

CoramBAAF Conversations | Endorsement of PACE

00:00:04 Ellen Broome

Hi Olivia, nice to have you with us today. Do you want to start by introducing yourself?

00:00:09

Yes. My name is Olivia Clark. I am a qualified social worker. As of about 13 years now I've got around 10 years experience working in fostering sector. Both local authority and independent.

00:00:24 Olivia Clark

And I currently work for fostering network as a practice support consultant.

00:00:30 Ellen Broome

Very great to have you here today to talk about, to talk about your work, Olivia. I'm Ellen Broome, and I'm managing director of CoramBAAF. I'm really excited to have you here to talk to us today. So should I kick us off with the first question, Olivia.

00:00:42 Olivia Clark

Yes, please go ahead.

00:00:44 Ellen Broome

Can you explain what pace principles are and how they've influenced your work with carers?

00:00:50 Olivia Clark

Yes. So the pace principles is a parenting model that was derived from the theory developed direct developmental psychotherapy. So it was a model that came from Dan Hughes as a result of thinking about that where ordinary parenting.

00:01:10 Olivia Clark

Doesn't always work with children who've experienced trauma. Pay stands for playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy. And it's borne out of thinking about attachment theory, child development into subjective.

00:01:26 Olivia Clark

Fatigue and developmental trauma and really thinking about on the ground. What's a useful model that that predominantly foster carers and adopters can use, and that can be helpful for practitioners. So this I was really fortunate really early on in my career to be able to do DP level one with Dan Hughes.

00:01:46 Olivia Clark

Myself and at the time I was, I had no idea what I was, how how significant it was yet to become going, trundling along in in, in my early days. So it really has influenced my practise right from the get go.

00:01:53

OK.

00:02:00 Olivia Clark

In terms of looking behind people's presenting behaviour, so be that be that with a birth parent and a doctor, a foster carer or even working with professionals and then also predominantly looking at it for children and and understanding what is what's behind.

00:02:20 Olivia Clark

The behaviours and and the and the words and the things that people are presenting us with so that we can really help understand what's going on for them. That's it's been really significant throughout my career in, in, in that way of working because I find that.

00:02:34 Olivia Clark

And teaching is helpful and and giving people knowledge. But in order for people and children to really understand what's gonna work for them and and help understand what's going on for them and help people to take on board what you're saying, you need to understand what's behind the behaviour. And I think pace really, really helps in terms of creating a connection.

00:02:55 Olivia Clark

With an adult or a carer to help understand what's going on for them.

00:03:00 Ellen Broome

It's really, really interesting and I suppose you've talked here about children who have The Who have had significant trauma in their lives, who have experienced significant trauma in their lives.

00:03:10 Olivia Clark

Can you tell?

00:03:11 Ellen Broome

Me a little bit about what some.

00:03:12 Ellen Broome

Of those, because you talk about kind of ongoing challenging behaviour, I think that stems from that trauma. Can you tell me a bit about those?

00:03:19 Ellen Broome

Come some of those common difficulties that you think aerospace when managing that kind of challenging behaviour, maybe especially if it's directed towards them as care.

00:03:28 Ellen Broome

There is.

00:03:28 Olivia Clark

So I think when carers are experiencing telling behaviour specifically directed towards them, I think over a period of time there is a risk of carers entering into sometimes what professionals call compassion fatigue or blocked care and and what that means in practical terms is.

00:03:47 Olivia Clark

When a child is activating your stress responses over and over again, it's really difficult for adults and carers to tune in to the part of their brain which which engages empathy and understanding because you're you're feeling under threat. And I think that over time, the repeated nature of that.

00:04:09 Olivia Clark

I think leads to block care, which means that carers themselves can can can go into fight or flight and so therefore their react, their parenting becomes reactive rather than reflective. And I think it's really hard then to care as when their stress responses are continuously.

00:04:30 Olivia Clark

Being activated to have empathy for a child.

00:04:34 Olivia Clark

And to really remember that it's not personal and it's not directed to them.

00:04:39 Olivia Clark

However, we've got a child on the other side who is then also potentially feeling under threat and maybe they're experiencing some of parenting that they've received before they when they were with their birth parents, and that can increase risk of allegations for foster carers, lead to placement breakdowns, and sometimes I think.

00:04:59 Olivia Clark

What can happen in common difficulties for carers?

00:05:03 Olivia Clark

Sometimes what can become a a focus is what their responsibilities are. So an example would be if a child is continuously refusing to go to school and a carer's feeling like gosh I, it's my job to get them to school, I have to get them to school. If I don't get them to school.

00:05:19 Olivia Clark

It's going to.

00:05:20 Olivia Clark

It's not going to be good for.

00:05:21 Olivia Clark

Their learning, that's that's part of my role as a foster carer.

00:05:25 Olivia Clark

And the responsibility for that can overtake kind of understanding what else might be going on for the child and the child's continuing to refuse and it becoming a challenging behaviour surrounding.

00:05:38 Olivia Clark

That it can become massive for foster care and time. You can get into kind of power struggles and and power plays, and I think that's just one example that that I can give that can lead to just real difficulties for carers managing these these challenges. And you can get stuck I think. And that's where the carers, you know, really losing sight of.

00:05:59 Olivia Clark

The embassy that they perhaps once had for the child and and like I said can lead to block care and only placements breaking down.

00:06:07 Ellen Broome

Which is so this.

00:06:08 Ellen Broome

Is something you.

00:06:08 Ellen Broome

Really want to avoid and you really want people to be able to continuously engage with children in that encountered way.

00:06:14 Olivia Clark

Yes. And I, yeah, I think in those moments and I think when carers are under repeated stress, it's in those moments where it's the hardest to maintain therapeutic parenting approach on a pace approach. I think when you're not under stress and and you're at your best self, it's it's potentially easier.

00:06:33 Olivia Clark

To to follow a pace attitude and and follow therapeutic parenting. But I think when when we're talking about the other end of the spectrum, when you're constantly managing high high levels of challenging.

00:06:44 Olivia Clark

Media. Those are the times that it can be the most difficult to maintain. Some of these approaches, but what's really tough is that those are the moments where the children need a pace approach, probably the most and it and it's those bits which I think civilising social workers and and fostering services. That's the bits that we need to.

00:07:05 Olivia Clark

To unravel and and to understand the most to.

00:07:07 Olivia Clark

Prevent placements from breaking down.

00:07:10 Ellen Broome

And that makes kind of perfect intuitive sense, doesn't it? When?

00:07:13 Ellen Broome

You're at your. It does when you.

00:07:14 Ellen Broome

Talk about this time it sort of.

00:07:16 Olivia Clark

Makes that's that's.

00:07:17 Ellen Broome

And it's really hard to then be your best self, but it's also absolutely when the child needs your best response because they are challenging because they need something from you that's really, really interesting. So because you've obviously done a lot of work with.

00:07:30 Ellen Broome

Errors and thinking around pays principles.

00:07:33 Ellen Broome

What changes and carries have you observed when you apply the principles of pace with carers?

00:07:39 Olivia Clark

So I think in order for carers to have a pace approach with with children, they ultimately need to be supervised and held in exactly.

00:07:48 Olivia Clark

The same way.

00:07:49 Olivia Clark

So supervising social workers and the fostering service need to work. Following DP and pace principles to really help the carer.

00:08:00 Olivia Clark

Feel safe and secure and health.

00:08:03 Olivia Clark

And and what that means in practise is that the carer is able to come to you and saying, you know all that stuff you told me to do. And we told spent hours talking about doing well. I can't do any of it and I haven't been able to do any of it because of of all these reasons and for the agency and the supervising social worker response to kind of be that's OK.

00:08:23 Olivia Clark

It's OK. Let's talk about it. Let's let's help me understand why that was hard. Help me understand what was going on, what was going on and to have that environment and to have that space and and sometimes just to slow down and to really just meet the career where they're at and I think.

00:08:43 Olivia Clark

When that is achieved fully, that's when you start to see the change in carers and you start to see them being able to adopt the same approaches with children. So then they're saying to children it's OK. I've asked you to, you know, put your shoes on for 10 times and we're now.

00:09:02 Olivia Clark

Going to be late.

00:09:03 Olivia Clark

And I can feel myself getting stressed. But do you know what? That's OK. I can see you're struggling with this cause, you know, perhaps when he lived at home, he might never have.

00:09:11 Olivia Clark

Had to wear shoes.

00:09:13 Olivia Clark

You know, or perhaps he never knew how, and it's about tapping into that understanding. But the career needs to have that environment themselves to be able to to in terms.

00:09:23 Olivia Clark

One respond to a child and I think that's when you start to see.

00:09:27 Olivia Clark

Those changes and increasing confidence from the carer, because then they're they're recognising if I mess up it's OK, but I think it it comes from every part of how our fostering services run, so that's about, you know, getting carers, having knowledge about, if I did have a complaint or allegation.

00:09:49 Olivia Clark

This is the process that will happen with that and that ISIL safe and I know that that's the process and that that might happen, but I'm aware of that and this is what my agency will do to support me and having the training and resources around them. So it's it's not just about the supervision relationship, it's about everything in terms of how fostering services is run to support a career.

00:10:10 Olivia Clark

To be able to feel safe and held enough to to work with a.

00:10:14 Olivia Clark

Child in in that.

00:10:15 Olivia Clark

Way and that's when you start to see the changes.

00:10:18 Ellen Broome

When you share some examples of carers demonstrating being playful, accepting, curious and empathic towards.

00:10:26 Ellen Broome

The children in their care.

00:10:28 Olivia Clark

Yes, yes, definitely. So I think play playfulness.

00:10:32 Ellen Broome

Is, is, is.

00:10:33 Olivia Clark

Such a brilliant one, and I think I can't think of any statistics sort of in my head, but you know, being playful and humour is a great relief for stress. You know it it.

00:10:42 Ellen Broome

Is it your favourite one? Is it your favourite principle?

00:10:46 Olivia Clark

Yeah. And I say it's my favourite principle, but it's also the one I struggle with the most personally. Yeah. My in, in with my children. My husband is a lot more playful than than I.

00:10:56 Olivia Clark

But I I do struggle with it because it's not my natural way of being. However, it's the the benefits for creating a connection with a child, but helping your stress levels. And sometimes I think in parenting you can so easily get into power dynamics and power.

00:11:12 Olivia Clark

Struggles with children.

00:11:14 Olivia Clark

If you can just make a joke of it.

00:11:16 Olivia Clark

Then you might have been 45 minutes trying to get them to do something, or you've asked them the same to do something for the same time. So and you're 2 weeks into that and you're still not on.

00:11:27 Olivia Clark

Is if you can just think, do you know what this is? Just this is quite funny. Let's just laugh about it, you know, and let's just have a joke and that will release your stress and your attention, but also it creates a connection with the child. And just sometimes it can be enough to just break the cycles, whatever it is that you've got that you've got into. So I think.

00:11:48 Olivia Clark

You know, for carers and professionals and you know and parent all parents really I think if you can tap into that playfulness, it.

00:11:54 Olivia Clark

Can really help.

00:11:55 Olivia Clark

Create a connection and and and fuse fuse attention. Really acceptance can is if I think it's a really useful tool to learn and I think if everyone can do it in their everyday life.

00:12:09 Olivia Clark

In work in practise, but with children who've experienced trauma, it can be really powerful in terms of helping them to accept who they are, accepting that they're not the reason.

00:12:23 Olivia Clark

For why they've come into care, and it's about so an example would be if a child says I don't have any friends at school and the carer could respond saying yes, you do. Your teacher always says you have lots of friends at school. Every time we go and you know you've talked to me about Billy and.

00:12:40 Olivia Clark

Sarah and and thing.

00:12:42 Olivia Clark

At the end of that conversation, the child's still gonna feel that they don't have any friends at school for whatever reason, is that that they said that? So you know, and accepting response could be.

00:12:53 Olivia Clark

Gosh, I'm really sorry that you feel like you don't have any friends at school. That must be really tough. I know that your teachers keep telling me you have lots of friends at school, but maybe they don't feel like your friends to you, you know, and just having those conversations and really just accepting wherever the child is. It can be really powerful in terms of building a connection with a child.

00:13:16 Olivia Clark

But also just realising it's never too late to do that.

00:13:19 Olivia Clark

So sometimes it's really hard to do that in the moment, so it might be that in the moment when you're doing the dishes or you're in the car.

00:13:26 Olivia Clark

You might just hell, yeah, you've.

00:13:27 Olivia Clark

Got loads of friends. You know, we had this person around and we went to the park with this person and then later on you might think. Ohh gosh, I didn't mean to say that I shouldn't have said that cause.

00:13:36 Olivia Clark

I went on this training last week and they said I should do XY and Z.

00:13:39 Olivia Clark

It's never too late, so you know, if you're when you're reading a story later or you're doing bedtime, you that could be a time where you bring it up again, you know, you know, you said earlier you didn't have any friends at school and then you can talk about it. It's never too late to to bring it up with the child again. If you feel like, ohh, I shouldn't have said that. Or perhaps I didn't get it quite.

00:13:57 Olivia Clark

Right. You can always repair that relationship in terms of being curious, it's quite a helpful one in terms of making links with with trauma. So for example, if a child, you recognise a pattern of behaviour before or after contact, it's a typical one, which is a really obvious time that you can be curious is to make the links so for example.

00:14:21 Olivia Clark

The child wets himself or has an accident every time before contact.

00:14:26 Olivia Clark

You might say to the child and you don't need to say at the time it could be anytime. Really it could be the week after. It could be the day after it could be in the moment if it was appropriate, you might say, gosh, you know, I've sarahs noticed that this sometimes happens before you see Mummy. Perhaps you're feeling a bit wobbly about seeing Mummy because sometimes.

00:14:47 Olivia Clark

If it's hard to say you're feeling what belly, then your body tells you you're feeling wobbly.

00:14:52

The child might.

00:14:53 Olivia Clark

Say ohh no no, it's not that it's.

00:14:55 Olivia Clark

Not that, but it doesn't mean that it probably isn't. It's just maybe they're not ready to acknowledge that it is, but you've you've helped them understand what's going, what's going on for them. And that's a good, good way to be curious. You can also make a joke. It's quite it's quite easy to be helpful.

00:15:13 Olivia Clark

To be playful when you're being curious. So if you ask a child what they've done at school and they say no, you might say ohh didn't dinosaur come in your classroom and and then you might say ohh did did Miss Potter stand on the table and then you keep and then the end they might go. No, I did this because they're getting so frustrated with you saying all these ridiculous things so.

00:15:32 Olivia Clark

That's another kind of.

00:15:33 Olivia Clark

Way you can use curiosity with with playfulness.

00:15:38 Olivia Clark

So last but empathy. So I think at the moment in society, rarely do we stay with empathy that much. So if a child's hurts knee, you might.

00:15:48 Olivia Clark

Say, oh, I'm really sorry you hurt.

00:15:49 Olivia Clark

Your knee and give a cuddle and then you'd quickly move on to.

00:15:52 Olivia Clark

The next thing to maybe distract or whatever, that's quite a simple example. So I think especially with children who've experienced trauma, it's using any opportunity you can to sit with empathy for as long as long as you can to help that connection and to help.

00:16:08 Olivia Clark

Them understand that you're really trying to be in their shoes and and trying to understand how life is like for them. So an example I could use to talk about that would be with stealing for example. So, and this is often one that carers find really, really tricky. So children.

00:16:28 Olivia Clark

And commonly actually from neglect backgrounds might steal in the home in the Foster Care's home, and it's commonly one that you can get into a more traditional behavioural style response of it. So that would be kind of removing the steeled object or saying a child has to use their pocket money to pay back whatever they've stolen.

00:16:50 Olivia Clark

And it can be really difficult for carers, so, so tough, understandably so. You know, it's it's your belongings and and quite often it's it's children can steal things that are really precious to you and that's to do with the complexities of their relationships with adults, in caregiving roles and and their confusion around.

00:17:10 Olivia Clark

How to be in a home?

00:17:12 Olivia Clark

And and relationships and we could do. Oh, never talk about the reasons children steal. And you know, if you sometimes seeing can happen around a special event or an occasion and it can sometimes because child doesn't know how to handle that. So if it's a carers birthday, a child.

00:17:32 Olivia Clark

It's still a present that their care has been given, or if it's leading up to a holiday and the carers are getting all the things ready and you're all going away and everyone in the household is getting really excited about it. The child in care might actually be feeling incredibly anxious about holidays because they either might not know what holiday is.

00:17:49 Olivia Clark

Or they might have been abused around times of holidays, so then they might take something that means you can't go on.

00:17:56 Olivia Clark

The holiday because.

00:17:58 Olivia Clark

That's where their way of trying to communicate how they feel. So.

00:18:03 Olivia Clark

If the carers responding to this and they realise what's happened or they they find the the missing objects, that's a real opportunity to dig deep and.

00:18:12 Olivia Clark

And so hard to carers, but if you can use a pace approach in in those moments and to to try and use curiosity to help understand why a child might have done that and best wondering out loud, and then if you do get to the moment where you can have the connection to get to the point where you and the child can have an understanding.

00:18:35 Olivia Clark

Together as to what has led to the stealing is to really sit with the empathy of the feeling and not the.

00:18:41 Olivia Clark

Action of the stealing.

00:18:44 Olivia Clark

Which is so tough.

00:18:45 Olivia Clark

As carers and I think as I'm saying this out loud, I've just, if anyone who can achieve this is remarkable or even take a bit away from what I'm saying. But you know to to real, have an empathy cause, gosh, how hard must it be for a child where a holiday is supposed to be a fantastic thing to look forward to?

00:19:03 Olivia Clark

And they're feeling wracked with anxiousness, guilt, fear.

00:19:08 Olivia Clark

And they cannot say that to anybody. And the only thing they can do is to steal something in their mind, which might prevent the holiday from happening. And and to have a child who has to manage all of those feelings on their own. Gosh, you know that that's a lot been something that.

00:19:24 Ellen Broome

I mean, and they're great examples. They're really something about putting yourself in to to, in, in the children's shoes and responding in the kind.

00:19:32 Ellen Broome

Of the best way that you that you can be and not ignoring their feelings or why, you know, trying to see beyond actions rather than just the what has happened, you know, look for why they might maybe behaved in a way that was really difficult. I think it's. I mean they are. It's really beautiful when you describe.

00:19:52 Ellen Broome

What you might be able to do instead, and how you might be able to see because I think anyone who's been a parent or cared for someone will recognise some of those situations where that's. And obviously for children with trauma in their backgrounds, it's even more important, but it feels very recognisable in a way. It's very important to have your feelings valid.

00:20:09 Ellen Broome

Did and to be met with acceptance rather than someone saying why are you being angry with you? Feels kind of feels really intuitive as well, I think.

00:20:20 Ellen Broome

It'd be really interesting.

00:20:21 Ellen Broome

So you've talked, you've actually given some examples, but you'd be really interested to hear about if you are able to share some specific instances where therapeutic parenting is really have to maybe.

00:20:32 Ellen Broome

And maybe maintain a more settled and secure relationship between a child and a carer, because we know that that sometimes can be.

00:20:38 Ellen Broome

Really difficult so.

00:20:40 Ellen Broome

Be really interested to hear if you have some sort of specific examples or instances to share with.

00:20:44 Olivia Clark

Us. So I've certainly worked with a few carers who I've had a child place with them.

00:20:52 Olivia Clark

And gone past, you know, sometimes we use the honeymoon period where things are quite settled.

00:21:00 Olivia Clark

And then after that period, the child's behaviour starts to change significantly and the carer starts to experience some really daily, really high level challenging behaviour and the carer is not feel can't connect with the child.

00:21:20 Olivia Clark

They're feeling that it's making them highly stressed. It's it's affecting the way they live their life. It's affecting their birth children and and all they can see is this can't work. I cannot see how this can work for my life and my family. I just. I cannot see how this can work.

00:21:38 Olivia Clark

And then every further challenging behaviour event.

00:21:43 Olivia Clark

All it's doing is confirming the narrative.

00:21:45 Olivia Clark

This cannot work.

00:21:46 Olivia Clark

I cannot see how this can work and.

00:21:51 Olivia Clark

At that point I have worked with carers who have had one to one sessions with therapist DDP and and pace alongside supervision.

00:22:03 Olivia Clark

Which is complementing that.

00:22:06 Olivia Clark

To teach them basically the principles of pace and DP. And then I have no circumstances where then that placement has been saved ultimately and led to a long term placement now where the success of that is where the moment of the intervention.

00:22:25 Olivia Clark

Comes before the carer reaches compassion, fatigue and blocked care.

00:22:32 Olivia Clark

Because the further down that path you go that the child is feeling increasingly increasingly unsafe and their behaviours continue to continue to escalate and and thoughts.

00:22:41 Olivia Clark

Innately, that's often.

00:22:42 Olivia Clark

Where we end up with the serious allegations, which sometimes then take over the tenable nature of the of the placement continuing.

00:22:50 Olivia Clark

But if you can get it in that moment and I have worked with with several cases where that has happened and and one particular one I'm thinking of.

00:22:57 Olivia Clark

Is is an?

00:22:57 Olivia Clark

11 year old girl.

00:23:00 Olivia Clark

Who was displaying soiling behaviour, sexualised behaviours and couldn't be on their own with any other children. So when the carers had grandchildren visiting, it was incredibly high level of pressure on on their family life.

00:23:15 Olivia Clark

That what, what the support did and and the.

00:23:19 Olivia Clark

Therapy did was.

00:23:20 Olivia Clark

Help the carer connect with the child and and help the carer empathise with the child again, and that connection is what fueled them through.

00:23:30 Olivia Clark

And alongside that is repair.

00:23:34 Olivia Clark

Doesn't mean to say that the incidents or the behaviours didn't happen and that the carer didn't get stressed doesn't mean to say that the carer didn't always follow it to the T and I'm sure on many occasions defaulted to previous ways of parenting that that perhaps didn't work. But repair repair is what continues the connection with the child.

00:23:54 Olivia Clark

So you have a fracture. Child defaults to previous behaviours, the carer goes back to. I can't cope with this, you know, defaults to perhaps traditional parenting.

00:24:06 Olivia Clark

The carer then realises or has a moment of reflection, and it might be from supervision. It might be the same day, it might be an hour later, it might be a week later. Then the repair happens and each time you have a repair, the connection of the relationship is brought back and that's what keeps the relationship going and and that's what keeps the replacement going. And it's never too late.

00:24:25 Olivia Clark

It's never too late to do repair, but it has to be led by the carer. You know it has to be led by by the carer and the carer has to have the space to be able to be reflective. I think that's that's one of the keys is and that comes from the support from the agency we were talking about at the start is.

00:24:42 Olivia Clark

The carer has to be able to have the space and have the self-care to be reflective and to wonder and to guess and to think what caused that, what was going on for me, what was going on for them, how can we repair this? How can we make that make that connection? So yes, there are many occasions I've had a few cases where I have known that.

00:25:02 Olivia Clark

But I've also in many cases where it doesn't work and I think it's a timing thing.

00:25:07 Olivia Clark

And and also it it relates to what else is going on for the care of his life and and matching. Because sometimes, especially when there's birth children involved. Unfortunately even with this approach in place, sometimes the risk might be too high. If there's birth children involved, but if.

00:25:25 Olivia Clark

You can support the carer.

00:25:27 Olivia Clark

To keep the connection with the child and and can keep that relationship going through repair it it, it can work and it can prevent placement breakdowns.

00:25:36 Ellen Broome

It's so interesting you say about timing and kind of space for reflection. Do you think we?

00:25:41 Ellen Broome

Support our careers.

00:25:43 Ellen Broome

Enough to have that because the, you know, parenting or caring for someone is a 24/7 and it's all the time. It's not like you can take time out when you are feeling unwell or you know when something happens you are, you know, still the the caring responsibilities remain. So do you think we provide office to carers?

00:26:03 Ellen Broome

And all the carers that we have with enough sort of support, I suppose in time to do that really important kind of reflection piece and the the wandering and the being curious with someone who can help guide that those thoughts and those reflections.

00:26:19 Olivia Clark

I think it's tricky and I certainly think.

00:26:24 Olivia Clark

As a sector as a whole, it's helpful to have an approach to matching where at the matching point you're thinking, right?

00:26:32 Olivia Clark

Almost thinking. Can we match respite carers at the same time as matching main carers because it needs to run parallel to be able to maintain a a successful long term placement and as you were talking I was just thinking about the Mockingbird model which works really well because.

00:26:49

It it it?

00:26:50 Olivia Clark

Builds in all of these things. Naturally, it's not something you have to.

00:26:53 Olivia Clark

To work out or put in place and then it allows all this time for reflection and it allows time for self-care because.

00:26:59 Olivia Clark

As we all.

00:27:00 Olivia Clark

Know sometimes you can't even get to the reflection bit if you're absolutely exhausted and your basic needs aren't met, it's the same as children. As in, if you're if you're.

00:27:08 Olivia Clark

Exhausted. And you?

00:27:10 Olivia Clark

You need to be able to have reflective capacity, which you need to have regular bats. You need to have regular respite. Everything else although.

00:27:19 Olivia Clark

Some some colleagues who you know, psychologists and and things like that respite and the pace and DP approach it has to be handled incredibly, just incredibly sensitively and in the timing of that because.

00:27:31 Olivia Clark

As the success of pace is about the connection with the carer and the child and that can be broken and not achieved if a child is regularly being sent to respite carers and it's not managed appropriately and they don't have a this, you know they're not involved in in, in the in the in the right way. So that means that's another conversation and it all needs to be managed.

00:27:51 Olivia Clark

In order to.

00:27:52 Olivia Clark

Achieve what you're wanting to achieve in in.

00:27:54 Olivia Clark

The longer term.

00:27:55 Ellen Broome

Something that I genuinely kind of think about, like how do we support, we talk about allegations. We talk about, you know, sort of bit.

00:28:02 Ellen Broome

Do we give people enough? And I agree with you, I mean, a child might just feel like they've. I mean, I've heard children and care say that. Oh, I just got sent to respite because they couldn't cope with me. And,

you know, it sort of breaks the relationship rather than help support it, as you say, you know, I think I think children can.

00:28:17 Ellen Broome

Still, double rejection or another.

00:28:19 Ellen Broome

Lot of rejection when they're when it happens, even though it's.

00:28:21 Ellen Broome

Not meant to be.

00:28:22 Ellen Broome

For for them or for the career so.

00:28:25 Ellen Broome

I was just was just really interested.

00:28:26 Ellen Broome

That from your experience.

00:28:28 Ellen Broome

What are the long term benefits of using a therapeutic parenting approach in preventing placement breakdown?

00:28:35 Olivia Clark

The ultimate aim is that the child creates a secure relationship and attachment to the carer and and if that is achieved, the carer has the power to help the child make sense of the trauma that they have.

00:28:50 Olivia Clark

Which in some ways can be as more powerful or as equally powerful as a child going to therapy or or to camps and and then essentially they're going to feel safer in that relationship than going going externally to make sense and not saying that that those things.

00:29:10 Olivia Clark

Got married together, but it's a carer. Who is going to be there when all these key moments happen. So when a child soils before contact, that's that's the moment. That's the narrative. That's the opportunity to make that link to help the child make sense of the trauma that they've experienced.

00:29:29 Olivia Clark

And if the connection can keep going and the carer is supported in the right way to to make they get to make best guesses, to help the child make the links to make, to help them make sense of their life and the trauma they've experienced, it's the success of it and the long term progression.

00:29:49 Olivia Clark

The child is going to be so much better because the carer will understand their narrative and the and the carer will help them make sense of the world because they would have been there, been there throughout it.

00:29:59 Olivia Clark

And I think it's through like I've talked about the repair and they keep going back through that cycle of supporting the child. So yes, it definitely can help prevent placement breakdowns and it can help the child recover really. But I think one thing that I haven't talked about which.

00:30:18 Olivia Clark

I think is.

00:30:19 Olivia Clark

Quite helpful. And and Dan Hughes talks about it, but it it doesn't form part of pace in in formally is is the story use the storytelling and to help children recover from trauma.

00:30:33 Olivia Clark

And that can even be in a really basic way, as as a tone of your voice. I was trying to model it a bit earlier when I was talking. So if you're talking to a child, it's using a story telling lullaby voice and making your voice really quiet and and using perhaps repetitive words or.

00:30:51 Olivia Clark

Or sounds that you as a carer and that becomes part of your connection with the child.

00:30:57 Olivia Clark

So it might be you say something like it's OK, you know, we've talked about this. We've talked about this. And do you remember that's perhaps because of this and and you I'm almost having your own language and certain words that you use with the child that helps describe things that have happened to them. So if they have a behaviour that happens every time before contact you might you might find a word that just you and the child.

00:31:18 Olivia Clark

Understand about that and you say that's OK, that just happened because of that. We were having a wobbly wobbly and that's OK because we know that that happens because of that, doesn't it? And that's OK. Thank you for showing me or thank you.

00:31:29 Olivia Clark

For telling me.

00:31:30 Olivia Clark

That you were feeling wobbly about that.

00:31:33 Olivia Clark

And it becomes therapeutic in in its sense in and using that storytelling voice. And then I.

00:31:39 Olivia Clark

Think sometimes even.

00:31:40 Olivia Clark

As even as teenagers or adults, they might laugh when you do it, and they might remember if it's a long term place that you're doing it from when.

00:31:46 Olivia Clark

They were little or something like that also.

00:31:49 Olivia Clark

It can be quite powerful. Some carers I've worked with, we've helped them is is talking about.

00:31:54 Olivia Clark

When the child came to live with them.

00:31:57 Olivia Clark

And and making a story about it. So and you can do it for a child of any age, but it can almost be the start of your therapeutic parenting journey with them. So you might say, and you can use playfulness in it, but you might say, ohh gosh, you know, me and Steve, we were so bored in our house and we just had all this space and we just didn't know what to do with it. So.

00:32:18 Olivia Clark

We phoned up Sally and.

00:32:19 Olivia Clark

We said, oh, we'd really like a.

00:32:21 Olivia Clark

Child to come and.

00:32:21 Olivia Clark

Stay with us. We had to be.

00:32:22 Olivia Clark

The right, right child. We really wanted to help.

00:32:25 Olivia Clark

Them and you, you.

00:32:26 Olivia Clark

Just pick certain facts and then they would say also we knew you were coming and we went to get your room and.

00:32:31 Olivia Clark

We did this, that and the other and when you?

00:32:33 Olivia Clark

And you might make up and say, oh, when you came, do you remember you had that funny look on your face and we went to get a McDonald's and and whatever is you keep it a short story and then you repeat it and and you kind of you use factors such as like how pleased you were they came and certain things.

00:32:50 Olivia Clark

You might have remembered.

00:32:51 Olivia Clark

And you had.

00:32:52 Olivia Clark

That blue coat, that was your favourite blue coat and.

00:32:54 Olivia Clark

Remember, it's still in your wardrobe.

00:32:56 Olivia Clark

Remember we did this or we did.

00:32:57 Olivia Clark

That and and and the reason why it's important for carers to do that is it. It's a sense of belonging. It reminds the child that they wanted to come to that house, that the carer remembers that memory as a significant, important memory to them the day that they came and that they were wanted and all the preparations that they made.

00:33:19 Olivia Clark

And and and the key memories of that first day and it being and it being a positive day for the career and that and that they belonged.

00:33:26 Olivia Clark

And and that can always be the be the start and it.

00:33:29 Olivia Clark

Doesn't need to.

00:33:29 Olivia Clark

Be very long. It can be quite short and it can be if the child was really you know, you can kind of make things up, you know, to funny things or whatever little elements but can be that can be quite helpful in terms of starting off the journey in a positive way.

00:33:45 Ellen Broome

I thought it was really interesting.

00:33:47 Ellen Broome

You talked about creating their stories because there's the stories that most children would have in their birth families. They would talk about mum and Dad or parent mums and mums or whatever it'd be. But they talk about parents being really excited and preparing rooms or siblings being excited. It's kind of recreating that type of story for them.

00:34:06 Ellen Broome

In their new home, because that's the new family and the new home. And that's kind of a story of of being welcome and being wanted, being wanted and being loved, which is maybe something that they've struggled with, getting enough of in their previous lives. I think I've said that was a really there was a really lovely sort of thing and I.

00:34:26 Ellen Broome

You know, you kind of recognise it in many families. They have stories around children's arrivals and and that's.

00:34:33 Ellen Broome

That's a really lovely way.

00:34:34 Ellen Broome

Of recreating it and creating that connection between career and child in a in a.

00:34:39 Ellen Broome

For my, that's very, very lovely. Is there anything else you wanna mention, Olivia around pace.

00:34:48 Ellen Broome

I mean, I feel like.

00:34:48 Ellen Broome

Maybe you could talk for.

00:34:49 Ellen Broome

A long time about it.

00:34:52 Olivia Clark

Which we don't really like. Yeah. Yeah. Ohh gosh, I don't think so. I think for there's lots of things like snippets. Hopefully I've said.

00:35:02 Olivia Clark

That people could take away all the.

00:35:04 Olivia Clark

People who are listening to this, I think.

00:35:06 Olivia Clark

The storytelling thing and and the playfulness and repair, I think you know, if if you're supervising social worker working with a carer or you're a carer and you're trying to do.

00:35:18 Olivia Clark

This, but you kind of think.

00:35:19 Ellen Broome

Ohh, just keep going.

00:35:20 Olivia Clark

All these trainings about pace and I don't really know and and some kids might think, you know, some of the stuff I do is more traditional and that stuff.

00:35:27 Olivia Clark

Still work, so should I not be doing that? Should I be?

00:35:30 Olivia Clark

Doing this and.

00:35:30 Olivia Clark

That and I think.

00:35:31 Olivia Clark

Ohh it's just it could be really.

00:35:33 Olivia Clark

Tricky and sometimes people can get stressed out thinking about all of that.

00:35:37

What I would say is those.

00:35:38 Olivia Clark

People is the fact that you're.

00:35:39 Olivia Clark

Even thinking about that as a thought.

00:35:42 Olivia Clark

Is it's amazing because it means that you're thinking about the child and you're thinking about how they're experiencing you and how you're they're experiencing your parenting and you're trying to make a connection with them. And I think finding your own way of.

00:35:56 Olivia Clark

Doing this is is is the key to.

00:35:58 Olivia Clark

Do it and the key to it is is connection and I think try not to get stressed out about it because there's not. We don't wanna add it to it. Be a thing that someone's adding to the things that you have to think about when. Oh no, I have to do this and I haven't done it and you know and use that time for supervision when, with, with, with your supervising social work or superstition. That's the time to kind of unpick.

00:36:18 Olivia Clark

And and it and it will come and it will come naturally. And I think when people do it over a long period, it's when people find their own way of doing it. I've had lots of carers say.

00:36:28 Olivia Clark

You know, I had to spell my own way because it's sometimes I find if you go.

00:36:33 Olivia Clark

On a therapeutic parenting called pay sort, you know, whatever it be is you think ohh, that person said that really good. I'm gonna remember to say it exactly like they said it and then you was a child and then you start I think it's almost a bit like when you're at school and you have to.

00:36:46 Olivia Clark

Learn your lines and then.

00:36:47 Olivia Clark

You can never say it right and then you think I remember what words they use and all they they how they said it sounded really good.

00:36:54 Olivia Clark

You kind of have to just get your own way of saying it and just come through through practise, I think.

00:37:01 Ellen Broome

There's something in there in there. You reflected earlier, playfulness, maybe something that you struggle to access more. But maybe acceptance comes really easily.

00:37:09 Ellen Broome

To you, yeah.

00:37:09 Ellen Broome

And that's yeah, be the same for everyone, isn't it? You know, they're gonna. You're gonna struggle more with maybe some of those principles.

00:37:15 Ellen Broome

And applying them and thinking about what that means to others and you'll be influenced by the parenting you've received yourself. And you know, maybe how your parents and other children. Yeah. So. So it's it's kind of, I think finding your own way feels like a really sensible.

00:37:29 Ellen Broome

No, but also the only way that you could make it your way because it has to be authentic for you. The child's gonna know what you're not being authentic. They're gonna sniff that out in a heartbeat.

00:37:39 Olivia Clark

But if they do, it's kind of like being honest and just mute, almost using that as a playfulness, you could just say to them, and I know it's hard. It doesn't.

00:37:46 Olivia Clark

Give that to.

00:37:46 Olivia Clark

People you say? Ohh well, I'm just trying really hard to be playful. I'm trying really hard to. I'm just not really get especially teenage. Are you just say Oh yeah, I was very rubbish at this and I'm trying to do. Are you noticing? I'm trying to say a bit different. I'm.

00:37:59 Olivia Clark

Yeah, I'm trying really hard, but I'm just not really very good. Like maybe we'll try something else or maybe we'll talk about this or whatever.

00:38:05 Olivia Clark

And and even that can just be playful in itself. Then the boy just laugh and be like, you know, you're a bit silly, but.

00:38:09 Olivia Clark

I'm a bit silly, aren't I?

00:38:11 Ellen Broome

And break that ice, break the ice and make it a connection rather than something else. Yeah, I think that's. I think that's that's really beautiful. Thank you so much, Olivia. This being on the website and people.

00:38:21 Olivia Clark

That's OK.

00:38:25 Ellen Broome

People hearing what you have to say, I.

00:38:27 Ellen Broome

Think it's really, really. It's really.

00:38:28 Ellen Broome

Beautiful when you describe it. Actually, it's really beautiful how people can kind.

00:38:34 Ellen Broome

Meat, I think, meet children where they are, you know? Accept them where they are. If they're not, because that's that's what they deserve. And that's what they need most of all. Thank you so much.

00:38:48 Ellen Broome

OK.