

When my parents aren't very motivated or tell me that everything is fine and they have nothing to talk about or what to work on, how can I conduct parent training?"

I once heard on a podcast that instead of calling it parent training-to rephrase it as parent coaching since it sounds like more of a positive collaborative approach.

This really resonated with me, and I have tried to tell my parents that I am also always learning and growing in my parenting skills. I clarify that it's actually an additional shoulder to lean on or discuss everyday issues in the home.

Pairing is essential for parent training, especially in the beginning. It's hard to have someone come to your house or to analyze your parenting skills, so parents may give you some push back. To let them know you're here to support them in a positive way, you should simply listen to them and make an effort to commend their child's actions or certain aspects of their parenting. Validating parents also helps cultivate a connection which is a process in itself.

You can also try to tell them in a gentle way that part of the aba

relationship is having weekly sessions with a parent. Offer to meet them on their terms and with their availability so it doesn't become stressful for them. Tell them it can be brief like 20 minutes or so, but it's best to keep it consistent weekly.

What if they don't have much to say?

If they don't have anything to share or want any guidance, share with them what you implemented during your weekly visit. I try to schedule my parent weekly sessions after my in-person supervision visits, so I can recap with them what I observed or did with their child that week. Once you share some of what your targets/goals are you can try ask them how can we generalize some of these skills at home? What would work for you to help carry these skills over? It can also be really helpful to talk about sibling dynamics since most families have difficulties in this area.

Another way to get parents to open up is to ask them what does their daily routine with their child look like? For example, who gets them dressed, what does the morning routine or after school look like...does their child comply or tantrum? What are some common challenges at bedtime or bath time? There are no homes that run on perfection; therefore, everyone experiences highs and lows every day.

If a Bcba feels stuck and still can't get the parents to open up about any issues and they really tried the above methods to get the parents to open up, you can try reading a book together during your parent training sessions, and then discuss it together on how to make it practical with their child.

****Be mindful if you take this approach to not get stuck on that book's method ONLY but make sure that you are also reading in other books or listening to podcasts, attending workshops where you can also incorporate those methods as well.**

At the end of your session try to give the parents a small recap of what was discussed and a small takeaway goal that they can implement over the course of the week. For example, if a parent is struggling with reinforcing negative behaviors you can try to get them to come up with a small tangible goal that they find realistic to implement.

"This week, I will provide non-contingent attention twice a day"

"Once a day, I will model taking a deep breathe when something frustrating happens"

This can be empowering for them and will more likely be implemented throughout the week.

REMEMBER THAT IT ALL COMES DOWN TO ASKING THE RIGHT KIND OF QUESTIONS THAT WILL FACILITATE A CONNECTION, AND WILL GET THE PARENT TO TRUST HOW ABA CAN TRULY HELP THEIR CHILD AT HOME
