



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES USING A RACIAL EQUITY LENS

Jessica A. Pryce, Ph.D., MSW

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What We Will Cover

- Managing Change/Transitions
- Power/Authority
- Attitude/Mindset
- Questions

“When a community loses its memory, its members no longer know one another. How can they know one another if they have forgotten or have never learned one another’s story? If they do not know one another’s stories, how can they know whether or not to trust one another? People who do not trust one another do not help one another, and moreover, they fear one another.

And this is our predicament now.”

-Wendell Berry

**MANDATED REPORTING
TOWARDS MANDATED
SUPPORTING**



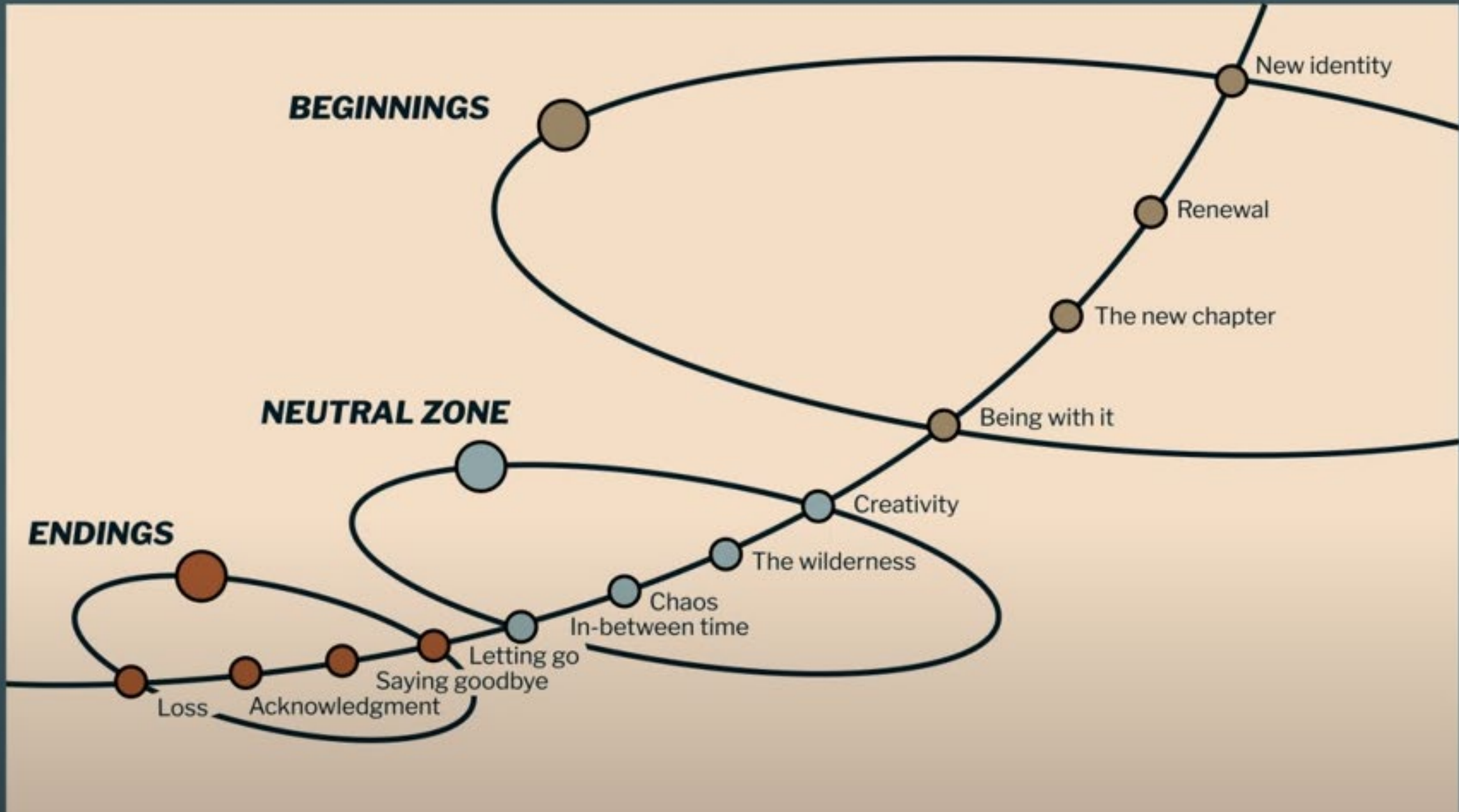
**The New
Beginning**

**The
Neutral
Zone**

**Ending,
Losing,
Letting Go**

Indications that someone is in the Neutral Zone

- Constantly worry about the future.
- A desire to try something different.
- Feeling confused and disoriented, things don't make sense that way they used to.
- Feeling lost and scared about choosing the wrong path.
- Being excited - and overwhelmed - by the possibilities.



**WHERE ARE YOU
IN NEW JERSEY?**



Leadership Strategies: Ending, Losing, Letting Go

- Acknowledge what is ending, what is being lost, and what your team is letting go of...**and WHY.**
- Acknowledge that “change is hard” and that you recognize that the transition will not be easy.
- Be clear about what you are now embracing:
 - Safer Homes
 - Cultivating Belonging
 - Tempering the Trauma of Separation
 - Strengthening family bonds
 - Maintaining Community Connections



Leadership Strategies: The Neutral Zone

- **Patience, Time, Presence** (Be **patient** with your team, give **time** to your team, be **present** for your team)
- Be repetitive about the new vision/mission.
- Invite your workforce to be a part of the change. Leverage their creativity and their ideas.
- Engage in hard discussions about **barriers** and **benefits**.
- Empower your workforce to set goals.
- Set a [realistic] timeframe for neutrality and be clear with your team.



Leadership Strategies

The New Beginning

- Be vigilant about team members who have not progressed through these phases.
- Build diverse teams and implement new organizational policies and operating procedures.
- Your new identity should be front-facing, known in the community and included in recruitment/onboarding.
- Seek Feedback to maintain momentum

POWER DYNAMICS

AUTHORITY VS POWER

Authority: The leveraging of **facts and context** to make decisions, enforce laws, and guide others based on an established **position, policy or role**. Authority is granted by a system or institution and involves **responsibility and accountability** for outcomes. (Decisive)

Power: The **control or direct influence** on the behavior of others, often through force, coercion, or manipulation. Power can exist **without authority** and may not always be derived from a legitimate source. (Judgmental)



Power Dynamics

Hierarchical & Imbalanced

Reward/coercive

Subjugated populations show a pattern of **conformity** (adherence), **fight** (resistance), or **flight** (absence) when confronted with dominance.

**HOW DO YOU (PERSONALLY)
RESPOND TO
POWERLESSNESS?**

Power Theory and Child Welfare




WHAT ARE THE POWER DYNAMICS AT PLAY IN “MANDATED REPORTING”?

Hierarchical & Imbalanced	Negotiated & Reciprocal	Shared & Balanced
Dictating	Bargaining	Partnering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamics are driven by Rewards/Coercion When confronted by dominance, parents often show a pattern of conformity (adherence), fight (resistance), or flight (absence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The holder of power grants limited access but not consistent. The person in authority provides the parents with certain opportunities to make decisions. Often seen as disingenuous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent, equitable and balanced CPS is a facilitator/resource Goals are Participant-driven The focus is on client strength and building a collaborative relationship, co-creating solutions and addressing challenges.

**CONSIDER THE MINDSET OF THE
MANDATED REPORTER**

Developmental Framework for Child Welfare Professionals and Community Partners



	Agent	Advocate	Activist
Mindset	Segregationist	Assimilationist	Justice-centered
Power Dynamic	Hierarchical and Imbalanced	Negotiated and Reciprocal	Shared and Balanced
Belief System	"These people are permanently inferior, and they cannot be helped. We must save them from themselves."	"These people are only temporarily inferior, and they can be helped. We can rehabilitate them. We can help them become better parents."	"These people are people, and they were never inferior. They have strength, value and inherent worth."
Guiding Sentiment	Pity	Empathy	Compassion
Operating System	Punishing	Saving	Liberating

CHARTING A NEW COURSE (MANDATED SUPPORTING)

WHAT'S HELPING



TEAM

GOAL or VISION



WHAT'S STABILIZING



WHAT SLOWS US DOWN



THE SAILBOAT

The team itself



THE SHORE

The ultimate goal or vision for the team



THE WIND

Things that are helping the team glide along
(team strengths, good communication, etc.)



THE ANCHORS

Stabilizing forces and things that support the team from drifting off course, or what provides opportunity for rest and re-evaluation



THE ROCKS

Pitfalls and things that slow the team down or hinder forward progress

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

Imagine our team is a ship sailing to the islands. What islands, or goals, do you think we should be headed toward? Take some time to brainstorm different factors that either help or hinder our team on this voyage.

<p><i>Wind</i> What propels our team forward? What helps us go faster?</p>	<p><i>Islands</i> What are we aiming for? Where are we headed?</p>
<p><i>Anchors</i> What keeps us from drifting off course? What opportunities exist for pause, rest, or re-evaluation?</p>	<p><i>Rocks</i> What hidden or unforeseen issues might prevent smooth sailing? What slows us down?</p>

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

AS WE WORK TO TRANSFORM HOW MANDATED REPORTING WORKS AND TO DRIVE BETTER OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES, HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE CHOOSING TO REPORT A FAMILY TO CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES:

- How long have I known this family and have I had the time to build a trusting relationship with them?
- Do I know of any circumstances that have emerged in this family's life within the last 6 months which have impacted their stability and/or safety?
- Have I considered what community or social supports could help this family? For example, social/emotional support, nurturing and attachment, parent and child development, social connections and faith-based alliances.
- Is there a trusted colleague or community advocate who I can connect with to brainstorm ideas to assist this family?

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- Are my own values impacting my view of this situation at all? If so, how might I extricate my own personal worldview from this family's current situation?
- Do I have a sense of what will happen next when child protective services enter into the lives of families?
- Answer the following: "If this family had resources such as _____, my concern for them would be resolved."
- I understand the harms associated with family separation and also understand that my report could result in this family being separated from one another.

Questions