

Webinars for Supervisors

Welcome to Supporting The Whole VISTA

To join the audio portion, please dial:

888-769-8753

Passcode: **7462753**.

This session will begin shortly.

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 



VISTA

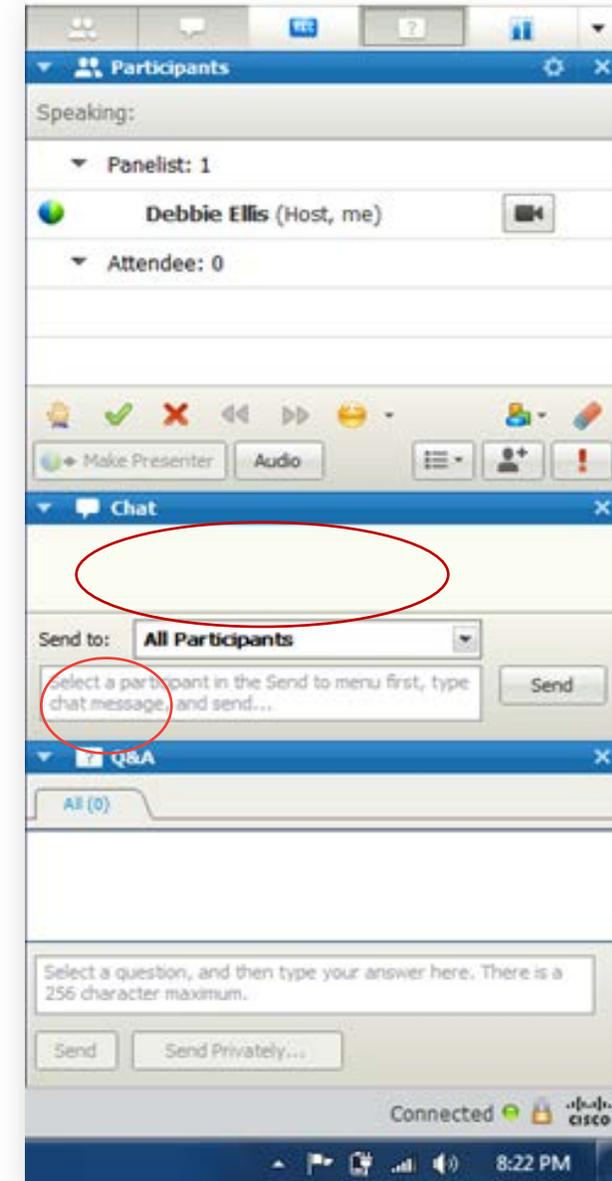
Volunteers In Service To America

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Tips for Participating

Webinars for Supervisors

- Phones are muted until Q&A at end
- Audio available through your computer
- To ask questions, use the Q&A panel
- To share comments and ideas, use chat
- Recording will be available afterwards on the VISTA Campus
- Closed Captions can be viewed in the Media Viewer panel



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Today's Team

Webinars for Supervisors



Jessica Burch

Corporation for
National and
Community Service



Elaine Williams

Counselor/Coach/Consultant

Session Goals

By the end of the webinar you will be able to:

- Utilize positive inquiry to identify each VISTA's unique needs, strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Identify symptoms/patterns that might signal a need for increased supervisory support.
- Recognize the steps needed to implement preventive and proactive responses to ensure support of the whole VISTA.
- Identify steps to be taken when supervisor support is not enough.

Question to Ponder

Chat :

Think back to your first professional job or when you made a big move in your life...

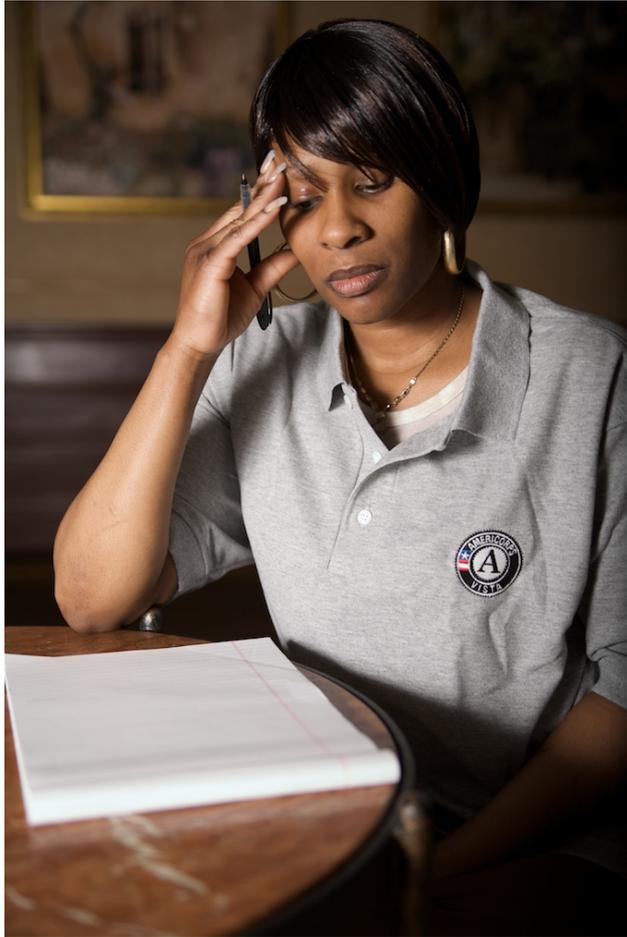
describe how you were feeling as you began your new transition.

Jenny... *writing to another VISTA*

“I remember the feelings of that first week---ones of excitement, anticipation, and underlying all that, an anxiety! Will I be able to perform at my job? Will I get along with all my co-workers? How will I afford coffee on this stipend?? How will I learn everything I need to know?”



Colleen...responding to Jenny



“My first week was very different from what you described, and this has shaped how I view my year of service overall. During the first week at my organization, I experienced the feelings that you mentioned--- excitement, anticipation and anxiety. For several of us, this experience is our first in the ‘working world.’ Everything is new and scary.”

What is Positive Inquiry?

- Addresses the person's strengths and positive potential
- Deliberately seeks to discover the VISTA's unique gifts, traits, and qualities.
- Focuses on empathy



Core Components of Positive Inquiry

A deep desire and ability to:

1. Listen, understand, exclude judgment or assumptions
2. Ask open-ended questions, dialogue, consistently clarify
3. Ensure confidentiality
4. Create a safe environment to support openness
5. Recognize and respect unique communication styles

Core Components of Positive Inquiry



Do I have all the information I need to consider and to meet this VISTA's unique needs to ensure their success?

What resources do I / will I need?

New Beginnings Create Discomfort

Typical Coping Symptoms and Patterns

- Anxiety and self-doubt
- Temporarily nervous about the unknown
- Relationship-building stressors
- Recognition of the need for good communication
- Temporarily feels losses, lonely, isolated

Prolonged Symptoms and Patterns

- Anxiety and doubt continues to grow ... obsessions /fear
- Edgy, irritable, distracted, confused, inability to focus, etc.
- Relationship barriers persist
- Conflict-prone, blaming/judging messages, anger, poor listening skills
- Pattern of feeling isolated and depressed easily triggered / continues

Languaging Positive Inquiry: Open Ended

- “Help me understand
- What natural strengths and talents are you bringing with you to your VISTA experience?
- Describe what strengths you have that will help you cope as with the unknown and unpredictable as you begin your VISTA year.

Languaging Positive Inquiry: Focusing on Strengths

- Have you had previous situations where you had to deal with a new beginning and the lack of predictability that comes with that? Tell me how you managed those situations? What especially worked for you?
- What could you use from your past coping strategies to help you adapt to your VISTA role and responsibilities?
- Describe what would help you feel confident as you begin your VISTA year.



Languaging Positive Inquiry: Connecting to IDP

- How have your strengths, talents helped you cope in the past with new beginnings, let's talk about what you need personally and professionally to succeed this year.
- At PSO, you worked on an IDP, Individual Development Plan. Let's look at it together and see how we can ensure you achieve your goals.
- As your supervisor, how can I support you in achieving your IDP goals?



Languaging Positive Inquiry: Knowing Communication Styles

- At PSO, you also talked about communication styles, let's share our styles with each other.



- Are they complementary or different?
- If different, what accommodation(s) do we need to make to ensure clear communication and consistent feedback with each other?

Languaging Positive Inquiry: Observe & Inquire



- Level of anxiety or nervousness
- Inquire and explore the 'specifics'
- Identify when there is a comfort with change
- Consonant behaviors

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The key ingredient for continuing success:

Build strong foundations between you and your VISTA using Positive Inquiry techniques

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Proactive Responses

For Managing Lingering Psycho-emotional
Challenges

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Stress Warning Signs and Symptoms

Cognitive Symptoms

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment
- Seeing only the negative
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Constant worrying

Emotional Symptoms

- Moodiness
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation, inability to relax
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Sense of loneliness and isolation
- Depression or general unhappiness

Physical Symptoms

- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea, dizziness
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat
- Loss of sex drive
- Frequent colds

Behavioral Symptoms

- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax
- Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)

Pro-Active Responses to Managing Lingering Psycho-emotional Challenges

1. Seek to understand
2. Offer non-judgmental feedback about what you are observing as soon as you detect a *pattern of struggle*.
3. Inquire if this is a new or old pattern of responding to stress?

New pattern, what do they believe might help them cope better with their stressors?

Old pattern, what have they done in the past that has helped them manage their stressors?

Pro-Active Responses to Managing Lingering Psycho-emotional Challenges : *Active Listening*

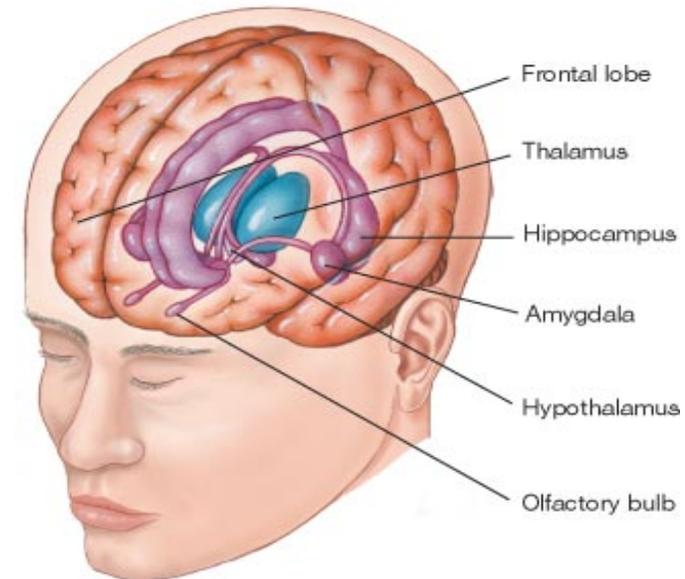
- Listen for what they self-identify as needing right now?
 - Listen for information about whether they have been or are in counseling.
- Employ active listening
 - Inquire what do they believe would help them manage their stress better right now?
 - Inquire if there is someone they know who they could talk to about their stress level?
 - If yes, support that.
 - If no, would they be willing to talk to someone?

A Case Example: Illustrating the Application of Pro-Active Responses During a Crisis Conversation

- Find a quiet, private space to calm agitated state
- Communicate a desire to understand
- Inquire about past coping strategies
- Offer options and include VISTA in the problem-solving
- If need arises to inquire about medications, do so only as related to current VISTA stressor(s)
- Obtain additional information from sponsor/state office as needed

Pro-Active Responses to Managing Psycho-emotional Challenges *continued*

- Do they have a history of Trauma or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)?
- Do they have a network of positive social support; or are they isolated and alone?
- If yes, are they being triggered somehow?
- If no, inquire if this is a new or recent pattern?



Supervisor Reflections and Self-Awareness



Supervisor: Reflection & Self-Awareness

1. Your comfort with stress
2. Your boundaries
3. Your communication style
4. Your feedback style, consistency, predictability and structure
5. Does your supervisory style support the VISTAs needs?

When Supervisor Support Is Not Enough

- Disclosure of suicidal thoughts, history of abuse, clinical depression, personality disorder, PTSD and associated stressors, likely indicates a need to make a referral.
 - Referring to a mental health professional
 - Utilizing community resources to access needed support

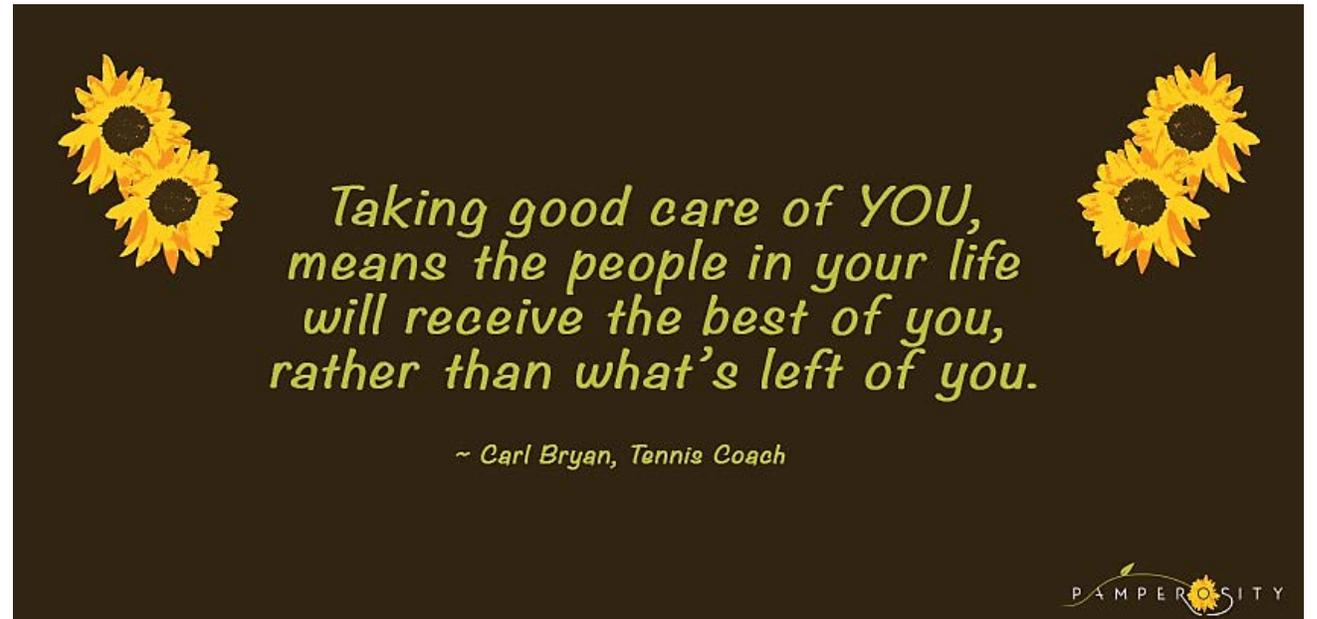
Referral Resources

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
1-800-273-TALK

<http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>
1-877-VET2VET

Role Model

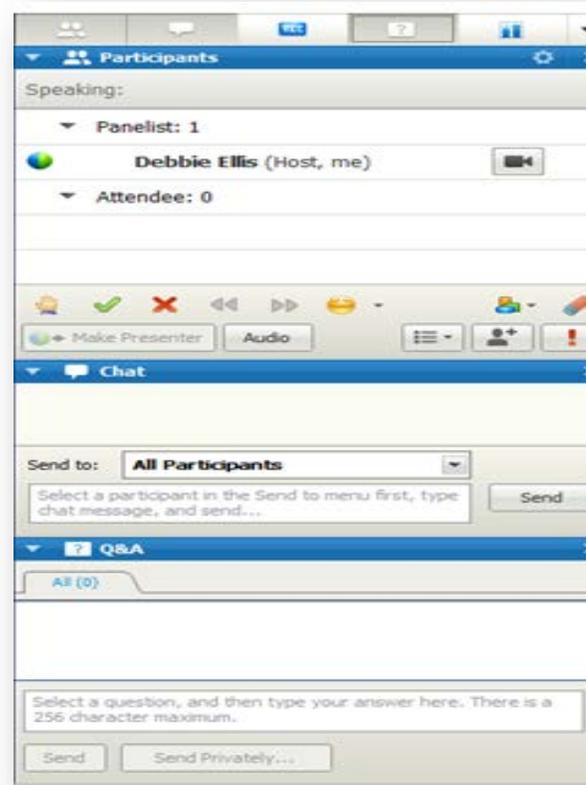
1. Healthy habits and self-care
2. Openness
3. Consistency in providing feedback
4. Positive Inquiry



How to Ask Questions

Webinars for Supervisors

- Ask questions by:
 - Pressing *1 on your touchtone phone
 - Posting in Q&A



Evaluation Poll:

Please take a few moments to share your feedback. How can we improve these sessions? What topics should we include in future webinars?

Thank you very much for your time and participation!

THANK YOU For Your Participation!

If you have further questions or for more information, contact us: VISTAwebinars@cns.gov

**Beyond VISTA: Project Sustainability
Approaches & Strategies**

April 21, 2015

2:00 - 3:00 pm ET