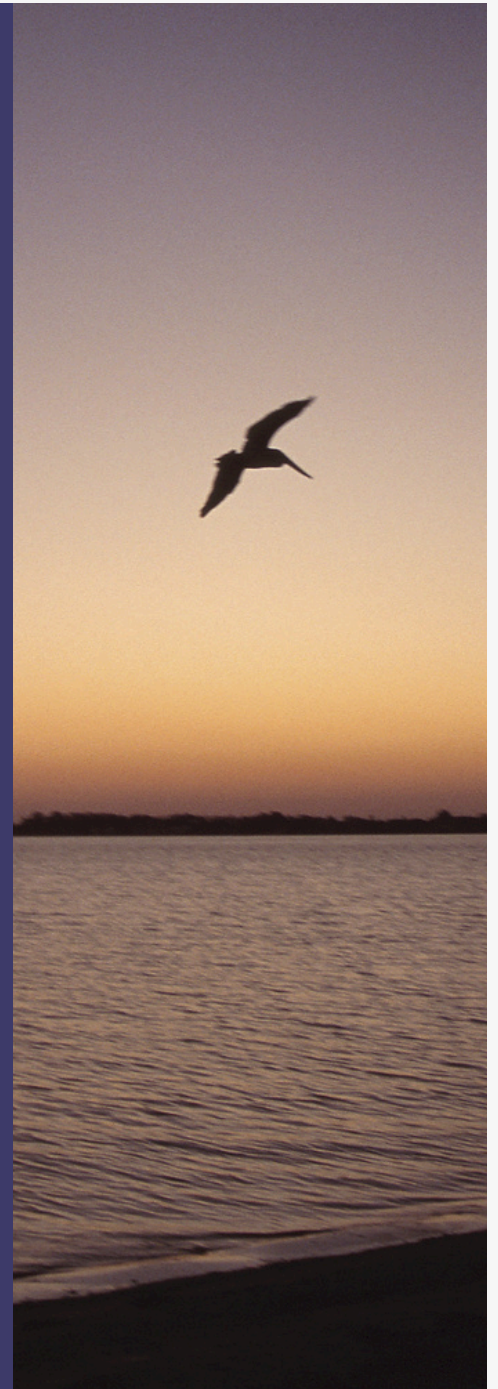
- Diversity of colleagues, small groups, and facilitation were most highly rated, with 10 or more (out of 13) participants rating those elements as very important.
- Large group meetings, especially the two dedicated to harvesting wisdom, were also rated as important or very important.



OUR EMERGENT WISDOM

In this dream, there was a bird. I'm not sure if I was the bird or maybe I was behind the bird, but it was a dark bird, and the bird is flying over an ocean. And in the ocean. It's choppy. And there's a hurricane storm in the ocean. So, the waves are giant. And there's lightning and thunder and dark clouds, and the bird cannot see a lot, and it is being flapped in different directions. And then there are these voices that came from different parts of the ocean. And it says, this way," "this direction," and then it says, "this direction," and then it says, "this direction." And then the bird feels no direction, and it dives into the water. And then it is all quiet. I am not the bird, but I am with the bird. I can feel the bird. It has dark wings. I don't know if it is a crow. I know crows don't go flying over the ocean. It is some sort of a large bird. And it dives, and it's flapping its wings. It's not drowning, but it takes in the quiet. And you can hear them ruffling. But it is quiet enough to know where to go next.

*~ Abigail Bocanegra
(in BIPOC Affinity Group)*



Abigail's dream offers a powerful metaphor for our shared experience as practitioners. We are often surrounded by competing voices, urgent demands, and multiple directions, pulled by expectations, responsibilities, and systems that rarely invite pause. Like the bird caught in the storm, we may keep moving without clarity, believing that forward motion itself will reveal the way.



Yet this dream reminds us of another possibility. When the bird dives beneath the turbulence, it finds stillness. In that quiet, orientation becomes possible again. Guidance does not come from louder voices or faster movement, but from pausing long enough to listen differently. It is there, beneath the surface, that the next direction can be sensed.

The *Reimagining Reflection* project was, in many ways, an intentional collective dive into those quieter waters. It created space for practitioners to pause, to reflect on lived experiences, and to engage in dialogue that honored both individual truths and shared wisdom. Through this process, reflection became not something we do only at designated times and in designated spaces, but a relational and embodied practice, one that allows meaning, insight, and wisdom to emerge through connection.

Dr. Ratnesh Nagda facilitated the discernment of patterns and themes arising across the small groups and affinity groups, and refined them through collective reflection during full-group gatherings. Across all these conversations, three interwoven themes became clear.

- **Nurturing Being:** From transactional to transformative reflection
- **Cultivating Being With:** From holding to healing in relationship
- **Empowering Being For Transform-action:** From fear and pain to love and hope.

Each theme reflects a shift, a threshold, moving us from familiar ways of being toward new possibilities. Each theme carried direction for a pivot from “what is” to “what can be.”

Shawn Ginwright (2022), in *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Ourselves, Reimagining Justice*, describes pivots thus:

A pivot is a small change in direction from a single point where we are. It means that through one small change in direction, over time, we can get to where we want to be. A pivot is not a complete abandonment of what we know, but it braids together what we know with how we feel and who we wish to be. A pivot acknowledges collective harm and individual injury but also leans into the future and open entirely new possibilities. A pivot involves renewing our sense of possibility, transforming how we see the world, and shifting the values of our culture. This can only happen when we foster a collective imagination that restores communal wisdom that embraces both imagination and engagement, empathy and power, reflection and action. ... A pivot means that we need to dream higher about the future we want to create.

Shawn Ginwright (2022, pp. 16-17)

Ginwright's articulation resonates deeply with the journey of *Reimagining Reflection*. Our conversations braided lived experience, professional practice, and shared longing for more humanizing, just, and healing ways of being with children and families, and one another. The themes that emerged do not stand alone; they scaffold one another, expanding outward from the individual practitioner to relationships, collectives, and broader ecosystems.

Within each theme, we observed a layering of subthemes. The first often reflects "what is" current practices and realities. The second signals the necessary pivot or bridge. The third gestures toward what we are dreaming into and what reimagined practices might become. Strengthening this dreaming dimension is essential, as it offers direction and hope for how reflective practice can continue to evolve. What follows is a deeper exploration of these three themes.

Nurturing Being: From Transactional to Transformative Reflection	Cultivating Being With: From Holding to Healing in Relationship	Empowering Being For Transform-Action: From Fear and Pain to Love and Hope
Being	Holding the Baby in Mind	Pause to Pivot
Becoming	Holding Parents/Caregivers in Our Hearts	Power Consciousness
Belonging	Healing in Community of Providers	Purpose in Practice



Theme 1. Nurturing Being: From Transactional Reflection to Transformative Reflection

Reflective supervision and consultation are often structured as regularly scheduled, designated spaces held by an endorsed consultant or trained supervisor. Their regularity, predictability, and collaborative stance are intended to create the conditions for reflective practice. Within these spaces, providers are invited to reflect on the thoughts, feelings, and emotions arising in their work with babies, children, and families. The reflective supervision or consultation session comes to be seen as the time to delve into reflection.

While these reflective spaces are often valued and protective, many practitioners note a tension. As much as there is a call for a pause from doing or action, the content of reflection often veers into clinical problem-solving. Many providers also lament that they have to place their reflections in the “parking lot” until their next reflective supervision/consultation session, while day-to-day demands dominate time in between. The intention to pause from doing is present, yet reflection risks becoming transactional, contained, time-limited, and secondary to other demands.

The possibilities illuminated through *Reimagining Reflection* point toward a pivot: from transactional reflection to transformative reflection, where reflection is not merely a professional activity but a way of being. Transformative reflection centers on the embodied quality of reflectiveness, how one exercises self-awareness, presence, and relationality across contexts, rather than only within designated reflective spaces. Our colleague Gil Romero-Mewharter articulated this succinctly.

Reflection is who we are! Reflection is just who you are, who you show up as in the world, rather than the space, this very specific thing. That's who we are.

~ Gil Romero-Mewharter



Seen this way, reflection is more than a vehicle for regulation and clarity. Traditional reflective practice often supports providers in acknowledging thoughts and emotions and understanding how internal experiences come up in practice. It provides time and support to reflect on oneself and acknowledge what is coming up for oneself and perhaps what is influencing one's thoughts and actions in practice with children and families. Transformative reflection builds on this foundation while inviting something more: growth into who one is becoming, and who one longs to be. Rather than aiming solely for comfort or emotional regulation, moments of discomfort and dysregulation are welcomed as invitations for courageous growth, especially when addressing the harms of inequities and moving toward healing and justice.

Reflective supervision and consultation commonly occur in individual or small group formats. Even in group settings, however, questions persist about how dominant power dynamics may be inadvertently reproduced, whose reflections are centered, whose voices are amplified or marginalized, and how implicit bias and inequities remain unnamed. Within *Reimagining Reflection*, an additional dimension of group and communal reflective practice began to take shape: belonging.

Reflecting on an early session of *Reimagining Reflection*, our colleague Haruko Watanabe spoke to the significance of vulnerability and revelation in community with others.



One person's decision to be courageous in the moment encourages others to join in to speak their truths. I'm really holding on to that. We're talking about something very fundamental in terms of how to be with one another. It seems very simple but important... I mean, this is what we do, right? This is what we're striving to do in our work. All of the sharing today is helping me think a lot more deeply about the complexity of it.

~ Haruko Watanabe

Haruko's reflection points to the unspoken but felt sense of belonging that both sets the conditions for transformative reflection and is a consequence of transformative reflection. Reflection practiced in community can embolden individual courage and invite reciprocal vulnerability. When providers risk being seen by one another, individual courage transforms into collective en-courage-ment. In this shared space, safety is not created through comfort alone, but through mutual risk-taking, honesty, and growth.

When practitioners move from safety as self-protection toward bravery as connective and reciprocal vulnerability, reflection becomes relational rather than solitary. By bearing witness to one another's experiences, providers create spaces where becoming, individually and collectively, is possible. Belonging emerges not as a destination, but as a lived experience that enables transformation.

In this way, ***nurturing being*** through reflection shifts from something we do at scheduled intervals to something we practice being together—an ongoing, relational, and embodied way of showing up in the world, with ourselves and with others.



Theme 2. Cultivating Being With: From Holding in Mind to Healing in Relationship

Cultivating **being with** builds upon transformative reflection by widening the circle of attention. It asks us to consider how reflection lives in relationship, with babies and children, with parents and caregivers, with colleagues, and with ourselves. In this relational field, healing becomes possible not through technique alone, but through presence, attunement, and belonging.

All of our partners—providers and practitioners—were drawn to *Reimagining Reflection* out of a deep care for babies and families. One of the foundational tenets of traditional reflective practice is “to hold the baby in mind,” centering the baby’s independent thoughts, feelings, and emotional experience as essential to healthy development. Embedded within this tenet is an understanding of the baby as an independent being, whose inner world is prioritized.

Yet this framing also reflects culturally rooted assumptions of dominant culture, values emphasizing independence, autonomy, and mastery. Within *Reimagining Reflection*, participants consistently named a different understanding: the baby or child is inseparable from a larger relational ecosystem that includes parents and caregivers, families, communities, as well as the providers.

The familiar phrase, “It takes a village to raise a child,” captures this reality. Yet, within *Reimagining Reflection*, the village came into focus not as an abstraction but as a lived relational experience. In particular, our partners spoke with deep empathy about the well-being of parents and caregivers. More than simply holding the baby in mind, our colleagues spoke compassionately about holding the parents and caregivers in our hearts and supporting their healing.

Jae Perez De Luengas articulated this perspective through the lens of healing across generations.



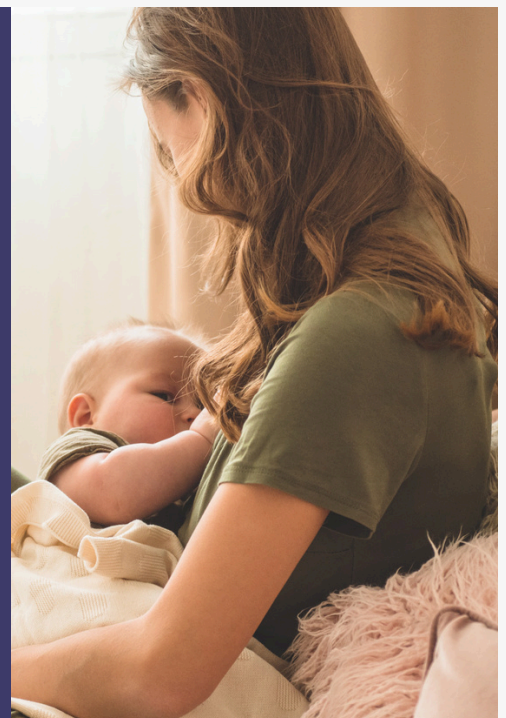
When we work with parents and other adults, the baby or child that's within them oftentimes has needs or hasn't healed, like childhood trauma... when you're able to really address or acknowledge parents, it's keeping the baby in mind, but we also know that those babies and children in adult bodies who have a lot of learning and healing to do. We all know that's sometimes painful, and it takes time.

~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez De Luengas

By holding the parents and caregivers in our hearts, we begin to undo the unintended consequence of solely prioritizing the baby in mind. Betty Peralta builds on this insight by connecting healing to belonging and challenging us to examine our projections about what is "best" for the child. She invites reflection that does not bypass parents and caregivers in decisions about the baby and family, but rather centers the baby in relationship with the whole family.

Parents and other caregivers stay engaged with us when they feel a sense of belonging and when we see the baby as part of an ecosystem--as part of the whole family. How do we help the family feel like they belong? How do we make this caregiver feel like they're heard, like their voice is important, and their parenting practices have value and meaning? How do we keep the actual baby in mind rather than our image or projection of what they should be in mind?

~ Betty Peralta



Expanding the relational field around the child also requires turning our attention to providers themselves. As dominant culture values of independence or separation are questioned, it becomes clear that providers, too, are shaped and affected by their experiences with families. The pivot from holding the baby in mind to healing in community carries an understanding of parallel process: how providers are held and healed can influence how they, in turn, hold and provide spaces of healing for parents and caregivers, and subsequently how parents and caregivers hold their children.

Drawing on her experience as a reflective consultant, Meyleen Velasquez passionately highlights the importance of bringing our whole selves into the work of holding and healing.



[It] is the whole acceptance of that individual In order for me to be able to hold, to support the provider, that caregiver in mind, I have to be capable first to give that person, rather co-create, a sense of belonging.

How am I really listening with my heart and soul to your heart and soul? How as a reflective consultant, the experience that I'm trying to create with the person I am consulting with mirrors the experience that I hope that they have with the parent/caregiver. For me, what makes the translation is talking about it "how we [providers and reflective consultants] are and then how you [providers] are with the family.

~ Meyleen Velasquez

Rather than listening with the mind, Meyleen calls us to receive deeply with our heart and soul. Rather than beginning solely with the baby, Meyleen suggests starting with the provider. When providers feel seen, heard, and valued, they are better able to perceive the fullness of families' experiences. Like Betty's reminder not to overlook parents' and caregivers' voices, Meyleen emphasizes honoring the experiences of providers' lived realities, relational histories, and emotional truths.

Across these reflections, a common thread becomes clear: belonging. Being seen, heard, and valued without erasure or minimization creates the conditions for healing. Wovwn through transformative reflection and relational healing, belonging makes space for wholeness, growth and connection.

In shifting from holding to healing, reflective practice expands beyond technique or stance. Healing becomes a relational process grounded in presence, attunement, and courageous listening. *Being with* invites us to recognize that healing happens in relationship, and that wholeness is not achieved in isolation, but in community. Healing-centered reflective practice honors the parallel process while embracing the power of mutuality to both transform and be transformed.



Theme 3. Empowering Being For Transform-Action: From Fear and Pain to Love and Hope

Empowering *being for transform-action* extends reflection beyond individual growth and relational healing into the realm of collective responsibility. It frames reflection not only as a source of insight, but as a catalyst for foresight, guiding how we act, how we organize, and how we imagine futures rooted in dignity, love, and hope rather than fear and fragmentation.

Just as babies and children exist within a web of relationships, parents, caregivers, and communities, providers, too, are embedded within broader organizational, institutional, and societal ecosystems. Traditional reflective practice has often focused on helping providers explore their internal cognitive and emotional worlds. While this can be deeply valuable for providers, it can also carry explicit or implicit messages: “you have to figure it out on your own” or, worse, “it is all in your head.” When mindfulness and self-care practices are decontextualized from larger social, organizational, and structural contexts, responsibility for harm or for coping with hurts can quietly shift to individuals. In these moments, reflective practice risks reinforcing dominant cultural values of individualism and fix-it mentalities. Reflection, or simply becoming aware, is seen as an end in itself: awareness without action, insight without movement.

Within *Reimagining Reflection*, participants named a different possibility. Reflection was understood not only as reflection on action or reflection in action, but also as reflection for action and action informed by reflection. If healing is truly relational and emerges in spaces of belonging, then how might reflection support not only individual well-being, but collective healing and systems transformation?

The theme of *empowering being for transform-action* calls attention to the role of critical reflection in naming how dominant structures and entrenched practices, ways of being, thinking, and doing, can cause harm to providers, families, and babies. It invites a courageous pivot: transforming fear and pain into love and hope.

Our colleague Abigail Bocanegra captures this invitation to daringly reimagine reflection at the collective level.

Birthing and labor...it's transformative, yes, it's beautiful, but oftentimes it's not talked about how painful, how frightening it can be. When we're talking about bringing in something new or returning to other reflective ways, there's an invitation that we are giving ourselves in the collective, the community, to step into a space in which it can be beautiful and also incredibly frightening. The question I'm holding right now what happened yesterday evening as indigenous people we're sitting around feeling at the body level, the disruption of our reflective practices that many of us hold and we've forgotten, we've gotten lost along the way but the question I have and that I asked last night was: What are we afraid of for individuals or organizations or systems to do this work on the collective level?

~ Abigail Bocanegra



Echoing Gil's remarks that reflection is who we are, Abigail speaks to reclaiming ways of being that are culturally rooted and ancestral while recognizing the grief and pain of ancestral reflective practices that have been lost or erased.

A stance of “pause to pivot,” in contrast to “find it, fix it” or a mere “pause,” invites reflection on the impact of ongoing practices and an opportunity to pivot toward healing. While “pause” may connote temporary relief, “pause to pivot” points toward more intentional and impactful action. Rather than merely acknowledging how one is internally affected by interactions and other external events, “pause to pivot” invites ownership of responsibility, both complicit and change-oriented.

Participants repeatedly named the importance of bringing power consciousness to reflective practice. Reflection, when situated within a broader awareness of power and context, can help us ask different questions: How do we pause to reflect on reflective practice? How do we hold ourselves and our practices accountable to healing, not harming? How can a power-conscious reflective practice help us build collective structures for transformative action, or transform-action?

This theme also illuminated the necessity of attending to the ecosystem of reflective practice. Nina Evers, for example, noted a disconnect in the parallel process of reflective practice, where supervisors are expected to hold reflective space for staff without receiving reflective support themselves.



We know there are supervisors receiving reflective consultation who carry full responsibility for their staff's reflective capacity and relational well-being, yet they themselves may not be receiving parallel support within their own organization. So, the focus on the reflective dyad without considering the full ecosystem can be harmful.

~ Nina Evers

Such isolation can lead to reflectiveness being experienced as performative or expendable, protected temporarily but vulnerable to erosion. The theme of transform-action calls us to examine how reflective practice is modeled, supported and sustained throughout the ecosystem.

Several partners emphasized purpose and alignment as central to this work. Like Nina, Jae imagined reflective practice as a universal resource, from the frontline providers to agency leaders and decision-makers.

I wish reflective practice was a universal requirement for everyone. 'Here you are you're a human being, you need to do this like a driver's license because it's so important.' I think the same [for] different roles in our agency. What would it look like? I've even imagined internally at our agency if there was a requirement for everyone, but especially the program directors, to engage in reflective practice. It's going to feel uncomfortable like it has for all of us when we first start, but I think there's so much power to that because maybe they don't get the chance to have that time to reflect and to slow down and to really think about how their actions are impacting others.

~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez De Luengas



Resonating with availing reflective opportunities for leaders, our colleague Ryan Good shared a concrete example of how embodied experience can create reflective openings across roles.



I remember one of the best feelings I got from my department was a year when board members decided to attend home visits. The people who sit at desks and write the policies and manage the budget came out and were a part of what we're doing as teachers inside of homes. There was just a really big 'Aha' moment: "I now fully understand what our employees, staff members, and specialists are doing out there."

~ Ryan Good

While not reflective practice in the traditional sense, such experiences of “walk a mile in my shoes” catalyzed reflective opportunities that bridge staff and administration and gain support for reflective practice for home visitors. Reflection, in this view, becomes a shared responsibility and a common language for understanding impact.

Empowering *being for transform-action* builds on belonging and healing to imagine collective futures shaped not by pain, fear, and scarcity, but by hope, love, and generative abundance. A chord resonating in another's insight, growth emerging through encounters with difference and discomfort, and glimmers sparked by collective realizations form connective threads, weaving a sense of steadfastness within oneself and a deeper sense of communality with others.

This theme brings us full circle: from individual reflection to collective imagination, from solitude to community, and from reflection as containment to reflection as catalyst. Transform-action invites us to move forward together, holding both what has been lost and what remains possible, what has been taken and what can be reclaimed, as we co-create reflective practices that sustain life, dignity, and hope across our shared ecosystems. Healing-centered reflection mobilizes transformation when *power within* joins *power with*.

Weaving Across Themes: Honoring the Emergent Thread of Spirituality

The three themes—*nurturing being*, *cultivating being with*, and *empowering being for transform-action—together* trace a relational and developmental arc of reimagining reflection. What began with attending to inner life and embodied belonging expands outward into healing in relationships, and then further into collective responsibility and action within larger ecosystems. Rather than discrete or sequential shifts, these themes are deeply interwoven, each strengthening and scaffolding the others. Reflection emerges not as a single practice or moment, but as a living, relational process that moves across self, relationships, and systems.

As we listened across conversations, another dimension consistently emerged, sometimes spoken directly and sometimes felt beneath the words: spirituality. Many partners observed that professional training and dominant systems have often pushed spirituality underground, even as practitioners experience their work as deeply meaningful and sacred. Naming and honoring spirituality becomes an act of reclamation, giving language and legitimacy to what has long been lived but seldom acknowledged, especially in professional settings.

I don't know where spirituality lives in this work of reflection or of reimagining reflection. I know that means different things to different people; it's a different experience for different people. But I have always felt like there is something deeply spiritual about the work we do, that relationships are sacred, holds deep meaning for me. And yet in the language, the culture, my training as a social worker or in psychotherapy always felt like that part of this work has had to kind of go underground. So I just want to name that and just how validating it felt even for [colleague] to use the word spiritual in this space.

~ Diane Lostrangio





Rather than a distinct theme, spirituality appears to weave through all three themes, shaping how participants understand presence, connection, courage, and hope. Within *nurturing being*, spirituality is felt in moments of stillness and attunement, in the pause beneath turbulence where meaning can settle, and direction can be felt rather than forced. In *cultivating being with*, spirituality shows up as reverence for connectedness and relationality, as listening that reaches beyond words, and as an honoring of wholeness that resists fragmentation. In *empowering being for transform-action*, spirituality is reflected in expressions of *power within* and *power with*, a shared source of strength that supports accountability, imagination, and collective movement.

Seen in this light, spirituality does not sit outside reflective practice; it gently animates it. It deepens reflection beyond technique, sustains courage in moments of uncertainty, and supports movement from insight toward transform-action rooted in care and responsibility. As *power within* joins *power with*, spirituality becomes a quiet but generative force, supporting hope, love, and possibility alongside honesty about pain and loss.

Weaving through these themes, spirituality invites us to understand reflection both as a way of being and a way of doing. It holds meaning, honors connection, and supports transformation across individual, relational, and collective levels. Through this lens, reflective practice emerges as a living relational practice, one capable of holding complexity, tending to what has been wounded or forgotten, and nurturing possibilities for healing and renewal across the ecosystems we share.

REVEALING THE LAYERS OF REFLECTION-IN-RELATIONSHIP: BELONGING, HEALING, AND PROPHETIC COMMUNING



These spaces are purposeful and meaningful. And they're supposed to be happening to us with us and for us right now to find some respite in our work and in our human hearts so that we're not so heavy all the time. I just so much appreciate these opportunities to breathe and to be reminded that we are going somewhere, to do something that's bigger and better and greater than ourselves, and for others. Sometimes it's a lot of weight to carry, but we're doing it together.

~ Maria Vasquez

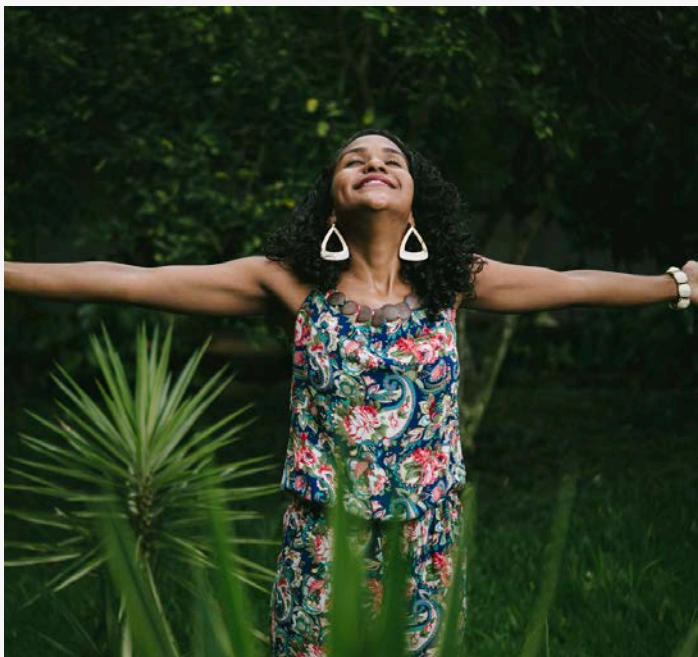
As our *Reimagining Reflection* journey came to a close, we intentionally paused to turn inward together. In this shared moment of reflection, we considered what the experience had revealed—what had moved us, what had shifted within us, and what we were carrying forward. In many ways, this was a reflection on reflection itself: a collective noticing of how connection, presence, and shared inquiry and dreaming had shaped our time together. Through this retrospective dialogue on a brief yet deeply meaningful journey, powerful insights emerged, all rooted in connection and connectedness.

Gratitude for Connectedness

Our partners, deeply embedded changemakers in agencies and communities, expressed their gratitude for *Reimagining Reflection* as a space of respite and revitalization. For many, this sense of slowing down and breathing was as simple as being held in a reflective, relational space, and as profound as experiencing it as a healing space. Most powerfully, this gratitude was not felt alone but embodied collectively.

What I'm holding is gratitude, a feeling and caring in my body, the felt sense of this group, and how supported I've felt. It's the content and feeling, but also the slower pace, and this wondering kind of stance.

~ Haruko Wantanabe



I feel so grateful for our ways of being with one another. That's the biggest thing that I'm feeling in my body right now. I learned so much. But it's not just about what I'm learning. It's about what I think might be happening collectively.

~ Marie-Celeste Condon

Our shared space came to feel like fertile soil, tended together, nurturing growth within us and extending beyond us.



I'm grateful for spaces like this where I'm a part of the discussion, where I'm not facilitating and holding the space because, every once in a while, those of us who do quite a lot of facilitation will need our own space and time to be able to process things as well. I am grateful for being included here and being with you all.

~ Nucha Isarawong

Our time together has been a very needed touch point. I think the safety and the environment that we've created together...where we have more opportunities to share space, connect, hear each other's stories, explore, and be together in these very healing ways, it gives us a sense of deepened purpose... and how beautiful it can be if we can continue to ripple that out to others.

~ Sahkiya Brakebill



As much as we regularly hold space for others and facilitate connections in our everyday work, many of us found it deeply nourishing to be the ones held in a space of deep reflection with trusted colleagues. These experiences of connection and imagination became a catalyst for renewal, and for remembering and grounding ourselves in our purpose.



I'm grateful for a sense of community and belonging. One of the things that I continue to think about every day is the intentionality of partnering with communities statewide to promote family and community well-being: What does this really mean as we are doing the work with so many community partners and different communities across the state? How do we get to well-being? What does it mean for different, unique families, for unique colleagues, for unique partners? How does that happen? What's the vehicle? And what I keep coming back to is this idea of connection and the importance of building relational capacity, and reflective capacity is a big part of that. Every time I get to be in this space with you all, it re-anchors me and reinvigorates me to go out.

~ Kelli Bohanon

Kelli's reflection is a powerful testament to the interconnected nature of the *Reimagining Reflection* experience. Within a shared space of mutual belonging, we were able to sit with difficult questions in ways that felt generative, both in what we asked ourselves and in how we seek to engage in just relations with families and communities. Our wisdom revealed itself not only in the emergent possibilities, but also in the brave questions among us.

Bearing Witness to Wisdom in Connection

Reimagining Reflection became a space where we could voice and listen to the truths of our lived experiences and practices, while bearing witness to new understandings emerging through deep relational engagement.

It's hard to put into words what it means to look forward to somebody's wisdom and experience. But that's what I've come to anticipate ... I just felt really excited to be a part of the wealth of knowledge and experience and to have a front row seat to everyone's perspective and intuition about the work that you do and about other people, and how you view our work with families and children.

~ Ryan Good



It's exciting to come to this group and hear what people say. ... when everybody is about to talk, I'm just like, "What are you going to say?" And I'm never disappointed. ... It's been really rewarding to get to share these ideas and co-create and co-conspire information together on a dream and a vision for reflective practice.

~ Betty Peralta

I can't write fast enough. I keep moving to write profound statements ... I think it's just that I'm really invigorated and energized by the profound wisdom and the realities that have come before us and are still here and preparing us for the future.

~ Maria Vasquez



The co-creative process of sharing, seeking, and generating wisdom left a lasting impression on us. More than a refuge from the pace and pressure of everyday work and life, these opportunities to play with one another's ideas and build something new both stretched us and energized us. Through this experience, we came to realize the uniqueness of our co-created container and the conversations held within the container.



I've found this just so powerful and such a unique space. I haven't had conversations that were like this or felt like these many times in the past.

~ Bridget Lecheile



Sometimes you're part of things that lose momentum after a while, but I felt like we just kept building and building. I could see a difference in myself after these conversations. I just hadn't had the opportunity to have these kinds of conversations at this depth.

*~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez
de Luengas*

The invitation to lean in, to bring one's own wisdom as part of the connection, and to be held within a supportive, relational space, opened up meaningful possibilities. In contrast to more familiar work meetings or professional development experiences, the *Reimagining Reflection* experience of being together felt enlightening, refreshing, and expansive.

In this field of meetings and trainings, I've gotten so used to being a passive participant to whom information is being given. I'm absorbing and processing and then adding to my style. Or I'm taking in technical information to track for the month. And then we have a little bit of discourse where we talk about the technical aspects of things. There might be wisdom in the information that's being given to me, but that's still different from witnessing or being a part of this version of authentic improv wisdom based on our responses and reactions to what we're hearing in the moment. And to be able to watch everybody's process as the topics were coming up was just so freeing. It was so exciting to be vulnerable but also supported, just like to see what the conversation had in store.

~ Ryan Good



Exciting, freeing, grounding, inspiring, energizing, reigniting, reinvigorating, and more. These words reflect the powerful feelings held in bodies, hearts, and souls about and as a result of our *Reimagining Reflection* conversations. We felt these emotions not only within the held and bounded space of our group, but these feelings permeated our beings as we moved beyond the group space. We carried one another's words, we wondered about each other's truths, and we held one another's wisdom outside the shared space. Alongside renewed commitments, we also experienced a sense of newness in ourselves, as co-creators and collaborators with others.

Growing Courage Through Connectedness

The changing climate of public discourse and realities in the United States and the consequent social and economic tremors have heightened feelings of fear, uncertainty, and unpredictability. Within this broader context, the sense of connectedness cultivated through *Reimagining Reflection* offered grounding and steadiness. Rather than retreating into spaces of comfort or remaining isolated with grief and worry, many of us found anchoring with one another. The relationships and shared meaning-making within *Reimagining Reflection* helped us stay rooted in our values and committed to our visions, even amid uncertainty.



[What I am holding from this experience is] just the idea of being connected. The first time we went through the [2016] election, I felt totally disconnected and really kind of questioning, 'Why do we continue to do this work?' This time around, it highlights how even more important this work is and how important it is for us to be together, to support each other, and celebrate even the smallest wins because we don't know what those ripples will mean for others.

~ Gil Romero-Mewharter

... Especially in the wake of the election, I am appreciating this sense of being connected to people who are actively engaged in pushing back and holding up values that, on the surface, may appear to be eroding. But there is this web of people that are not going to back down.... I'm not alone in all the feelings that it evokes. You are part of that web, I am part of the web, and we have work to do together.

~ Diane Lostrangio



The embodied experience of this collective web—being in connection, feeling our connectedness, knowing that each of us mattered, and reimagining together—stirred a growing sense of courage among us. This shared experience invited deeper engagement with the responsibilities we carry, including the responsibility to situate ourselves honestly within systems of power and racialization.



It's also the thing that's helping me stay grounded in that it is more important to do our work right now than ever before, to continue [to do the work]. For me, as a white woman, that really is rooted in responsibility and knowing that when I act on that responsibility, that is where the healing comes for the white supremacy culture that I've been raised in.

~ Nina Evers

The threads of responsibility, healing, and change resonated in the group as others stepped into their own emerging courage. In this way, *Reimagining Reflection* became an incubation space, a place to experiment, to practice, and to build confidence to exercise newer ways of knowing, being, and doing.



This opportunity to really talk about some of these things that we've all been talking about or mumbling about or grumbling about over the years, about life and just the heaviness and the weight, and not really having outlets. I'm starting to see now, it's clearer after being a part of this group. It's clicking for me that I get to do things differently, and I'm practicing it here with you all - getting it right, getting it wrong, breaking through the language fumbles and the feelings and the weight of things, getting to now practice it moving forward. That's always the hope, that we share forward the golden nuggets of this opportunity because we always want others to be better with us, but we want them to be better without us.

~ Maria Vasquez

Every time I left [our sessions], I felt so inspired and reignited to keep speaking up and advocating for many things. It just kind of gave me that little boost that I needed. When maybe before I would have been a little bit more shy or fearful to speak up in other groups, knowing that I carried your power with me as I moved forward.

~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez de Luengas



Maria's and Jae's reflections speak to the courage it takes to break the silence around what often remains unspoken, and to gently peel back layers of fear that shape survival-based and business-as-usual practices. Their reflections hold both hope and responsibility—the hope born of transformation, and the responsibility of carrying that transformation forward so that others, too, may experience greater freedom, belonging, and possibility.

Our conversations in *Reimagining Reflection* revealed that courage is inseparable from healing. It is personal, and it is collective. Courage undoes the harmful impact of social inequities and collective trauma, and it moves us toward reclaiming personal and collective power. Courageous and collective healing calls us to decolonize ourselves by unlearning survival patterns and to reimagine what it means to fully belong, both as who we are and as who we are becoming. Beyond individual healing or professional development alone, our partners lifted up the multi-dimensionality of collective healing: healing with one another, healing in our work with communities, and the intentional holding of healing spaces in the communities in our care and within systems that we are a part of.

Coming Home to Ourselves, with One Another

The unfolding experience of *Reimagining Reflection* offered a space not only to think differently about the future, but to feel the reimagination taking place in the present. We noticed the subtle yet palpable shifts—in our bodies, our minds, and our spirits. Through our shared presence and collective engagement, we began to sense what a reimagined reflective space can hold, and what it can call forth.

Many of us described this experience with a single word: **home**.

As we listened intently, deeply, and lovingly to one another, these words settled among us. We began to notice the many forms that home can take, like light refracting through a prism, each granular expression distinct yet connected.

For Martha Aguiñiga, home is community, of being in power with others, grounded in relationships, and committed to the courageous work of resisting othering and exclusion. The *Reimagining Reflection* space, and especially the BIPOC Affinity Group, became a counterspace, an oasis, amid the many strange and estranging spaces she navigates each day.



I'm having a moment of feeling home here. It feels like home to be amongst all of you, old friends, new friends. So many other spaces don't feel like home. I don't know what to call them, but they're not home. Already, I mean it's only noon, but by the time I arrived here, it already felt not home so many times. So, I'm just allowing myself to take in the feeling of home and the feeling of community and the feeling of being with spirits who are also courageously in this fight and in this sense of belonging. I really appreciate the way this feels. Thank you all.

*~ Martha Aguiñiga
(in BIPOC Affinity Group)*

A partner resonated with Martha's sense of home within the BIPOC Affinity Group in contrast to other spaces she traverses daily.



The affinity groups were one of the secret sauces of this space. Although I felt authentic in every space, there is something different about an affinity space, like I can take off "my outside clothes" and just chill in my "house clothes."

*~ Anonymous
(Evaluation survey)*

Our partner intimates a depth of authenticity possible in home space. Oftentimes, affinity spaces are seen as a full embrace of one's being without having to explain or justify one's experience or perspective. There is an unspoken understanding, a shared experience that is in contrast to the professional spaces our partner alludes to navigating.

For Jae Perez de Luengas, coming home meant returning to an earlier sense of herself as a dreamer and finding affirmation for the visions she has long carried.

I married my elementary school sweetheart. He has a picture that I gave him, [maybe in] 6th grade, and I signed my name as "la dreamer," and I still feel like I'm a dreamer. It's kind of a full circle moment because sometimes even a dreamer can be made fun of, or it's like you're too much. But now we need spaces where we can dream together, as it has really just felt like home. I have been really enjoying being part of conversations about reflective practice, and it's really transformed who I am.

~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez de Luengas

Kelli Bohanon spoke of home as an affirming web of connection, rooted in power-with, held by people willing to do the hard work of changing systems by weaving reflection and relationship together.

I've always believed that this work starts and ends with our connection and relationship. This has been such a profound experience for me, because I feel like I'm home. I feel like I'm surrounded by people who really want to do work this way. What it takes me back to, though, and what I believe so immensely about systems and hierarchy is: if we're going to make this change, it's this vision that I've always had where we're going to show up—in a government agency, in a nonprofit in a school, in our communities, wherever we're at, wherever we're at in our communities and whatever we're doing, if what we're coming to do is this.

~ Kelli Bohanon



In Ratnesh's own reflection notes following a small-group session, he wrote about a feeling of ease, a sense of home beginning to take shape. It was not fully formed, yet it already offered shelter.

Our journey through Reimagining Reflection has been one of returning home for me. It is not a familiar home of the past but a home of longing, loving, and belonging aligned with my aspirations and dreams. It is a felt space where the "who," "how," "what," and "why" of my being and being with others feels right. Be it an alignment of my anchor and purposefulness (rootedness), of creating spaces for collective imagination and healing (relationality), and being awed by what is possible to do in courageous and loving communities (regenerativity), I feel that ease of being wholly present in our space, here and now.

~ Ratnesh Nagda



For each of us, home is lived in relationship, to ourselves and to one another. It appeared as a refuge from systemic harms, a reclaiming of early visions of self, a catalyst for systems change, or a glimpse of a future not yet fully formed but already felt in its fullness in the present. Home was a deeply felt sense of ease and affirmation of who we are, who we are becoming, and how we show up to better a world that can hold us all in connection and community. Far from being protected, walled off, and exclusive, the sense of home among us felt supportive, welcoming, and expansive.

Holding Transformation at the Intersection of Reflection-and-Relationship

The dual engagement, both as co-creators of the conversations and as witnesses to the conversations, allowed our partners to appreciate the emergent nature of our work. It also invited deeper wondering about what made such meaningful depth possible in our conversations, and how these insights might inform and enhance our own professional practices.

Many of our partners are directly involved in offering or managing programs focused on reflective consultation and supervision. While they actively participated in *Reimagining Reflection*, they also maintained a higher-level perspective, continually noticing and reflecting on the process itself as it unfolded.



I've been so impressed by how deep we have been able to go together really quickly without having established long-term relationships. And just thinking about what's that about, how exactly does that happen? An important component is how you, Ratnesh, hold the space. But what else?

~ Diane Lostrangio

The appreciative wondering brought greater attention to the complexity of holding collective and connective reflective spaces. There was a growing awareness that being with one another in *Reimagining Reflection* allowed individual insights to be woven into collective wisdom, and personal courage to expand into shared fortitude. Through this relational engagement, our partners found ways to translate their own growth, even perhaps unanticipated, into broader visions of family and community well-being. In essence, we were reimagining reflection by recentering relationships and connection.



To better understand how such depth emerged within a relatively short period of time, our reflections pointed toward relationality as the heart of deep and meaningful reflection-in-relationship.

Relationality moves us beyond relationships as structures or containers for connection; it is the enacted, lived, and felt experience of genuine connectedness. While relationships can make collective engagement possible, it is the mindset, heartset, and practices of relationality that cultivate trust, belonging, and shared purpose.

Within *Reimagining Reflection*, our partners named several elements that supported this relational approach: the facilitator's presence and connectedness, partners' owning change in self, and a shared commitment to transform professional practices and professional settings. Together, these elements shaped a sense of safety, belonging, and purposefulness that allowed reflection to be transformative rather than transactional.

HOLDING SPACE WITH PRESENCE AND CONNECTEDNESS

Partners frequently spoke about the presence and role of the facilitator in holding the collective space with care and attentiveness. They noted an absence of pressure to perform, produce, or arrive at predetermined outcomes, and instead experienced an openness that allowed genuine curiosity and honesty to take root.

I noticed the shift in me when I had enough experience with you, Ratnesh, as the host and the kind of creator of the space, and how quickly you were able to convey that this journey wasn't going to be about impressing you or hitting certain marks or agendas that you had, per se. The safety that you offered all of us, as somebody who is encouraging us but not trying to create a very specific final product, just loosened me up and loosened the group up. It was just a real pleasure to be, for lack of a better term, under your care inside this group.

~ Ryan Good



Being cared for offered a glimpse into the relational capacities of facilitation grounded in reflection-in-relationship. This experience moved beyond the predictable procedural approaches to reflective practice—regularly scheduled meetings, set formats, and predictable agendas—and instead invited attunement to what was emerging in the present interactions. This is not to diminish the importance of structure and consistency. Rather, our experience suggested that while structure offers a possibility, it is care, trust, and presence that cultivate connectedness. Rather than getting through the reflective practice session, what matters is diving deep, gently surfacing what lies beneath and making visible the patterns that emerge in the in-between spaces within ourselves, among us, and within systems of power that shape our work.



I was thinking Ratnesh, that it felt like, for lack of a better analogy, you were the father of the group and then you gathered the rest of us. Because we all trusted you, I think that rolled down into relationships with each other. "He trusts, so we can trust others in the room." I think that just had a lot to do with it right away. We were able to create in the space you gave us. And then I think from that grew even more trust and relationship with each other.

~ Gil Romero-Mewharter

As the facilitator, being entrusted by our partners and holding their vulnerable reflections about their "why" for joining the *Reimagining Reflection* journey deepened Ratnesh's own sense of responsibility toward each person and the collective. This responsibility extended beyond simply guiding the group to holding a space that honored each partner's lived wisdom, welcomed uncertainty, and allowed our shared power to become more visible.

*How do we plant those seeds,
and how do we nourish them?
How do we be the gardener and
the mirror at the same time,
practicing and nurturing, as we
move through our day-to-day
lives, in our small and our big
interactions?*

~ Sahkiya Brakebill



We soon recognized that ours was a liminal space, an in-between place where prevailing reflective practices fell short of our values and visions, and newer practices were not yet in full and clear focus. Yet, the depth of commitment present from the outset signaled a shared readiness to step into this space of emergence and reimagination together.

Sustaining this kind of reflection across time required intentional care, including attention to the time and space between our gatherings. Pre-session reflection questions and thoughtful post-session summaries helped weave continuity, carrying shared insights forward and allowing reflection to deepen over time.

The summaries that Ratnesh sent out before and after meetings were amazing. They helped us be more generative and deeply reflective than we might have been otherwise. We were held in mind thoughtfully and lovingly during and between meetings. I [now] offer summaries and resources similar in format and intent to those that Ratnesh offered us.

~ Marie-Celeste Condon



The relational qualities of care, trust, and attunement to the spoken and unspoken wisdom came to define this relationality-centered approach to holding transformative space. As our partners attested to, these qualities are often in contrast to the dominant cultural push toward transactional reflection that prioritizes efficiency, expertise, and outcomes over presence and connection. In *Reimagining Reflection*, the felt sense of safety and belonging created conditions where growth, healing, and transformation could unfold.

ATTUNING TO SHIFTS IN PERSONHOOD

As we continued to wonder about “what else?” enabled the depth in our engagement, many partners reflected on internal shifts that allowed them to lean more fully into the emergent process. For many, this shift was deeply relational, a sense of not being alone but connected.



And how much that has really helped me stay grounded in the midst of all the storms, literal and metaphorical storms! There are just so many things happening, but a couple of people have commented, “Why are you so chill? Everybody else is freaking out. Why are you so chill?” And, for me, it is not that I'm chill. I feel it too, but I'm not lost in the movement. I'm still aware, I'm still observant...Yet I'm not pulled into the spiral as much. So, I'm grateful for that. And this image is what I have; I really am not alone. I feel connected. I feel like others are also working hard elsewhere. And it feels like I'm a piece in the collective effort. So that feels really empowering and hopeful.

~ Haruko Watanabe

The power of the relational space became increasingly clear: the connectedness provided grounding for reflection, and the reflection, in turn, called forth a sense of responsibility to the collective. We wondered together about the relationship between reflection and relation: does reflection precede relation, or does relation precede deep reflection? Rather than seeking a definitive causal sequence, we came to honor the ongoing, reciprocal dance between reflection and relation.

I think relation has to be right there with reflection, and it has to be maintained. It is about being seen and heard. Whenever I leave this group, it's like, "Oh, I remember [our partner] saying something about this." I think being held even when we're not present.

~ Gil Romero-Mewharter



Being heard, seen, and valued are essential qualities of belonging and at the heart of an ethics of care. Gil's words, "Being held even when we are not present," point to a quality of relationality that extends beyond a single moment or space but is held in the times and spaces in-between. In this way, belonging deepened into a sense of mattering. Our reflections did not remain contained within the group; they reverberated outward, shaping how we understood ourselves and how we showed up in relationship with others. Relationality truly honors that we affect one another and that we remain open to being affected by others.

Recognizing that we are connected and that we matter to one another marked a meaningful shift for many partners, shaping how they understood their own capacities and voices. For those with less access to positions of power and privilege, this recognition often surfaced as a growing confidence to speak, act, and step into leadership in new ways.

A lot has shifted for me. Just the confidence to know that I'm not alone ... I'm taking on challenges that I wouldn't have done because I was scared of speaking up, like being on the planning committee for our DEI committee through our agency, and really speaking up and taking the time to write a follow-up email with my thoughts. I feel like I'm speaking up for a lot of people.

~ Jaenemy "Jae" Perez de Luengas

For other partners with greater access to power and privilege, being in relationship with others prompted a different kind of reckoning—an inward reflection on what must be unlearned or released in order to be in true power with relationship with community.

I tend to approach things like, “What's the answer? How do we set standards? How do we make rules? How do we find solutions?” I'm so inspired about ways to bring people together in their own communities when they're with their own people, to make this more community-driven. [We may] provide some kind of structure or things to draw from, but be able to let go of the control and the standards that really are barriers and contribute to the lack of access and get in the way of being community embedded. But letting go of control and trusting people means that reflective practice or our particular ways of doing reflection isn't something we have to heap on people and force on people.

~ Bridget Lecheile



Resonance with one another's reflections became a kind of mirror, revealing the taken-for-granted and unquestioned assumptions about authority, expertise, and control. Authentic relationality created the conditions for looking into these mirrors, those that we hold up to ourselves or those held up by others, with honesty, openness, and courage. Thus, reflection-in-relationship supported not only personal insights but deeper accountability in how we show up in and with communities.

For Betty, the personal shift toward being in true relationality involved a radical reimagining of time.



My first step in getting regulated is changing my paradigm, to move from 'time is money' to 'time is love.' I had this revelation that our 'time is money' paradigm is pervasive in everything we do. As a society, in our culture, we're always rushing. We have a colonizer mindset of "There's no time for this!" What makes money seem to have the priority in our culture? I'm just really wanting to shift that paradigm and think that actually, "time is love." These words came from my associate, Amelia Bolyard. It is a shift I'm trying to make for myself: to be less in a rush. Because when I do it slowly, then I'm giving myself time, which is essentially, giving myself love.

~ Betty Peralta

Betty's shift is powerful in that "time is love" allows her to be in a better relationship not only with others but also herself, to be deserving of self-love. Her offering to our group brought home the realization that time is love invites is a decolonizing practice, one that honors presence over urgency, care over efficiency, and consent over control. When we slow our pace, we create space for regulating, reflecting, and relating. In doing so, we practice love toward ourselves, toward one another, and the communities we serve. Our dialogue further shifted "time is money" to "time is honey."

"Time is Love" or "Time is Honey" expands further on the idea that our present moment, attention, and focus are a powerful currency (more powerful than money}, to give freely.

*~ Anonymous
(Final survey)*



PIVOTING PARALLEL PRACTICES

Continuing to peel the layers of “what else,” our partners lifted a powerful lens of parallel process, that is how relationships experienced in one context affect relationships enacted elsewhere. Many noticed a direct connection between how we engaged relationally within *Reimagining Reflection* and how they showed up relationally in other reflective spaces.



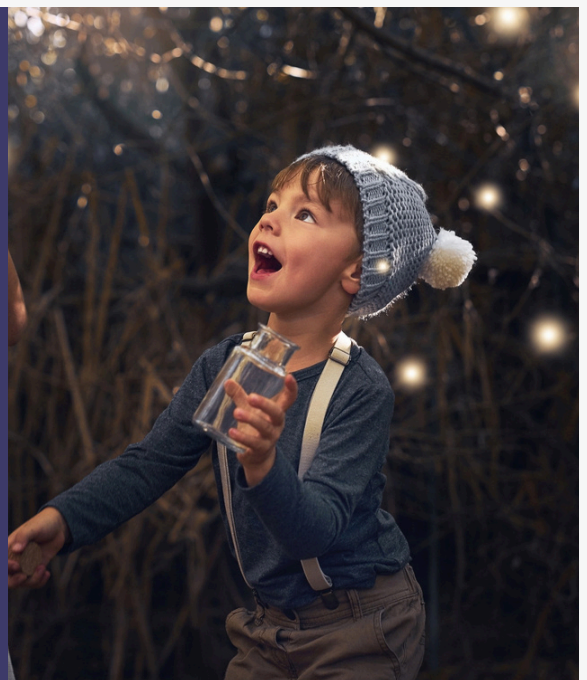
Some months later, I see our process as inspired, spirit- and heart-felt experiential learning that we carry within us and aspire to pass forward to others as Sankofa does.

~ Marie-Celeste Condon

Bearing witness to and co-creating transformative possibilities connected directly to the “what,” the “why,” and the “how” of our personhood and professional callings. Importantly, these possibilities were not abstract or aspirational alone; they were lived and practiced through relationality, through how we listened, responded, and stayed connected.

There's just this intentionality of listening, and like, I truly inside feel this desire to lean in even further. ... How do I bring a little more of the way this feels to other meetings and groups? I've been so inspired by these spaces... and thinking about, “How can I channel this?” And I know it's a magical, co-created experience and everyone's unique to these spaces, which isn't always something maybe in other spaces.

~ Celeste Farmer



The immersive experience in *Reimagining Reflection* opened new ways of centering relationality in reflective practice, how partners wanted to show up, how they wanted groups to feel, and how they wanted to engage with providers and participants.



I would like to add things from this experience to the way that I host the group that I'm responsible for. I'd like to announce things that I'm presuming more often, and really summarize what the group is and what I'd like for it to feel like, and the purpose of the group, rather than kind of like glossing over it or presuming everybody is thinking the same thing about that time. I'd like to speak to the qualities that I'd like for the group, like a sense of belonging, a sense of security, and invite participation, and how to refine certain variables to best accomplish that for the people who participate. Or just learn more about what is working and what the factors are that do work by asking and being curious about my participants.

~ Ryan Good

Ryan's reflection speaks to a shift from facilitation over groups to facilitation *with* groups. Rather than being apart from or separate from the group, transformative reflective facilitators are a part of the group, as both participants in the collective and guides of the process. Cultivating qualities of being—intentional, curious, and courageous—supports relationality of being with, which in turn can foster security, belonging, and co-creation.

Continuing her reflection on the embodied feeling of listening deeply, Celeste further reflected on the importance of consent and choice in shaping the quality of engagement.



One of the things I've been thinking about has to do with the quality of experience I've had in this group that I wish upon everyone who gets reflection, is like a level of consent or desire to be here. I felt a lot of freedom ... and that's like a privilege from my job, and just having time and space to give. I feel like it really matters that I get to choose to be here, and I'm invited, and there's consent and space, and that if I couldn't make it, there would be a lot of grace. It's like it makes me want to be here more.

~ Celeste Farmer

Another partner shared about their courageousness to carry forward the power of embodied imagination that had truly moved them in the *Remagining Reflection* space.

The encouragement/permission to bring dreams, symbolism, ancestral knowledge, and embodied ways of thinking and being into the space helped me feel more permission to then bring these ways into other spaces where I may have held back in the past.

~ Anonymous (Final survey)



RIPPLING CHANGE IN PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS

The ripple effects of *Reimagining Reflection* extended beyond implications for formal reflective consultation and supervision to embedding relational-reflective practices in other efforts, including trainings and workforce development.



I'm firing up around the advocacy for reflective practice. [A couple of us] are tasked with putting together a curriculum for early learning educators. And I'm just like: "How can we first lay a strong foundation of these conversations before we even start?" And two, "how can we infuse this into our training so that they do have access to it?" We're not doing reflective practice; we're doing a training.

~ Betty Peralta

Another partner shared how participation in *Reimagining Reflection* led her to radically redesign a 2-day training for providers to incorporate many relational-reflective practices, such as, somatic practices, extended peer connection, and storytelling grounded in lived experience. Not only were her changes impactful for the providers, but the redesign experience propelled her to reflect more broadly about healing-centered organizational policies and practices.



I felt like the influences I've had in terms of participating in this overall project were to resist the normal chock-full-of-business-items-kind-of-meeting that we've had and incorporated somatic movement, incorporated longer periods of peer connection time. And then both speakers, both days, had lived as well as professional experiences that they were sharing. So, I am really thinking about organizational well-being, how do we support the mindset and the values inherent or that are needed in order to create a safe and nurturing workplace for a diverse workforce?

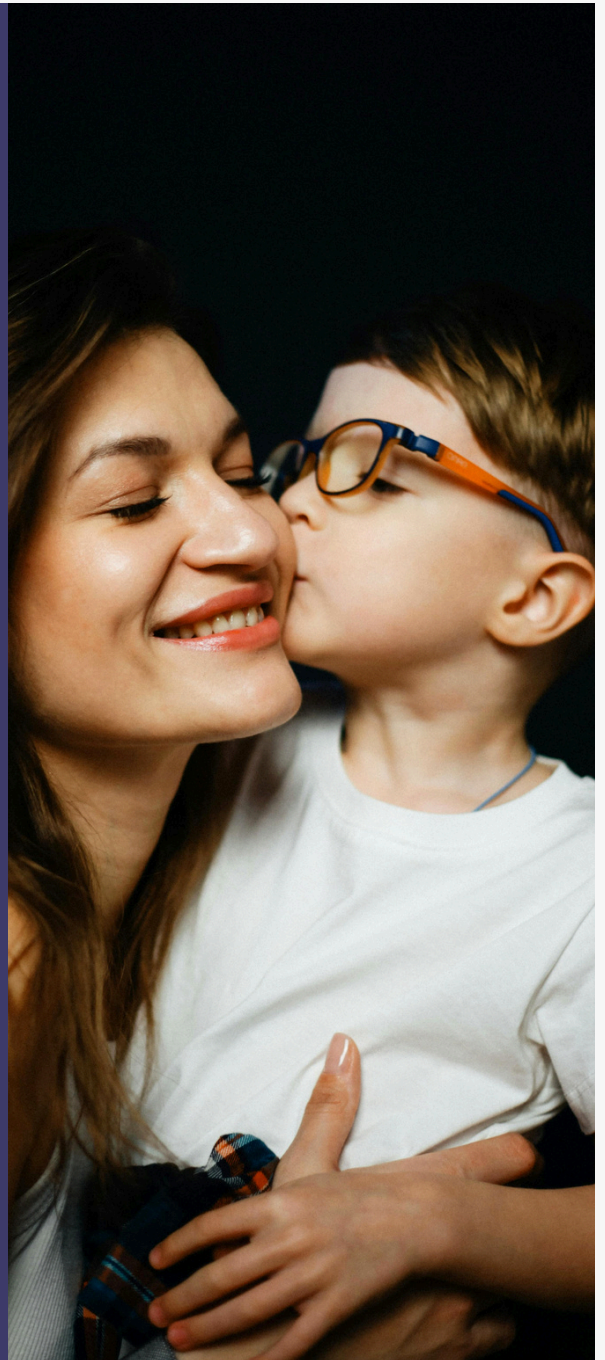
~ Nina Evers

Traditionally, parallel process within Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health is understood as a one-way, hierarchical flow of care, from supervisors to providers to families. Nina's reflection points to an important shift: insights generated in relational, reflective spaces can also flow upward, (re)shaping organizational culture and practices. When reflective spaces are reimagined in this way, they become not only places of individual support, but generative spaces for organizational learning and change in service of children, families, communities, and the systems that hold them.

The shift in the sites and processes of change resonated with other partners. Haruko, for instance, shared a powerful wondering and re-examination of her theory of change within reflective and relational spaces.

In response to Diane's observation earlier about how deep we have been able to get in this space, even though we haven't spent that many hours together. So, what is that about? I'm shifting from this belief that longer is kind of the best practice, a lot longer, more intensive services, best practice. There's something about our ability to go really deep and to profound, really transformative work. I'm just wondering about how it is that, like we have all experienced transformative change in meetings, in spaces like this that haven't required a whole year or two-year commitment? I'm thinking about the connection, resonance, and what allows us to go deeper. ... So how do we get to that essence in whatever we do--whether we facilitate a reflective practice group, clinical treatment, or home visiting program? How do we bring that?

~ Haruko Watanabe



Diane's and Haruko's book-end wonderings about the depth of reflective and relational engagement parallel an enduring rhythm within our communal space: deep dives into felt and lived experiences, followed by breathful resurfacing to notice and discern the generative wondering and wisdom amongst us. Their reflections honor how we collectively embodied "time is love" and "time is honey."



Within reflection-in-relationship, we come to appreciate that genuine wondering itself is also a form of wisdom. The curiosity we hold together, emerging from our shared experience and vulnerability of not knowing, is as meaningful as the answers we may offer. What matters, we learned, is how we hold the questions and the emergent insights: attuning to where the questions originate, being both receptacles and mirrors for each other's truths, reflecting on what others share in relation to our own lived experiences, and remaining curious about where and why we converge as well as where and why we differ.

This way of holding questions—relational, reflective, and spacious—deepens our collective engagement and expands what becomes possible. *Reimagining Reflection* thus revealed relationality not only as a condition for reflection, but as a practice of transformation itself—one that affirms our interdependence, honors our impact on one another, and invites us to carry this way of being, becoming, and being with forward, together. Weaving our wonderings with our wisdoms, our wishes, and our ways helps us pivot aspirational possibilities into embodied experiences and actionable practices.

Carrying Forward All That We Hold

The *Reimagining Reflection* experience revealed promising possibilities and enduring wonderings about how we hold space for growth and change, and how we ourselves are held within those spaces. These conversations invited us to explore not only what reflection can do, but how it feels when rooted in our identities, relationships, and purpose. To reimagine reflection, we are called to reimagine relationships and ourselves as relational beings. To embrace reflection-in-relationship, we must recenter relationships as both the context for transformation and the catalyst that makes transformation possible. Belonging, healing, and prophetic communing illuminate the possibilities within reflection-in-relationship.

Across our time together, belonging became the ground beneath us. Within this grounding, reflection became more than an individual practice or professional tool; it became a relational experience that affirmed our humanity and expanded our sense of what is possible together. As we were seen, heard, and valued for who we are, not simply for what we do, our shared wisdom emerged with greater clarity and confidence, helping to weave a larger collective vision.

Healing unfolded as we shed the layers of societal, professional, and personal limitations, and shifted toward more whole ways of being in authentic relationship with ourselves and one another. Vulnerable self-revelations, affirming resonance with others, and a genuine sense of mattering deepened our connectedness. Healing, therefore, is much more than wellness; it is about coming into our wholeness by honoring our identities and authenticity, our connections to multiple communities of belonging, and actualizing our purpose for collective liberation.

For many of us, *Reimagining Reflection* also invited a deeper knowing and sensing: that alongside, and even beyond, belonging and collective healing lives a prophetic community. This is an emergent community where we can come home to our dreams, show up authentically, and lovingly labor together to birth and nurture the future in the present. As Ratnesh described, a prophetic community is a possibility ahead of its time, yet very much meant to be felt, seen, and lived in the here and now.



In our prophetic spaces, vulnerability moves through fear, wonder replaces certainty, power within and power with prevail over dominating power over, and relationships can become both places of healing together and pathways for collective social transformation.

~ Ratnesh Nagda

What we carry forward, then, is not only insight or inspiration, but an embodied way of being with one another. We carry a commitment to reflection as a relational practice—attuned, courageous, and grounded in love—and a responsibility to bring this way of *being, being with, and being for* into the communities and systems we touch.

*Belonging is our beginning.
It roots us.*

*Healing is our becoming.
It transforms us.*

*Prophetic communion is our believing.
It births possibilities within us and beyond us.*

*In these spaces of trusting, dreaming, and laboring,
love is our steady foundation,
love is our ever-flowing fountain.*

~ Ratnesh Nagda ~



CONNECTING POSSIBILITIES TO PRACTICES



One of the images that kept coming up for me is the image of a birth. And how a birth is unpredictable. You don't quite know what's going to happen. But I'm thinking about a birth pre-colonization. I'm thinking about a well-supported birth. I'm thinking about a community sitting together, a family sitting together and welcoming this creation that's happening. There's a documentary about the medicalization of birth, "The Business of Being Born." Yeah, we're almost like taking the medicalization of Reflective Supervision and bringing some traditional ways of practicing, but not traditional as in dominant, but pre-colonization.

~ Meyleen Velasquez

The image of birth offers a powerful way to understand this moment. Birth can be carefully prepared for and well supported, yet it always unfolds with an element of the unknown. When held within community, when families and caregivers gather with presence and care, birth becomes a shared, relational experience. This framing invites reflection on how practices meant to support growth and care can sometimes shift toward control or standardization. Just as birth has been medicalized, reflective supervision has increasingly been shaped by professional norms that can distance it from its relational roots.

The *Reimagining Reflection* community, through its practice of looking both inward and outward, gave rise to many possibilities. The professionalization of reflective practice has brought meaningful growth, yet its benefits have often remained accessible only to some. While the development of rigorous standards was intended to offer competent guidance and care, these guardrails have at times hardened into forms of gatekeeping. Reflective practice has become a valued and sought-after respite, though it has not yet fully become the steady, living pulse of how we relate, work, and show up together. And while reflective practice offers a lifeline to many providers, it remains an open question how deeply the qualities it cultivates are woven into the fabric of organizational cultures.

Our work would remain incomplete without envisioning how these emerging possibilities take shape in practice. The idea of ripple effects within reflective practice captures how small shifts within an individual provider or a provider-family relationship can extend outward into other relationships and settings. The second phase of *Reimagining Reflection* focused on connecting these possibilities to lived, tangible practices across the broader ecosystem of reflective work.

Prentis Hemphill's writing on systems as harm-producers or healing-creators speaks closely to what became possible in the *Reimagining Reflection* space.

Healing, or care, is still essential for guiding the how of what we build, the visions for how we navigate the challenges therein. When we commit to social change, we remember that systems can perpetuate and create harm, or they can foster healing and resilience. ... Most of the time, we come to the work of making the world anew because of the pain this one has caused. Our wounds give us the initial surge to fight back, though this energy is fueled by our most frightened, defended, and adrenalized selves. ... we are most powerful when sourcing our energy from possibility, from our visions, not from the pain we know, but from the world just outside of what we can now see. Our energy is most potent when we make room for our grief and anger, when we allow ourselves to feel, and our direction becomes clearer. (Hemphill, 2024, pp. 26-27)

Reimagining Reflection called on us to remember, reclaim, and regenerate ways of practicing that are grounded in community, relationship, and collective care. Through continued conversation and shared reflection, six arenas of change emerged: deepening reflective practices, expanding access to reflective opportunities, building capacity through transformative learning and training, resourcing communities of reflective partners, cultivating a thriving ecosystem for reflective practice through policy and systems, and translating wisdom to impact through dissemination.



The six arenas of change are not meant to function as separate silos. Rather, they act as shared points of entry, rooted in deep reflection and mutual flourishing, where growth in one arena naturally influences and connects to other arenas. Together, they invite us to carry reflection-in-relationship forward as we reshape the why, how, who, and what of reflective practice.

Deepening Reflective Practices

Carrying forward the profound insight of transactional to transformative reflection, our conversations opened new ways of imagining what it truly means to deepen reflective practices. Grounded in the lived experience of transformation within *Reimagining Reflection*, we explored reflective practices not simply as a professional activity, but as a way of being.

Reflection moved from *what we do* to *who we are*. Being reflective became an embodied quality, shaping how we show up in our work, in our relationships, and in our lives. Rather than a solitary or internal process, reflection emerged as a collective practice that is created and held together with others.

As we deepened this understanding, reflection expanded beyond a primarily cognitive exercise. It became a fully embodied and holistic experience—mindful and heartfelt, intellectual and emotional, personal and professional, systemic and spiritual, and wise and wondering. Through shared reflective spaces, partners described feelings of connectedness and belonging. The power of collective reflectiveness is felt in acts of courageous revelations, resonant insights, and reimagined possibilities.

This is a place where we can bring in questions, we can bring in different perspectives, we can bring in emotions, not just always intellectual. If I think about the [reflective] space as something that's being co-created, then there is an assumption of collaboration. Everybody is responsible for shaping together what's okay to happen in that space. When [someone] is courageous enough to share stories and emotions, then it tells all of us that this is a place where we can do that together.

~ Haruko Watanabe



Deepening reflective practice requires us to expand our notions of formalized reflective consultation and supervision to more inclusive reflective practices, opportunities, and wonderment. Reflection, thus, is woven throughout relational encounters, rather than reserved for designated sessions. Reflectiveness, when held as a way of being, ripples outward, shaping relationships with colleagues, families, and communities.



How can we use reflective practice to lean into the relationships that we build with the parents of our students, of our young children that we teach within my department as early intervention specialists and specialists who work with the birth-to-three population? I'd be curious if there was a way to connect staff to trainings or ways to expand their ability to use reflective curiosity and wonderment about parents to really build a foundation of a relationship with them. In a way that kind of supports that sense of equity and knowing each other so that we're really respecting that balance of power between specialists and parent.

~ Ryan Good

Through our own collective dialogues, reflection was reframed not as a retreat from work in order to cope, but a pause for revitalized re-engagement with the world. The validation of being seen and heard, the reassurance of not being alone, and the encouragement to act with courage in the relational reflective space can help break cycles of despair and inaction. Reflection, when deeply held, creates space for healing and opens up pathways for hope-filled imaginations and actions.

It's also the thing that's helping me stay grounded in the fact that individual awareness is about one's whiteness is more important to how we continue to do our work than ever before, and as a white woman, this reality is rooted in responsibility and knowing that when I practice this responsibility, that is where I can contribute to healing for the white supremacy culture I've been raised in.

~ Nina Evers



Power dynamics within reflective spaces, whether between supervisor and supervisee, trainer and participant, or provider and family, were named as essential areas of attention. We affirmed the responsibility of those holding greater power to lead with vulnerability, to speak what is often left unsaid, and to help create conditions of trust and safety. In these moments, reflection becomes not only supportive but transformative.

Real reflection, we came to believe, does more than help us regulate in the face of personal, social, and societal challenges. It can support personal and collective healing, and it can catalyze liberatory action through small, everyday shifts or broader movements for change.

How Deep Reflective Practices Can Be Held

- Holding power of reflection-in-relationship
- Bridging individual reflection with collective dialogue
- Grounding reflective spaces in consent and choice
- Offering high positive regard
- Co-creating spaces through shared responsibility
- Encouraging thoughtful risk-taking to build trust and safety

What Deep Reflective Practice Can Involve

- Expanding beyond reflective supervision/consultation to reflective practices, reflective opportunities, and reflective wonder
- Integrating somatic practices that engage body, mind, heart, and spirit
- Offering affinity group spaces, e.g., based on racial and ethnic identities

Expanding Access to Reflective Opportunities

Many partners expressed a desire to “pay forward” what they themselves experienced through reflective consultation and through participation in *Reimagining Reflection*. Describing their experiences as a “privilege” or “gift,” they imagined opportunities to advance equity by increasing access to reflective practice more broadly, but especially for individuals who are often excluded from such opportunities.

Traditionally, reflective consultation and supervision are offered within professional settings to providers working with babies, children and families. As our understanding shifted from reflective supervision and consultation to reflective practices, capacities, and opportunities, new possibilities emerged. Partners imagined reflective spaces not only for providers but also for entry-level paraprofessionals and organizational leaders as well as youth, families, and community groups. Rather than relying on parallel process alone to benefit children and families, they envisioned direct access to reflective spaces as a resource for connection, growth and healing for families and communities.



It feels like such a privilege to be able to do this and I would like to extend that privilege to those who aren't enjoying it, like early learning educators, parents and administrators. ... even when they [early learning educators] are allowed, it's brushed off or you have to navigate like finding a sub.

There's a real classism element to it--the education level and the income level--correlates with people shaming you if you were sick and couldn't come in because somebody couldn't a sub. ... I never had to deal with [these issues] because in my echelon, people cared about the law and they were a lot more conscientious.

~ Betty Peralta

Expanding access, however, requires intentional attention to the systemic, organizational, and personal barriers that shape who can participate in reflective practice. Early learning educators and childcare workers, the majority of whom are women of color, have the fewest opportunities for facilitated reflection despite the emotional and relational intensity of their work. Structural obstacles such as lack of coverage, rigid schedules, and workplace cultures that devalue rest and care were identified as significant barriers to participation.

Every person who exists within the perinatal through age five (P-5) ecosystem has the potential to shape a child's earliest relationships and experiences.

This includes, but is not limited to, birth workers, medical providers, home visitors, support staff, peer navigators, community health workers, and systems leaders.

Whether their influence is direct or indirect, those who care for and make decisions impacting babies and families benefit from spaces that foster curiosity, self-awareness, relational understanding, and collective reflection.

By broadening access to reflective practice across the P-5 ecosystem, we strengthen not only individual providers, but the relational fabric of the systems that surround babies and families.

~ Cynthia Turrietta



Conversations also surfaced ethical questions around choice and agency in requiring reflective practice. While some partners acknowledged that they might never have engaged in reflective practice had it not been required within their roles, others emphasized the importance of humility in mandating something that had been deeply meaningful for them. While the benefits of reflective practice for professional and personal development can be explained, partners emphasized that reflective practice is most powerful when rooted in consent, choice, and curiosity. Partners imagined flexible pathways, such as optional participation, trial periods, or reflection offered alongside other wellness supports so that individuals could engage in ways that felt aligned and respectful rather than imposed.

Access, as partners emphasized, extends beyond the availability of reflective spaces and opportunities alone. Equity-centered access calls for attention to representation and relationship: who holds the role of reflective partner, whose languages and cultures are centered, and how power is navigated within reflective spaces. Partners highlighted the importance of racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and experiential attunement in reflective relationships as well as the capacity to hold differences in identity and perspective with care and curiosity.

In this way, expanding access to reflective opportunities became not only about widening participation but about cultivating relational spaces grounded in dignity, belonging, and mutual respect. Reflection, when offered with intention and care, holds the potential to support greater equity, healing, and shared flourishing across communities.

How to Offer Reflective Opportunities

- Centering access, consent, choice, and agency
- Offering reflection in heart/home language
- Attending to diversities in identities and experiences
- Attuning to systemic, organizational, and interpersonal power dynamics

Who to Extend Access To

- Early learning educators
- Childcare workers
- Youth and youth groups
- Families
- Organizational Leaders

Building Capacity for Reflective Partnership Through Transformative Learning in Trainings

Experiences within the *Reimagining Reflection* space invited deeper reflection on how reflective practice is learned, supported, and sustained. As partners considered both deepening reflective practices and expanding access to reflective opportunities, attention naturally turned towards ways to build capacity for reflective consultants, partners, or facilitators.

Traditionally, aspiring reflective consultants are required to fulfill several requirements: training, work experience, participation in ongoing reflective supervision, and to be endorsed or credentialed. The Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health has, until recently, endorsed most of the reflective supervisors and consultants, and some state-based Associations for Infant Mental Health also provide credential services. While partners affirmed the importance of upholding standards of excellence, they also reflected on how these requirements intentionally or unintentionally create barriers.

Financial costs, time commitments, and dominant cultural ways of assessing competence were recognized as limiting participation and contributing to a lack of racial and ethnic diversity among reflective consultants, and consequent mismatches between consultants and providers.

Many trainings were described as prescriptive and content-heavy, emphasizing coverage of material and completion of predetermined competencies within constrained time frames. When training content is held rigidly for completion of endorsements or credentialing, training can become an instrument of exclusion. In contrast, when training is conceived of and conducted as meaningful learning for both personal and professional development, it has the potential to become a pathway toward inclusion and equity.

Our colleagues' experiences in *Reimagining Reflection* provided an example of what transformative growth feels like and helped envision what transformative learning for reflective partnerships can look like. In the *Reimagining Reflection* conversations, we refined our conception of training to center meaningful learning and growth opportunities, one that prioritized presence over performance and meaning-making over mastery. This shift was articulated through the metaphor of the carpenter and the gardener.



Today, you [Ratnesh] mentioned the word cultivate a number of times. It immediately made me think of the book, "The Carpenter and The Gardener," by Alison Gopnik. She's an early childhood researcher who does a lot of work on socio-cognitive development. The book contrasts the idea of parenting as being a carpenter, like you have this and you put this together, you build this, you do these right things, and here's your outcome. [She contrasts this with parenting] as a gardener, where you set the conditions and then you step back. ... That's what I've been sitting with Especially for me, coming from a lot of years in academia, where the objective was to impart things to other people to do things that are going to impact other people's knowledge.

~ Bridget Lecheile

Rather than assembling predetermined outcomes through instruction and control, transformative learning focuses on cultivating conditions that allow growth to unfold organically and collectively. In this approach, learners are honored not as empty vessels for knowledge to be deposited, but as whole people bringing wisdom, culture, lived experiences, and openness to continuing growth into shared learning spaces.

Prescriptive and manualized trainings, while offering a structure for covering content and achieving predetermined competencies, do not offer presence and attunement with the holistic life journeys that bring a diversity of practitioners to reflective consultation. Many practitioners may draw on cultural or faith-based reflective practices that are not recognized within the rubric of professionalized reflective practice.

Parallel to national discourse about rethinking reflective practice and centering equity, our conversations interrogated the power and privilege inherent and explicit in the titles of reflective consultant and reflective supervisor. These titles carry assumptions of expertise, authority, and hierarchy. Our community partners offered alternatives such as reflective partner, reflective guide, or reflective facilitator, while also acknowledging that changes in language must be accompanied by changes in practices. Moreover, shifting from “reflective supervisor/consultant” to “reflective partner” helps loosen the often heavy and sometimes illusory link between professional title and presumed authority and competence. Transformative learning thus requires explicit attention to power dynamics and an intentional commitment from those holding greater power to lead with vulnerability, openness, and relational accountability.

I've often told my supervisees that when there is a power dynamic, like a trainer-trainee or supervisor-supervisee, or therapist-client, whoever holds more power (if there is a power differential), it's the privileged person's responsibility to bring more vulnerability first or to speak the unspeakable first.

~ Haruko Watanabe



Across conversations, partners emphasized the value of integrating more somatic and body-mind-spirit practices within the learning environments, not only as content but as part of how learning unfolds. Similarly, relational connections among learners and learners-trainers that foster safety and courage can be a goal within the learning environment as well as a pivot for ripple effects of deep reflection and creative imagination beyond the learning environment. The in vivo experiential learning environment can be a space for experimentation for deep self-and-other reflection, and personal, professional, and collective transformation.

How Learning Can Be Held

- Shifting from exposure (to content) to experiences of connected and embodied learning
- Experiential engagement and learning
- Cultivating more authenticity (gardening), less prescription (carpentry)
- Attuning to identity, difference, power, and group dynamics

What Transformative Learning in Trainings Can Involve

- Integrating somatic-cognitive-affective-spiritual practices
- Equity and healing-centered
- Experiential--learning by doing, learning through individual and collective reflection and meaning-making

Resourcing Communities of Learning and Practice for Reflective Partners

As we reimagined reflective practice, seeking to strengthen our work, expand access for those who have been marginalized or excluded from professional reflective spaces, and create learning opportunities that feel meaningful, an unexpected yet essential insight emerged. Our partners themselves were deeply nourished by the richness of the conversations and by the ongoing learning that emerged through being in dialogue with one another. Being in community with peers from diverse personal and professional backgrounds and grappling with shared passions seemed to meet a longing that had often gone unnamed.

Several partners spoke to how rare it is to experience reflective spaces where they could participate fully, rather than hold space for others as they so often do in their professional roles. Many described a sense of renewal that came from being seen not only as facilitators or leaders, but as learners and humans in process. These reflections illuminated the sustaining power of community, not simply as professional development, but as a source of connection, meaning, and continued becoming.

Reflective consultants and supervisors are expected to continually develop their skills and competencies to maintain certification and advance through different levels of endorsement. Communities of practice have become a viable form of sustained engagement in continuing education. Yet partners noted a scarcity of continuing education opportunities that feel as relational, spacious, and transformative as what emerged in *Reimagining Reflection*. While credentialing language often frames these experiences as continuing education, what partners described pointed toward a more expansive understanding of learning across the lifespan.



I am learning from sitting with all of you, and I feel like I am honing how I can show up even better by this kind of space. And I would love it if there was some way to make this a regular thing that could be paid for out of professional development that could count as continuing education as a reflective consultant....this has felt very much worth my time

~ Diane Lostrangio

This work invited us to think beyond continuing education to lifelong and life-deep learning. Lifelong learning reflects an ongoing commitment to growth across the span of one's life, while life-deep learning invites reflection beneath the surface, into spaces of vulnerability, uncertainty, and transformation. Together, these forms of learning encompass personal, professional, and political dimensions, with the political comprising an awareness of power relations, identity dynamics, and systemic conditions that shape reflective practice. Our partners experienced learning rooted in deep reflection, sustained in community, and transformative in nature.

Partners emphasized the importance of reciprocity within these communities. Those who regularly facilitate reflection, support others, and navigate complex emotional and relational spaces also need places where they can be held, witnessed, and renewed. Communities of reflective partners offered opportunities to reconnect with curiosity, to see oneself through the eyes of others, and to rediscover a sense of vitality amid rapidly changing professional and social landscapes.

We keep giving and giving and giving, and sometimes the give back isn't there...like what Nucha was saying earlier about being a facilitator all the time, you need to be facilitated too so that you could have some space to see yourself or to imagine what you yourself know, you could look through the eyes of someone else in those spaces. So I feel that in today's time, when things are changing so quickly and people are evolving so quickly, that these spaces, this experience, is helping me to feel new.

~ Maria Vasquez



At the heart of these reflections was a shared recognition that connection is not incidental, it is essential. Being in community supports not only professional sustainability but personal well-being and relational health. Reflection in relationship, held across a lifelong and life-deep continuum, becomes a practice that nourishes authenticity, resilience, and humanity.



Connection is a vital element within us. When we don't nurse it, when the energy is not there to be in connection, when we're not in community, our lifespan drastically declines, as does our overall health. But at the end of the day, like this idea of what are we doing when we're in community and how do we navigate being human, and it just so much comes back to this idea of reflection on a [lifelong] continuum.

~ Kelli Bohanon

Creating and sustaining communities of reflective partners requires intentional resourcing. Partners working in policy and systems contexts emphasized the importance of advocating for funding that recognizes reflective communities as essential infrastructure, not optional add-ons. This points to a larger need: an ecosystem of support for reflective practice and for those who carry it forward. Resourcing communities of reflective partners is ultimately an investment in the people, relationships, and conditions that make transformative reflective practice possible.

How Communities of Learning and Practice Can Be Held

- Touchpoints and reflective spaces to share successes and dilemmas
- Parallel process of lifelong and life-deep growth and development
- Incubatory space to inform organizational and policy change-making

What Resourcing Communities of Learning and Practice Can Involve

- Recognizing and resourcing reflective communities through funding and policy advocacy
- Convening sustained communities of practice of changemakers
- Shared reflective facilitation responsibilities, eg, rotating facilitator or co-facilitators

Cultivating a Thriving Ecosystem for Reflective Practice across Policy and Systems Contexts

Our commitment to *Reimagining Reflection* is rooted in a deep belief in the transformative potential of reflective practice. We seek not only to deepen its impact and expand access, but also to create conditions in which reflective practice can be sustained over time. This invited us to look beyond individual experiences and ask what it would take for reflective practice to truly thrive across organizations, policy, and systems contexts.

Reflective practice is most powerful when supported by the broader environment in which people live and work. Partners wondered about the conditions that help reflection take root, not as a special or isolated activity, but as an integrated way of being in organizations, communities, and systems. Reimagining reflection from an ecosystem perspective challenged us to think about how reflective values and practices might be infused throughout everyday interactions, leadership practices, and decision-making processes.

How do we become agents for supporting and developing all practitioners in family-serving organizations to be reflective, to show up as the same person whether you're actually in a formal supervision or you're just interacting about something that somebody is bringing to you on the fly? How do you be that same person? How do you hold that same stance? How do you infuse it so that it is part of the culture? So it's not just this, "Oh, this is such a special place once a week where I get to come, and the rest of the week, I feel battered.

~ Diane Lostrangio



Many partners named the difficulty of imagining organization and policy environments that genuinely support reflective practice, particularly given their lived experiences of systemic barriers and harms. Policies, both at organizational and structural levels, were described as sometimes unintentionally dehumanizing families and providers, emphasizing compliance over connection and efficiency over care. Skilled and deeply relational practitioners, often multilingual and embedded in communities, are frequently asked to prioritize documentation and deliverables rather than presence and responsiveness.



I've been able to sit with people who work out in the community with families who are visiting homes and sitting next to babies. The way that policies, organizational policy, and bigger picture policies sometimes contribute to dehumanizing our families and our providers... Something that consistently comes up for me with these groups of practitioners who are incredibly skilled, who are multilingual, is that they are constantly told that they are not professionals, that the service they provide is essentially less than right, so that they should stick to certain requirements for the policies and procedures of their organization. And what happens is they're in homes with families, with babies who are needing someone to listen, and they are being constantly told not to because what they need to do is deliver a curriculum or get in a certain amount of hours or prove that they've delivered the handout right.

~ Martha Aguiñiga

These experiences highlighted a disconnect between policy and practice. Partners described how decisions made far from families' lived realities can undermine relational work on the ground. This disconnect can lead to frustration, exhaustion, and a sense that reflective practice is valued in theory but difficult to sustain in practice.

To build a thriving ecosystem for reflective practice, partners emphasized the importance of explicitly naming and addressing the structural forces that limit access and diminish humanity. These include restricting reflective opportunities to those with credentials or resources, funding structures that reinforce dominant perspectives, policy language focused primarily on individual responsibility, and limited inclusion of community voices in policy development.

For the people for whom reflective practice is even available now, they can't even access it, much less access it in a way that is responsive to who they are as a human being. ... they are lacking access to people who do reflective supervision and consultation who reflect their culture, their race, their experiences, and their backgrounds.

~ Kelli Bohanon



Grounded in the vision of leveraging the power of reflective practice throughout the ecosystem, partners proposed principles and practices to navigate the terrain of changemaking in the ecosystem.

- **Expand Access:** Make reflective practice available to all practitioners, including paraprofessionals and frontline workers, regardless of credentials or resources. This means intentionally addressing staffing shortages, low wages, and a lack of agency, especially for those who are deeply embedded in communities.
- **Infuse Reflection into Culture:** Encourage legislature and agencies to embed reflective practice into their everyday culture, so it becomes a core organizational value rather than a special opportunity available only to select people. Leaders should model and support reflection in both formal and informal interactions.
- **Broker Practitioner and Community Voice to Inform Policy:** Foster ongoing dialogue between policymakers, practitioners, and community members. Policies should be informed by community wisdom and lived experiences, and implementation should be responsive to the realities of those affected.
- **Promote Equity and Healing:** Center equity and healing in all policy-making processes. This requires transparency, operationalizing guiding principles, and asking critical questions about whose voices are included and how decisions impact lives.

Our conversations recognized both the challenges and possibilities of doing complex and innovative work at the ecosystem level. Partners shared avenues at the statewide and organizational levels that embody the principles of equity, reflection, and relationship at the ecosystem level.

- Executive Leadership Fellowship modeled after the Barbara Bowman Executive Leadership Fellowship hosted by the Erikson Institute, Illinois. This statewide cohort-based Fellowship program brings together leaders from all sectors, for-profit and nonprofit, to learn how child development is embedded in every sector of society, that every sector impacts children's development, and that leaders in these sectors have a responsibility to the future of our society. The fellowship pairs public policy knowledge with real-world experience, strengthening advocacy for early childhood policy. It advances community-centeredness by supporting candidates who reflect the communities they serve.

Our partners underscored the power of cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary work to transcend prevailing silos. They emphasized that such a Fellowship, if initiated in Washington State, uses experiential engagement, cultivates equity and healing-centered reflective and relational capacities for leaders, and intentionally connects reflection-in-relationship to child, family, and community well-being.

- A partner helped co-lead a statewide, legislatively mandated early relational health and behavioral health workgroup in Washington State. The workgroup engages community members and elevates their voices to build consensus and advance policy recommendations to a larger member group of legislators, state agencies, lived experts, and providers. By broadening participation and creating a more community-centered space, the workgroup surfaces issues that had previously been pushed aside by high-stakes, big-program agendas. The workgroup typically engages in intensive learning and brainstorming about issues for a few months before convening community participation. There has been a recurring interest in reflective practice in these brainstorming sessions, and the workgroup will be a good audience to advance recommendations from *Reimagining Reflection*. The issues that get forwarded to legislators are vetted through shared values, such as: Is it community-informed? Does it center and advance equity? Is it realistic and achievable? Does it strengthen and transform?

The state-wide workgroup advances core principles of equity, community-centeredness, and connecting reflective practice to policy-informing and policy-making processes. Through its own process of reflection for internal accountability, the workgroup committed efforts to increase a diversity of voices and attention to issues that have historically gotten left out.

The third possibility, at the organizational level, picks up on a growing trend of reflective practice for organizational leaders.

- Our partners, drawing on their organizational and professional experiences, underscored the need for organizational leaders to be steeped in reflective practice to understand its benefits not only for providers in direct practice but also for their own leadership practice.

I did Reflective Practice training yesterday afternoon with ESIT [Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers] providers. It was such a big theme that they brought up about leadership--the need for leadership to be steeped in reflective practice, to model it, and to infuse it in an organization. ... leaders need it, and that they need to be modeling it, supporting it, and even understanding the importance.

~Bridget Lecheile



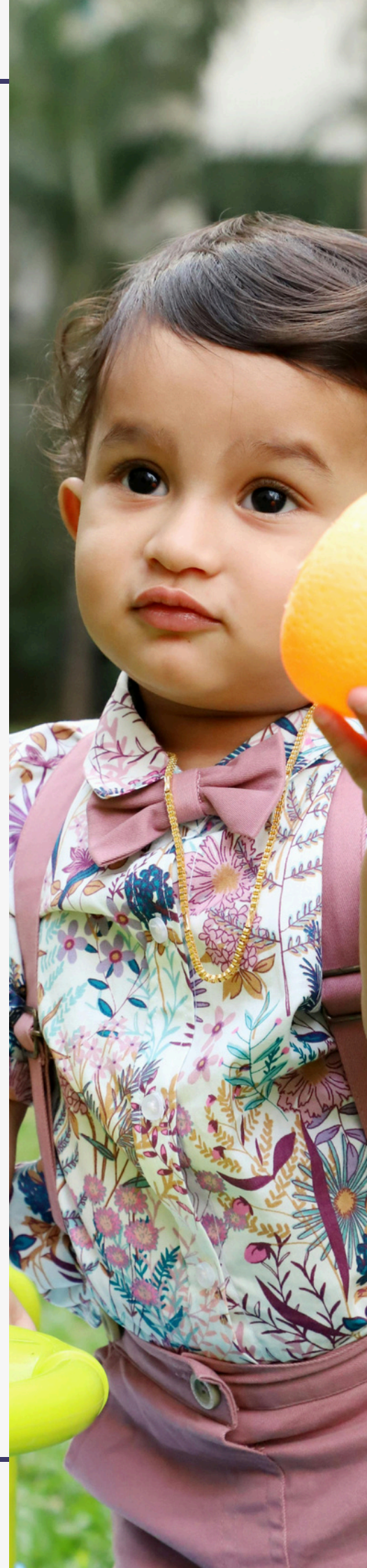
Reflective practice for leaders can also have ripple effects across the agency. Some partners recalled admiration for their agency leader to be wholly invested in reflective practice, in all their vulnerability and curiosity. The potential impact on organizational culture, shifting conceptions and practices of leadership, building trust, increasing capacity for hard conversations, cultivating vulnerability as a strength, and more, is real and felt.

I worked at an agency that embedded reflection into its culture at every level, from the CEO down. Leaders were trained in reflective practice, and it showed in how we operated day-to-day. It was one of the best environments I've been part of: deeply relational, values-driven, and built on the understanding that feelings and relationships matter. Reflection wasn't just a stated value; it was visible in how we held each other and made space for the human side of work."

~ Sahkiya Brakebill

Even when leaders may have exposure to reflective practice, such as Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN), being engaged in its practice over time has more potential for transformation. Rather than seeing it as a touchy-feely experience relevant only for direct service providers, our partners shared how their reflective work with leaders has indeed led leaders to think more deeply about the work they are doing. Moreover, the leaders realize how much they hold in their positions and feel supported that someone is holding it with them at least once every month. Through her own experience in *Reimagining Reflection* and providing FAN for agency leaders, a partner wondered about pivoting from a workshop training model to a more experiential approach sustained over time.

Reflective practice for leaders holds great potential for exercising leadership that is mindful about and accountable for its impact on the collective agency. It can be a powerful process for continued learning, organizational decision-making and policy-making, and creating an organizational climate that honors humanity and whole persons.



At the same time, infusing reflective practice for leaders will need to be creative in how reflective practice intersects with the specific demands and responsibilities of leaders as well as connecting socioemotional processes with learning and leadership.

Building a thriving ecosystem for reflective practice ultimately requires alignment across levels: individual, relational, organizational, and systemic. It calls for policies grounded in lived experiences, organizational cultures that honor whole people, and leadership practices that center reflection as essential to ethical and effective work.

How the Ecosystem Can Be Held

- Cross-sector and interdisciplinary collaborations
- Elevate community voice and influence to inform policy
- Establish principles and processes along the continuum from policy decision-making to policy implementation and practice
- Reflect on the impact of policies and policy-making processes (harming-healing)
- Experiential and sustained engagement in reflective practice for leaders.

What Organizations and Systems Can Do to Support Reflective Practice

- Make reflective practice a core part of organizational and policy systems
- Support all practitioners in showing up as their full selves, whether in formal supervision or everyday interactions.
- Name and address upstream, structural forces that create barriers, and expand strategies for change.
- Use reflective practice to develop a set of equity- and healing-centered principles or values to guide all work practices.

Translating Wisdom to Impact through Public Dissemination and Engagement

At the outset, dissemination was understood primarily as making our work and insights more visible by sharing through professional conferences, academic journals, and practitioner publications, all of which have long been valued as avenues for broad knowledge exchange. Over time, and alongside continued reflection, this understanding shifted.

Dissemination came to be understood not only as the sharing of information, but as engagement and translation of learning into lived practice. In this sense, dissemination is relational and embodied. It is carried through who we are and how we work, not only through what we present or publish. When reflective principles are woven into practice—through expanded access, transformative learning spaces, and reflective leadership—dissemination and engagement happen through ripple effects across relationships, organizations, and systems.

We are also attentive to the politics of knowledge production and knowledge sharing. Our partners named the risk of extraction whereby insight is gathered, packaged, and circulated without honoring its original wisdom-bearers or including them in how that knowledge is carried forward. In contrast, dissemination rooted in collaborative thinking supports expansion: knowledge that is held collectively, shaped in relationship, and shared with care and accountability.



I was connecting with dissemination... from extraction to expansion, supporting collaborative thinking... thinking about spaces like this where we bring a group of providers together to think. It could be a training, it could be a work group. How do we support, teach, provide a space for people to think about what it actually looks like together, that knowledge, and expand it, versus gathering that knowledge and putting your name on it? It becomes extraction, not when you're giving the information, but when, like what happens to the information, you're not included in the process of it.

~ Meyleen Velasquez



Meyleen's emphasis on collaborative thinking captures a core relational lesson of *Reimagining Reflection* and honors our collective experience of wisdom-generation. Her call to shift from extraction to expansion reflects a commitment to inclusivity, voice, and shared ownership. It invites us to extend the impact of *Reimagining Reflection* by cultivating similarly engaging spaces for other practitioners and continuing principled, transformative reflective practices that embody what we have learned together.

Throughout this report, our partners' words of wisdom and curiosity offer glimpses into the ways this work has been transformative, both individually and collectively. While we developed a shared understanding of what reflective practice can become and how we might work together to transform it, we also recognized the diversity of pathways that brought us to reflective practice and the many directions forward from *Reimagining Reflection*. This diversity of personal and professional life journeys became a source of inspiration, catalyzing our collective imagination for both deepening transformative reflection and sharing our learning more widely.



I wish I could read more statements about what reflective practice means to me or to hear more stories that could be similar to [our colleague]: "I entered, I didn't know what this was about or what was going to be going on, but I was told that this was best practice. And then six months later, this is the transformative effect it's had on me." I find a lot of power in testimony and authentic stories of people's experiences and it would be neat to have access to that. If I were encouraging reflective practice to be able to provide that to others to be like, this is kind of what a preview of what this journey has meant for others.

~ Ryan Good

Storytelling emerged as a particularly powerful form of engagement. Partners spoke about the power of testimony, of hearing how reflective practice enters someone's life, unfolds over time, and creates meaningful change. Stories humanize reflective practice, grounding it in lived experience rather than abstraction. Listening to and sharing stories invites reflection in itself, offering mutual transformation for both storyteller and listener.

Alongside storytelling, partners imagined creating *Reimagining Reflection*-like spaces for others: reflective groups, community conversations, practitioner-led podcasts, and facilitated gatherings where people can think together across roles and identities. Even conferences, newsletters, and practitioner convenings were reimagined as spaces that could hold experiential and relational elements, rather than serving solely as sites of information delivery.

Across these ideas, a shared theme became clear. Dissemination, when rooted in reflective values, is not a linear process of transmission; it is an interactive practice that invites dialogue, connection, and collective meaning-making. In this way, dissemination becomes deeply engaged reflective practice itself—healing-centered, relational, and transformative.

Carrying wisdom forward with integrity requires attention to whose voices are centered, how stories are held, and how learning continues to live in relationships. When dissemination is approached as expansion rather than extraction, it sustains the same process of shared wisdom-generation that has been at the heart of *Reimagining Reflection* from the beginning.

How Public Dissemination and Engagement Can Be

- Sharing our stories as knowledge and wisdom
- Translating insights into practice
- Expanding circles of connections with other changemakers
- Collaborative and expansive

What Public Dissemination and Engagement Can Involve

- Practice briefs with partner profiles
- Podcasts
- Professional practice outlets (publications, presentations)

Summary of Connecting Possibilities to Practices

	DEEPENING REFLECTIVE PRACTICES	EXPANDING ACCESS TO REFLECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES	TRAININGS FOR REFLECTIVE PARTNERSHIP: TOWARD TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING	RESOURCING COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING AND PRACTICE FOR REFLECTIVE PARTNERS	POLICY AND SYSTEMS: BUILDING A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM	PUBLIC DISSEMINATION & ENGAGEMENT: TRANSLATING WISDOM TO IMPACT
PIVOT Embodying Reimagining Reflection Wisdom	From transactional to transformative reflection	From select professionals to public at large	From prescriptive training to transformative learning	From continuing education to lifelong and life-deep learning	From defused to infused Reflective Practice	From extraction to expansion
POSSIBILITIES Embedding Reimagining Reflection Wisdom	Embedding reflection-in-relationship Integrating body-mind-spirit in RP (somatic practices) Offering racial/ethnic affinity group reflective spaces	RP for early learning educators, childcare workers and other paraprofessionals Community-based RP (for youth and parents) Embedding RP in work with families (building relational connection prior to assessment / diagnosis / treatment)	Integrating somatic-cognitive-affective-spiritual practices Focusing on developing reflective partnership practices Relationship building and spaciousness in training (less content, more presence and connection) Sustained and collective engagement (continuum of learning, training, and mentorship)	Regular touchpoints and reflection-in-relationship spaces to share successes/dilemmas and continued learning Funding communities of practice for reflective partners Avenues for influencing organization and policy development	Statewide policy to make RP accessible to all Infuse RP in decision-making processes Cross-sector fellowship program Honest brokering of relationships (with community stakeholders to influence policy) RP for leaders	Practice briefs with highlights of RP themes and implications Stories (from providers and Reflective Partners) of coming to RP Network with other change agents nationally and internationally Public dissemination through professional venues, podcasts, facilitating public conversational spaces
PRACTICES Just & Ethical Considerations	Honoring indigenous RP Equity and healing-centered	Accessibility--opportunity, race/ethnicity, and language match Choice Confidentiality	Experiential Equity and healing-centered Challenging professionalization of RSC	Learning in community Parallel process of growth and development	Choice Cultivating readiness in organizations and systems Aligning policies and practices	Multi-vocal--diversity of voices and perspectives Collective impact Regenerative innovation and learning
CONTINUING REFLECTIONS Sustaining Connectivity for Innovation <i>(Do we want to tweak and/or to transform? What are our theories of real change? How do we keep changing?)</i>			CONTINUING REFLECTIONS Organizing and Planning for Substantive Impact <i>(What is the long arc of change? How do we sustain our collective efforts? How do we keep changing?)</i>			

RIPPLES OF REIMAGINING REFLECTION

I don't think healing begins where we think it does, in our doing something. I believe it begins in another realm altogether, the realm of dreams and imagination. A realm that I might also call spirit. A place of potential where possibilities reside, where we retrieve, through prayer or in dreams, visions for ourselves and for the world that make us more whole. And with our visions in place, we can realize them through what follows, our commitment, and the steps we take toward them.

Prentis Hemphill

The transformative power of *Reimagining Reflection* extends far beyond the six months we gathered together. Like ripples moving outward from a pebble cast into still water, the wisdom and practices birthed in this space have begun to touch the lives of children, families, and communities across Washington State. The very essence of parallel process, so central to reflective practice, manifested through our partners' experiences: as they were held, seen, and transformed in the *Reimagining Reflection* space, they created new ways of holding, seeing, and transforming others.

In our closing evaluation, we invited partners to share how their participation in *Reimagining Reflection* had influenced their work. Their responses reveal the profound reach of our collective journey, from shifts in how they show up with families, to transformations in organizational culture, and to deeper commitments to decolonizing practices. These ripples speak to the heart of our vision: when we create spaces of safety, dignity, and belonging for practitioners, they become wellsprings of healing and possibility for others whose lives they touch.

What follows are the voices of our partners, sharing the ways *Reimagining Reflection* began to reshape their practices, deepen their presence, and expand their capacity for compassionate, equity-centered work. Their words illuminate the steadily unfolding bridge between reimagined reflection and transformative practices, between the dreams we dared to imagine together and the new realities we are cultivating in our daily work with children, families, and communities.



This experience has helped me reflect and commit to deepening my listening practices and capacity. ~ Anonymous

It has refreshed my responsibility to get to know the parents of the children that I am working with a little deeper than just surface-level information. I feel refreshed in my curiosity about others' circumstances and the experiences that've made them the parents they are today. ~ Ryan Good

As a program leader, I am learning to decolonize my leadership and, in turn, our staff approach family coaching in a decolonized way. Or at least, we started having conversations about our program's needs. ~ Jae Perez de Luengas

The focus on shifting from holding to healing provided a more compassionate and meaningful framework for supporting children and families. For me and my work with early learning providers and families, this likely means emphasizing the emotional and relational aspects of caregiving, creating safe spaces for honest conversations, and recognizing the healing power of community reflection. As well as inviting staff to explore how their work aligns with personal and organizational values. Asking more respectful and responsible questions. ~ Maria Vasquez

I have a deeper awareness of how language and the choice of words that I use impact others and how to be more intentional in communication (and slow down). ~ Celeste Farmer

OUR GRATITUDE

This work was born in community and sustained by community. It exists because nineteen courageous souls said yes to the unknown, yes to vulnerability, and yes to dreaming together.

To Our Community Partners and Co-Creators:

You brought your whole selves, your wisdom, your wounds, your wonder, and your willingness. You shared stories that made us weep, insights that made us pause, and visions that made us believe. You created home for each other in rooms and on screens, in affinity spaces and small groups, in moments of silence and eruptions of recognition. This work is yours. These pages hold your courage.

To the Families, Children, and Providers of Washington State:

Your lived experiences are the soil from which this work grows. Your needs, your dreams, and your resilience call us forward. We do this work in service of the worlds you deserve, worlds of safety, dignity, and belonging.

To Our Funders:

Thank you for believing that transformation requires more than fixing what is broken. Thank you for investing in a process that honored emergence over efficiency, that valued collective wisdom over predetermined outcomes, and that made space for the sacred work of reimagining.

To Our Ancestors and Indigenous Wisdom Keepers:

We acknowledge that reflective practices long predate their professionalization. Indigenous communities have always known the power of circle, of storytelling, of collective sense-making, and of healing in community. We commit to honoring these practices, learning from them, and working toward their restoration rather than their erasure.

To Those Who Will Carry This Work Forward:

To the early learning educators, the reflective consultants, the supervisors, the trainers, the policy makers, the funders, and the dreamers who will read these pages, thank you for saying yes to the pivot. Thank you for believing that another world is possible. Thank you for being willing to step into the quiet, dive into the deep, and listen for where we need to go next.

This report is our collective dream, spoken aloud, written down, and offered forward. May it ripple outward. May it call others home. May it birth new possibilities.

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