>> Okay. Hello, everyone. So, thank you so much for joining today. This should be enjoyable. Get it? Ha ha, because that's the title. Okay. So I just wanted to take a moment, before we dive into the actual slides and the technical stuff, just to acknowledge where we are in the world, where a lot of of us as dispute resolvers and practitioners and mediators and trainers and coaches, et cetera. So a lot of us were fairly busy about 2 years ago. We had things scheduled, but we also had figured out what things we needed to put in place to kind of take care of ourselves, right? I needed to, I don't know, go and get my fancy coffee drink in the morning, and I needed to go for a run. Or, there was one client that I was working with once a week and it was always pretty emotionally draining, so I planned time to go on a walk or something after that. And we roughly got that stuff figured out. And then, of course, the pandemic, quarantine happened, and let's face it. That threw us all completely in a loop. And now we're in this funny place where we've been pretty isolated for the last year and a half, and we were just starting to figure out ... some of us were ... how to make things work. And now, suddenly, we're supposed to start adding all of these things back into our schedule again, but a lot of us haven't taken the time for us, you know? We've been adding all the stuff in, all the stuff that we need to add in, the meetings and the sports and the make sure that we have this meeting back to back with this meeting. But I feel like we haven't taken the time to add in the mental health stuff and the stuff that really makes us powerful as mediators and as practitioners. And I noticed this a few months ago when I had been trainings and I had meetings, and then I had mediations. And, at the end of the day, I was sitting around the dinner table with the kids, and they ... we go around, and they're telling all their stories about the day. And I was empty. I had absolutely nothing. And the next day I was working with some clients, and I was checking off all the boxes. We signed to the ground rules, and we came up with an agreement, and we signed the process. But, gosh, it was like ... there was just nothing left to me, and so that's when I started really focusing on this and realized that, well, gosh dang it, if I treat myself like a robot, then that's what clients are getting, you know?. They're getting a robot that hasn't had anything invested into them, that hasn't ... if I haven't valued my creativity and my instinctual and my soft skills and my qualitative skills ... if I haven't valued that and fed into that, then I lose it. So that's when I started really focusing on this. I was like, okay, if we're in this world where we're going to mediate online, right, we're going to be meeting with a lot of our clients online or some kind of a hybrid process. And about a year into the pandemic, 60 percent of mediators, and now it's up to 90 percent of mediators, say that they want to continue at least some part of their practice online. So this is where we are. So let's figure out how we can make it work, right? How can we make it work for us as well as for our clients? So that's what I want to talk about today. So hopefully that's why you're all here because that's the plan. That being said, obviously, I want to make this pretty conversational because, again, soft skills, I feel like we have to talk through them and really absorb them in order for them to drizzle down through the rest of our being, right? It's not just a fact. It needs to be more of a habit that you work on. So let's talk about these. If at any point you have a question, please put it in the chat, unmute yourself. That's okay. Raise your hand. Let's talk through these, and I want to leave some time at the end where we can all share tips that we've learned, what makes this work for us, okay? Sound good? All righty. So let's begin. Ta-da. "

How to enjoy mediating online." Okay. So a couple of weeks ago, it had just ... gosh, it had been one of those super long days, and we were all sitting around, and we turned on Free Guy. If you haven't seen it, you should watch it. I thought it was pretty funny. Obviously, this is not a real picture of us because my house does not look this clean ever. But let's pretend my house looks this clean, and it was one of those hallmark moments, right, where you feel like the credits are about to start rolling, where I could just feel myself completely go, "Okay. I am satisfied. I feel full. I had a very productive day, and all of my needs are being met." Right? If we look at the Maslow's triangle, I was sitting there right at the top. And so I paused and took some intentional stock at the moment and said, "Okay. What is really making this moment work?" And this is what I came up with, that I knew that I could pause. I knew that, at any point, if I was uncomfortable, that I could step away. I also knew what the purpose was, what the plan was. I felt like we had created a safe place. I was familiar. I had rapport with everybody around me, and I also knew what the exit was, right? If at any point it got to be too scary or it was a difficult conversation, that I knew how to take a break, that I knew where the exits were. And all of those things reinforced me being able to completely let down my guard and enjoy being in the moment. And so I thought about that and realized, okay, that's really what I want to create for myself, and that's the atmosphere that I want to create for my clients. So this is the goal, right, that moment where you can just feel safe, where you know what the plan is, and you can start to let down your guard. Okay? So here is the plan. I like acronyms, in case you can't tell. So the plan, the four steps that we're going to talk about today, the process, change the length when we're working with clients online, being a little bit more aware that they can be easily triggered and what we need to do to keep them engaged, and normalizing that this is a different world with different hiccups, and how can we bring in tech that's supportive to this new world instead of being restrictive. Okay? So the four things we're going to talk about: process, length, awareness, and the norms. And as the world is starting to open up again and a lot of us are starting to meet with clients face-to-face or somewhat face-to-face, I think it's a good time for us to just take stock of what we want our practice to look like and what we want to be as practitioners. And instead of just going back to what things look like a couple of years ago, you know what, this is kind of a good opportunity. So I'm going to ask you to be a little kumbaya-ish for the next 45 minutes, and just go with me on thinking about what's going to make you the best you, right? What's going to help you to bring your absolute best self to that conflict resolution table? Hopefully you're all willing to do that and you haven't signed off at this point. Okay. So online mediation, or facilitation, coaching, consulting, whatever words you use, definitely brings with it some new norms, lots of new challenges, but it also brings with it some new opportunities, right? And I think it's important to talk about all of those things, again, so we can normalize this for our clients so we can be realistic with them about, yeah, there's some challenges here, like only one of us can talk at a time, or the bandwidth might drop out. But let's also acknowledge what are some of the new opportunities. And the first new norm is how do we mediate differently online? How do we connect with people differently online? So when we were ... going to move my face out of the way there so you can actually see a list. That's what's important. There we are. Okay. So think about when we were face to face. What did we do to connect with a client? Well, we could have these long sessions where we had lots of time to really get to know them. I'm going to share my heart and my story, and I want to hear your heart. We would do lots of verbal validation, right? "Oh, Sandra, that's so interesting. Oh. Mm-hmm. Oh, thank you. Tell ... " Right? We would do lots of those jump-ins. Lots of multi-sensory communication, right? And we learned

how to incorporate all those different learning styles, right? We would get up. We would move around. We would draw on the whiteboard. We might bring little fidgets in. Things to help connect with people in lots of different areas. And the important thing is that we also gave ourselves time to refresh. Okay? So before we would move to another session, we would debrief. We would call a friend. We might just be getting in our car and driving somewhere, but we would give our brain a break from what it was focusing on. Okay? So these are all the things that we took for granted, right? Sitting in the car, listening to a song on the radio. I've been ... my daughter is in the process right now of applying for colleges, and so I've been talking with all of the different college counselors. And they said that what's really interesting is .... it's good for her because it's going to be a little bit easier for her to get in a college right now. But, on a bigger note, it's kind of sad that people just aren't applying for college. It's just that the application numbers have dropped drastically. So I've been talking with the college counselors about that. "Well, what do you think is going on?" And they said ... now, tell me what you think about this because, again, this is just based off of a few counselors so far and their observations. What they said was that pre-pandemic, it was hard to get kids' attention, right? It was hard to get them to sit and focus on things, but they still could, right? If you're sitting in a classroom for a while, that they could sit and focus and identify their interests and their goals. And then, you put kids at home for a year and a half. And you know what they have when they're at home? They have the constant feed, right? They have that constant dopamine or serotonin drip of whatever. Instagram, Snapchat, whatever it is. "Oh, let me refresh. Oh, let me post something else. Oh, let me ... Oh, look I got a new high score." Da-da-da-da-da. And so we put our kids in this place where every 5 seconds they're expecting another little hit, right? And we know that it becomes this huge addiction, right, that they become addicted to that dopamine, and I know I am exactly in that category as well where we forced our brains into this incredibly accelerated pace. And the main problem with that is then if you are constantly going boom, boom, boom from one thing to the next thing to the next thing, and you're not giving yourself time to refresh, you're not giving yourself time to reflect on what's important, then you can't set any long-term goals, right? If I'm thinking about 5 seconds from now what I'm going to post, I'm definitely not thinking about 5 years from now where I want to go to college. And I'm not thinking about 5 days from now how I want to resolve this conflict that I'm in the middle of. So I think, first off, let's model what we're talking about. So, first off, I really recommend finding some brain break for yourself, some moment of quiet , some source of inspiration, whatever that looks like. And this is where I'm asking for you to give me a little bit of leeway on being kumbaya-ish for a moment. So figure out what that looks like for you, and then let's talk about how to create that place for your clients, for your kiddos, for the people that you're working with, okay? And it could look like a lot of different things. This is going to be different for everyone. For me, on my Google calendar, what I've said is between every meeting, Google forces me to have a 10-minute break, okay? So instead of going 9 to 10 o'clock, it just goes 9 to 9:50. And then it forces me to take that 10-minute break. I'm like, "Oh, but I have so much to do." But then I always have to tell myself, "Nope. It's time to go outside." Go for a walk. Go for a run. Get a cup of tea. Do something where you're not in front of the screen because then I'm feeding into myself, right? Then I am valuing what is most valuable about me. I'm not a robot. I don't have to go from meeting to meeting to meeting. No. There's something very magical about mediators that can be truly present in the moment, and we can't do that if we're super rushed, right? We just can't do that if we're drained. So this is my one request of all of us just because your services are just so dang

valuable and so dang needed in the world right now. Schedule a couple of breaks for yourself throughout the day. Go for a walk. Do something that's allowing you time to reflect. Okay. So, next, let's talk about other ways that the pandemic has flipped the world on its head. It has asked us to be a little bit more flexible and be a little bit more creative about meeting with our clients, and creating that safe space, right? That unhurried space where they have some time to reflect. Okay? What this means is that we have to be flexible and meet with clients when they're ready to talk. All right? And so a lot of you know I work at mediate.com, right? So I help mediators to be successful in their practice. And what so many people are saying is that their clients are asking for them to meet Saturday morning when they don't have any meetings scheduled, or their clients are asking to meet Thursday night at 8 once the kids have gone to bed. Or, 45 minutes here, and then 45 minutes there because they're realizing that they just can't focus when they have all these other distractions going on, and that they can't focus for more than about 45 minutes online. And I think we can fight the tide and try to say, "No, no, no. We're going to go back to what we used to do, and we're going to do these 4-hour and 8-hour sessions." But, you know what? Why are we doing that? It's harder on our brains, and it's harder on our clients' brains. So I think instead, if we can, be a little bit more flexible, and have more individual sessions where we just try to really connect with clients, right, because that is a little bit harder to do through the screen. And if we can also schedule more frequent breaks, and if we can schedule shorter sessions, then, gosh dang it, they're just so much more effective. So I'm trying to not meet with a client for more than about 45 minutes. And if we have more things to talk about, great, but we've got to take that 15 minutes in between. Some moment where we get up and … and if we were in a face-to-face environment, this would be where I get up and go get a cup of tea or plug the meter or go to the bathroom or something, and give my brain a break to settle and find some new sources of inspiration. And so I think we need to schedule the same thing for ourselves when we're online, and also for our clients. So I say, every 45 minutes, I have a little timer that goes off on my watch. It's like, "Oh, it's time for a break. Let's take 15 minutes." Get up. Walk around. Maybe give them some homework, but I ask them to not look at the screen, and just move around for a little bit. And I also schedule a separate session that's just about signing the agreement or coming up with what does our plan look like going forward. Instead of trying to cram all of that together, I want to come back and do that another day with my clients when they're completely fresh . Obviously, what this means is that my calendar used to have these nice organized blocks in it like, " Oh, here's a 4-hour session, and here's an 8-hour session." And now it looks like, "Oh, blip blip blip blip blip blip blip." So it's definitely a little bit more polka dotted than it used to be, right, because I'm doing smaller sessions with clients throughout the day. But it's become such a much more effective process. And, again, I don't know if any of you are in private practice where you have to market yourselves, but just to be completely blunt, these are the mediators that are getting paid clients, the ones that are willing to say, "Okay. Let's do a 45-minute parenting plan renegotiation." Or, "Let's meet for an hour on this one specific topic." And, again, that's what people are looking for , right? So those are the ones that are getting hired. Okay. So I'm going to ask you to reflect for a moment. What is some area in your process that you think you could change? Maybe this is a scheduling change. Maybe you'd be willing to meet earlier in the mornings, but then give yourself some time to yourself in the afternoons. Another thing that clients are really looking for is something that's new, right, something that feels authentic and sincere. And so you setting up the boundaries and the process that work for you is actually what clients are looking for, right? That's

something that they respect, that feels authentic. So I think it's okay to say, "Nope. I need to take Fridays off. That's my mental health day, or that's my recharge day." Or, to say, "I prefer mediating outside. I have a lovely little garden area, and that means sometimes I might lose bandwidth for a couple minutes, and I'll turn my video off. But, that way, I can really focus on what my client is saying and be my best self." So I want you to just pause for a minute and think about what is an area in your practice that you do want to change, that will just help you to be the best that you can be. And I'm hoping you come up with some really good ideas here because this is what I want to take a couple minutes to discuss at the end, are some of the ideas that all of you come up with. Okay. Second step of the plan, the length. Keeping it short and sweet. So we've already talked about the importance of shortening those sessions, right? And one of the other things that I think we need to do is really focus on how we can best support our clients. If anybody in here is on the New York City listserv, there's been a lot of discussion lately about working with clients who are at different points on the spectrum with different accommodation requests, with different disabilities. And we've been discussing what the appropriate intake should be, right? Can you ask clients about their disabilities? When is it appropriate, and when is it not? And the main consensus has been that we should just ask our clients, "Hey. How can I support you? How can I be there for you?" And it might be something as simple as setting up closed captions on the screen. It might be turning off video. It might be that the client needs shorter sessions. It might be that it's too traumatic to be in a video with both people, and so we'll just set up separate breakout rooms. But the main thing that we want to ask our clients is, "How can I help this to be a supportive process?" Right? Recognizing that a lot of people right now are just under some pretty severe mental health stress, and the last thing that we want is for this mediation process to add to that stress, right? The second they connect with you, this should feel like a safe haven. So the very first thing I want to ask them is, "Hey. How can I help? How I can make this a supportive environment?" And I always let them know, "You can send me a direct message if at any point we need to take a break, or if we need to turn video off, or if we need to come up with a more flexible schedule." And I'm going to have lots and lots of check-ins with them. And I'll let them know ahead of time, "Hey. I'm going to be checking in with you, let's say every 20 minutes or so." It depends roughly on how long we're meeting. And I'm noticing that the transcript keeps saying "chickens" instead of "check-ins," like, "Hey. Cool. If that's your process, and you want to bring chickens to the process, go for it." But I like to have check-ins, and just see how they're doing, right, kind of take their temperature. And then also let them know where the exits are, right? Like I was saying in the beginning, when I was really able to relax and enjoy the movie, it was because I knew where the exits were. I didn't have to worry about it. Just like in mediation, I want to make sure that my clients know where the exits are, that at any point they can send me a direct message, that they can say, "Hey, I need 5 minutes" or "I need to have a private conversation in a breakout room." I let them know that ahead of time because I'm doing everything I can to decrease their anxiety and make this process more supportive for them. Okay. Oops. There we go. All right. So, supportive process, we want it to be a kissy process, right? keep it short and sweet. So, by keeping it short, we've talked about that. I want to have a very simple opening, right? They don't really need to hear me. They don't need my 20-minute fantastic opening statement. Maybe a 3- to 5-minute opening statement max. And then, oh, this is the hardest one for me: asking single questions. I'm so bad at this. This is my goal in life to be able to figure out how to have an organized enough mind that I can ask one single question and then shut up. The thing that I'm absolutely the worst at, which I

could get away with when we were face to face, I would ask something and then immediately contradict myself, like, "So, what do you think, Pashma? Do you want to continue in your special ed classroom? Does that sound good?" Or, "What do you think? Do you want to be moved back into the general population classroom where you're with the rest of the students?" And now, if Pashma says, "yes," well, dang it, I don't know which question she's answering. Plus, I just asked her a question, and then immediately I interrupted her because, as we know, Zoom only sends audio one way. So if she's trying to answer my first question, I'm in the middle of interrupting my own client, and that is not so good at establishing rapport. So this is the main thing that I'm working on in an online environment, is to organize my brain enough to figure out what my question is, ask that single question, and then shut the heck up, Clare. So, I'm getting there. We all have goals, right? Also, to have a faster turnaround of documents, when we were snail mailing things, then, of course, it was understandable. You had two weeks to turn stuff around. And now, if it's more than two days, people are definitely asking me, "Hey. Did you not get my e-mail? What's going on? How come I didn't get that document back?" Right? So things are just speeding up. There's a faster turnaround of documents, faster turnaround of sessions, et cetera. So we want to keep our sessions a little bit shorter, but we also want to keep them sweeter. And we'll talk about the psychology behind that in just a second, but mainly it's because it's easier for people to disengage, right? We have to make sure that they are staying engaged, that they are staying invested in our online process. Okay. So, before I move on, I'm going to ask you to take a minute and think about do you want to change the length of your sessions? Would that be a positive thing for you, or would it be a positive thing for your client? Maybe it means working longer days but then giving yourself a Friday off. Or, meeting with your clients on the weekends, and then you get afternoons off. So we don't have to keep doing what we've always been doing, right? I think it is okay to say, "All right. What's going to work the best for me, and what works the best for my clients?" And then we can make that change. Okay. This is why I have to go and get a yummy coffee. It's the only way that I can get myself to stop talking, is if I drink something for a minute. Okay. Let's move on. So, step three in the plan, changing what we're aware of, right? Just acknowledging that our clients can be very easily triggered in an online space, and we have to help to make sure that they're engaged. So let's go back to what it looked like when you're in a face-to-face environment, right, and you can start to tell that one of your clients is just getting really triggered, that they do not feel like they are in a safe place. So what were some of the cues that you would pick up on? You can shout them out, or just throw them into the chat. Or, I'll just keep talking. So some of the cues that I would pick up on, I would see that their toes were tapping, knees were shaking. Maybe they're tapping a pencil against the table. I can kind of tell their stomach is tightening. Their shoulders are drawing in. And I'm doing every one of those things right now, and I'm guessing you can't see it, right? So that's just a simple fact of the matter, is that when we're online, we are missing some of the cues that we used to pick up on to figure out where our clients were, okay? I want to go here. So what that means is that, often, by the time I realize my clients are escalated online, they're more escalated than I would have let them get if we were face to face. Okay? By the time it gets to the point where it's manifesting online, they're typically more escalated. Okay? So by the time it gets to the point where their eyebrows are furrowed, or their face is flushed, or I can start to hear that tightness in the voice, then, you know what, gosh dang it, I ... Normally, I would stop this, and we'd move to a breakout room, or I'd check in or I'd validate when we're at about a five . But now, I might not be seeing the clues until we're about a seven. And the first couple online

mediations I did, they would say, "Oh, I just can't handle this!" And they'd want to storm off, or they'd say, "Oh, I'm just going to shut down the laptop." And I was thinking, "Well, gosh. Have I become a horrible mediator? What's happened?" And then I realized, "Oh, no, no. They're much more escalated than I realized." So I've just had to change my process, and now, the second I realize they're escalated, that's when I take a break, okay? That's when I say something like, "Let's take five . Let's move to a breakout room." Or, "Gosh, my coffee is empty. I'm going to take five and go grab some tea. I recommend you do the same, and then let's come back." Or, "It seems like we're just about out of time. How about we revisit this again tomorrow?" But I do something so that we can take a break, okay? So what's happening in our clients' brains is that when we're online, they just don't feel like there are as many exits, right? We kind of start to get this tunnel vision, right, where, whoo, we're just focused on the screen, and your eyes aren't flicking around as much as they would if you were in a face-to-face environment, right? You're not getting that constant visual reinforcement of, okay, the door is there. The window is there. There's a safe place outside. I know how to get out, and so I feel like I can calm myself down and take a breath. When we're in an online environment and all that you're focused on is that screen, you're just continually reinforcing your subconscious that, "Nope, this is it. This is all I'm seeing. I'm starting to tunnel vision, and I can feel my anxiety raising." And when that anxiety raises, then, for some of us, that becomes a fight response, right, where we become very triggered. Or, if we have that flight response, we just become disengaged, almost as if you're just watching TV, like, "Oh, I don't care anymore. I'm not invested enough in this process to actually try to make some headway." Okay? So when that anxiety goes up in our clients, when they become very escalated, then they usually respond one or these two ways on the pendulum, okay, where they become very triggered or they become very disengaged. And I just wanted to acknowledge that because this wasn't something that I was dealing with that often when I was mediating with clients face to face. But, as I've moved online, I am definitely seeing this happen more, that clients are shifting into that fight-or-flight mode a little bit faster. And, again, I think it's because by the time I pick up on it, they're already more escalated that I'm realizing, okay? So a lot of you know I get really nerdy on this stuff. I think it's so cool, just figuring out what happens to our brain when we're in conflict. And I've mentioned to some of you before, if you want to dig deeper into the stuff, I 110 percent recommend this woman named Sarah Peyton. Not Sarah Palin. That is a very different person. Sarah Peyton. She's a neurobiologist from UCLA that became a mediator. And so she applies all of that cool neurobiology stuff to what's happening during the conflict resolution process. And she's just fantastic. She's an amazing trainer. She has a monthly webinar. If you're interesting, I'd absolutely check her out or start to follow her blog. If anybody is interested, my e-mail is right there by my name. I would be happy to just send you a link to her. I'm a huge fan obviously. Anyway, so what she talks about is that what happens when our clients become really engaged is that prefrontal cortex, right, the higher cortex becomes completely disabled. In other words, the thinking part of your brain just flips offline, and instead, our amygdala takes over, okay? A lot of this we know, but let's think about how that applies to the mediation process. When our prefrontal cortex is engaged, then we can calm ourselves down enough to stay engaged in the process. Even if it's uncomfortable, you can override that feeling of discomfort and think about the goal and remember okay, this is going to be worth it. Even though I am uncomfortable in this moment, the process is worth it because we will get through this conflict. If instead you're not thinking long-term, right, so your prefrontal cortex flips offline, and you're just focused on your

amygdala, or you're just focused on okay, every 5 seconds, what does this feel like? And you're just living more in the moment instead of being connected to the past or the future, which is what your cortex does. Instead, the amygdala is just thinking about, how can I become comfortable in the moment? Then you completely give into that emotion of the moment, okay? So you completely give into that anger, the fear or the disgust or the frustration or whatever it is and do whatever it takes to make yourself feel better in the moment, which typically feels like slamming the computer, right, just turning the computer off or saying something really nasty that you know is just going to completely end the mediation. So we want to help our clients to not get there, right? And we want to make sure that we don't get there, that we as conflict resolution practitioners can keep ourself completely engaged, that we can continue to operate from the higher prefrontal cortex that allows ourselves to be in the moment, that allows us to have a wealth of help for our clients. Instead of treating ourselves like a robot, we need to make sure that we always know okay, I feel full. I feel safe. I know how to take a pause if I need to. So we're modeling that behavior. And then we're helping our clients know, here's where the exits are. You can send me a direct message whenever you need to. You can turn off your video. We can move to a phone call, or we can reschedule this tomorrow. Here are the exits. Let's lower that anxiety, and we just continue to name those emotions, right? They say that some of the best way to help your prefrontal cortex to come back online is to just name what's happening. So I move to separate breakout room and say something like ... Sandra, I'm going to keep picking on you because your name is right in front of me. I would say something like, "Okay, Sandra , I'm just going to acknowledge what I'm seeing here. Your voice raised. I see your eyebrows coming together. I'm sensing that this has become a pretty difficult conversation. Can you walk me through what's happening?" And just naming it so that then they can talk through it, helps the prefrontal cortex to reengage, and then they can start to reengage in that difficult conversation. So what does this look like when we're online? Well, we become triggered when things feel unfair, right, when we feel like we don't have an outlet, or we don't have any way to get what we really need. So when we're online, unfairness often looks like there might be a power imbalance from bandwidth. Or maybe one person is more comfortable with technology, or there are background sounds. Or one person is taking more time than the other, or one person has more concerns than the other. If any of these feel uneven, then our clients are probably going to check out, right? They're going to feel very disengaged or very triggered, and we want to avoid those things. So how do we do that? Well, I think the first thing we need to do is set up some kind of a session with our clients in the beginning. I love the idea. I had one with a client just this morning where we have a 5-minute AV session. And the whole purpose of it, I say, is to make sure that they're comfortable with the technology, that their video is coming across, that I can hear them, and so I try to address those AV concerns. But what I'm really doing ... This is my sneaky thing that the clients don't know. What I'm really trying to do is establish rapport, okay, because again, it's a little bit harder to establish some of that rapport when we're online. And so the way that I can do that is just to have a 5-minute conversation with them ahead of time. I don't want to know any of the details right now. That's not the purpose of it. The main purpose is just let's establish that connection so then they can tell me their concerns and watch me as I take those concerns seriously and I do something about them. For instance, if they say, "I'm worried about my bandwidth. My Internet cuts in and out sometimes." And then I model taking care of those interests. So I model saying, "Oh, thank you so much for letting me know. That must be really frustrating. What I would recommend we do if that happens is, let's all just turn our video off.

Does that sound good?" So now I'm establishing rapport right from the very beginning, okay? And that helps to establish feelings of fairness. Other things that I do to make sure we have an equal number of concerns and an equal number of times, take advantage of technology. When I'm working with clients, I will have a Word document up so they can see me taking notes. And just I have a little table set up where I have room for five issues for both people. And so I make sure that I'm jotting down an equal number of concerns for both people, or I'll have a little stopwatch in the corner of my screen, and I'll start it when one person talks, and let's say I'm going to give you 5 minutes. I'll hit start. At 5 minutes, I'll try to wrap things up, and then I make sure to give the other person 5 minutes, right? We're sitting at these computers. Why not take advantage of some of the technology that's there? So I don't know, I really recommend trying to find some app or bit of technology that makes your life easier. I'm sure a lot of you know Donna Silverberg, right? She's incredible, DS Consulting up in Portland. She was just telling me about Jamboards, Google Jamboards. If you haven't tried these, oh, they're so much fun, and it's just a shared document where we can all start to post issues and concerns and ideas in that same space. And they're cute little Post-it notes, and you can add pictures so it's a very fun, creative process, another great way to get your prefrontal cortex reengaged. And it decreases anxiety because again, now your clients feel like they have some control over the process, right? You're giving them that sense of comfort back. As soon as we're done with this presentation, if anybody hasn't used Jamboards yet, let me go ... I'll show you what they look like because I just love them. They've been really effective, I think, at getting clients reengaged. Okay, so a quick summary here. When our brains are online ... Let me move my face out of the way again. There we go. When our brains are online, they might flight, which is that experience of feeling disengaged, and they would rather just tune out as if they're watching TV, okay? They're not feeling very invested in this moment. There we go. All right. Or they might go the other direction which would be a feeling of fight, right? They are feeling panic, closed in, and they're ready to fight their way out of that room. And the goal is to keep them centered, right? We want to keep them engaged and keep them comfortable enough where they can have the conversation. Obviously it's going to be a difficult conversation, but we need to monitor that level of difficulty a little bit more when we're online, okay? We need to monitor how much it's escalating just to keep them engaged in the process. Okay, so some of the ways that we can do this are to engage with them more often. What I'm trying to do here is to keep them in that creative part of their brain and also to help them feel like they have a sense of control. Side note, so a lot of you know that I did my dissertation on workplace conflict, right? So I looked at 4,000-some conflicts around the country and broke them down into what made them a positive experience or a negative experience, right? It's not like conflict is ever really that fun, but at the end of the day, what made clients say, "Okay, I'm glad we went through that, and I'm glad we talked about it," versus, "I hate that. I'm never going to mediate again in my life." So I looked at what made it positive, and one of the main things was if clients felt like they had some sense of control, if they could design the process a little bit, or they had a little bit of power over maybe choosing the mediator or choosing the process or choosing what was going to be on the agenda. Something like that, right, decreases anxiety, gives them investment, gives them ownership. You all know this stuff. So the way that we can mimic that in an online environment is by using some of these tools. And I, to be totally honest, I probably use every one of these within one mediation session because I'm trying to mix it up. I'm trying to understand that my clients are expecting to have something new pretty frequently. And what's going on here ... Where's my chat at?

I'll just tell you. So what's going on here is the primacy-recency effect. I had no clue what that was. I just knew that when I was in college, I could remember the first sentence of a paragraph and the last sentence of a paragraph that I studied. But I kind of spaced out everything in the middle, right? And because our brains pay attention to the changes, they reengage when it's something new, and it's interesting. So the way that we can really connect with our clients here is by changing how we're working with them. Like I said, these Google Jamboards are great, or move them into a breakout room. Or while I'm doing a breakout room with this person, I'll ask the other client to do some research, or I'll pull up a calculator, and we'll just go through some numbers together. I'll do an online poll. Zoom has great polls that we can set up on the spot. EV Polls is another one of my favorites because then they can just answer it via text. The whiteboard on Zoom, I think, works really well. What I love about using the whiteboard ... Let me just ... I'm going to move these transcriptions for just a second. Let's go ahead and look at a whiteboard. Where did it go? Hello? Okay, 1 second. I lost my whiteboard. Okay, well, anyway ...

>> Claire, it just looks like you're not sharing at this point. We can just see, and we can't see your PowerPoint.

>> Yeah, I lost my share button. It's ...

>> Do you have two screens? Can you check on another screen?

>> Un-uh.

>> Shane, is there anything that you can help with here, where the share screen button might have gone?

>> Yeah, I think it froze. Give me 1 second. Let's take a moment and reflect while I fix this. I'm just going to get back to ...

>> Claire, do you want us to share the PowerPoint from [Indistinct] ...

>> Yeah, would you? Thanks.

>> You need to become a co-host because we haven't been seeing any of your slides.

>> Claire is now a co-host.

>> [Indistinct]

>> Claire, we don't ... We see your video, and your audio is fine.

>> Okay.

>> But you should also have a share button at the bottom [Indistinct] ...

>> I know I should. I think my screen just started to freeze, I think is what happened. I'm going to ... You're going to travel with me for just a second while I finish this up. Okay, so if you are able to share my screen because my screen froze here.

>> I'm going to bring up your PowerPoint.

>> Thank you so much.

>> Yeah, I got it.

>> So this takes us perfectly into the fourth step, which is normalize that stuff happens, right? Normalize that tech is just going to be frustrating. If you wouldn't mind, could you share screen ...

>> I'm just going to get back to that slide.

>> Awesome, thank you.

>> Yeah.

>> I would ...

>> [Indistinct] let me know where ... Close your eyes everybody. Back?

>> I'm starting to get things back on my screen. So I'm not ... Who knows what happened?

>> Do you know what you're on, Claire?

>> I was on ... Let's go to slide 31, if you don't mind.

>> There, we have arrived. Normalize it.

>> Thank you.

>> Yeah.

>> In just a moment, I can tell that I'm going to get everything back on my screen, but let's not bother waiting for that. Thank you so much for sharing for me. Okay, so 31, this is the listen screen, the listen slide, is that correct?

>> It's the one that has normalize, normalize venting and frustration. Approach it calmly.

>> Okay, okay, thank you.

>> You're welcome. Let me know when you want to advance, and I'll ...

>> You're awesome. Thanks so much. Okay. So yes. The main thing that we want to do with our clients is normalizing for them that stuff happens, just like this. I don't know if my computer overheated or what. But it's going to happen. And the more we can tell our clients that ahead of time, the more we remove that as one of the things that they need to be anxious about, right? So the more we can tell them, okay, chances are at some point, going to lose Internet, or Zoom is going to clunk out on us. So what we're going to do in that situation is, and then give them a plan. I will send you an e-mail with a new Zoom link. Or if you're comfortable sharing your cell phone number and getting theirs, maybe we'll text you, and we'll come up with another plan. And letting them know that it's not anything to be embarrassed about. It's not a power imbalance. It's not that they've done anything wrong. It's just part of the new world that we're living in, okay? So normalizing that things are going to happen with technology and then also normalizing that there are lots of paths. What I mean by that is they ... A typical Zoom video conference might not be the best path for them, right, the same way a typical mediation session with both people gathered around the table, that might not be the best for them either. It might make sense instead to have an audio-only conversation or an asynchronous chat conversation where they post ideas into a chat room, and then you come in and post your own idea. Or maybe we just do a phone call, or maybe it's completely a shuttle mediation where I have one client in a breakout room, and then I meet with the other client in a breakout room. So if we normalize this ahead of time, we all know this, then in the moment, if I do have to switch formats, then they don't feel like they've done anything wrong, right? I'm trying to make it very clear to them that at some point, we're probably going to switch and try a different path, and that's okay. That's just going to be the most effective for us in that moment. All right? So I'm going on now to what tech do we incorporate. And can you guys see that one? Okay, so what tech do we incorporate? And the answer to that is we want to incorporate lots and lots of different technology. Because like I said, we want to be switching pretty frequently. So breakout rooms, that allows me to check in with clients at multiple times. I want to share my screen, and this helps to validate their fears, validate any concerns that they have. I typically take notes when I'm sharing my screen, which typically works. Just right now for some reason I can't share my screen, which is weird. But I take notes in a way where they can see it so then they can see me validating this person's concerns and this concerns. Whenever I'm working with a large group or I want instant feedback, I will take a poll. I live in Oregon. We have a lot of lumberjacks that live here. And just to be completely honest, polls seem to work really well when I'm trying to grab emotions from my lumberjack crowd. It's much more comfortable for them to go through a poll and check different buttons as opposed to sitting in a large Zoom room talking about their feelings, okay? Calculator and calendaring tools are great, SimplyBook.me, MyFamilyWizard, et cetera. This is where if you have some suggestions for a calendaring tool or other apps that you really like, please put them in the chat, right? This should be a great time to be sharing resources. And one of the other bits of tech that I love, it's called the Empathy app. In case you haven't heard of this, it's just fantastic. And it's essentially you get to play poker with your clients, and every one of your poker cards has a different feeling on it, and there are some negative feelings and some positive feelings. So you can do things like right now, I have abandonment, and I want to be able to trade that for feeling included. It's just a cool app. I just love it. And the mediator gets to see what all the different clients have chosen, super fun. Another bit of tech that I often incorporate is I have them annotate. In other words, that means they get to doodle on the screen. This is great if I want them to look at an agreement, and we take notes on it together,

or we highlight and circle certain things, another great way to have them feeling engaged and in control and taking ownership. Or I will even give them remote control via Zoom, and this is a way where they can sign a document, okay? So typically I wouldn't record, but I'll often record this one piece of it where they're actually signing the document. Again, if you have other suggestions for technology, I would love to hear them. Yeah, so let's also remember that the Zoom setup is two-part. So sorry, another slide, if you don't mind. So you have already gone through the Zoom setup process, right? You have made lots of really good choices about protecting your clients' confidentiality, sending a Zoom invitation that establishes rapport, trying out different platforms, and you have come to a specific choice, right? You have gone through that process, so you feel like it's safe. Your clients didn't go through that process with you, so I think it's important to explain some of those choices, and it can be in an FAQ on your website, or it could be in that 5-minute test session. But I think it's important to explain to your clients why you're doing specific things online, like I am using Zoom because of this, or I am using MS Teams because we can send out lots of different assignments and reminders. Or I'm going to be using this calendaring tool because it will, I don't know, because it's the best at protecting your information, something like that. So we're trying to be very transparent with our clients from the beginning. And then model back to them that you still want to hear what their interests are, something like I'm going to be using Zoom because of XYZ, because I think it's important that we can see and hear each other. But I want to hear from you what's important. What is it that will really support you during this process, okay? So now, I'm going to ask you to reflect again and just think about in your own practice, how can you normalize online mediation? How can you take the fear out of it for yourself or for your clients? What are some of the areas that you're concerned about or any tech that you're concerned about, and how can you normalize that experience for them? Okay, so I'm just going to ask you take a minute and reflect through that here. That was the next slide, by the way, in case I forgot to tell you. All right. So last slide, so again, this was the plan for when we're online, changing the process, the length, what we're aware of and what we're normalizing. And what we're trying to do there is make it a more effective process for ourselves as well as for our clients, right, so that we don't completely deplete ourselves but that we can keep ourselves engaged and our cup full so that we actually have something to give to our clients. And then the goal is then when we're meeting with our clients to be able to make sure that they feel safe as well, to make sure that they feel like they are fully engaged and enjoying the process. Okay, so that was the main stuff that I wanted to share. And now, I want to check in with you. What are ... Yeah, my screen is totally frozen. If you are able to stop my sharing or just get me back full screen so that I can see everybody, that would be great. I don't know what options you have right now. Yay, thanks.

>> Okay.

>> [Indistinct]. My ... I don't know why my computer is ... It's just being bad today. That's what's happening.

>> So, Claire, just wanted to let everybody know that we have about another 4 minutes here, and then we'll be done. So if you have questions or comments, perfect time now. And Amber has posted the survey, which is really ultimately very helpful for all of us. It's in the chat box.

>> Yay, thank you. So I'd love to open it up for questions. Please just unmute yourself, and let's talk about, what are some of the different techniques that you have found that's really working for you? I mentioned in the beginning, I would like to hear if you have any suggestions for changing your process, anything that's worked for you in terms of scheduling changes or the amount of time you're spending with clients. Any thoughts on this piece? All right. And of course my Zoom is being funky, so if you're raising your hand, I apologize, I just can't see it. So if you could ...

>> No hands raised yet.

>> Okay, great. So next, if you wouldn't mind, just put some ideas in the chat about, again, about different bits of technology that you've seen. What are some apps that you have found that are really making this a more successful process for you? I mentioned the Empathy app, Calendly, so just having a link where my clients can contact me, that's really helping. Again, I like having a little stopwatch up on the screen. I get really caught up in people's stories and in the emotion of the moment. And so it's helpful for me to have that stopwatch so that I don't have to be aware of time. I can just let the stopwatch keep track of time, and then I can just fully focus on being present with them in the moment. I think that's helpful. And polls, I've mentioned EV Poll. I really like that one and the Zoom polls. Any others that you all have found that you really like? Again, you can just jot them in the chat, or you can unmute yourself. I'd love to hear what your thoughts are. I'm giving you a moment here. Okay, and then finally, the purpose of this talk was about how to make mediation more enjoyable, right, how to make sure that we are enjoying this entire process, so how can you do that for yourself? And this is one last time I'm going to ask you to be a little kumbaya-ish, is the only word that I can think of. And I want you to just put a note for yourself or put a note in the chat. What's a change that you're going to make to make sure that you're not treating yourself like a robot but that you are valuing the EQ, the qualitative skills that make mediation so magical? And it might be that you're scheduling 10 minutes in between meetings where you give yourself a break from the screen or a day off, or you get up and get a cup of tea. But what's an investment that you are going to make into yourself so that you're not drained at the end of the day? So I'm going to ask you to take a moment and write that down and then obviously jump in if you have any more questions. That was the main stuff I wanted to share with you today.

>> It looks like we have one comment from Christina in the chat box, sounds like recommitting to taking breaks, and she said, "Skipping lunch has been a common thing lately, and that needs to stop." So thanks, Christina.

>> Yeah, thank you, Christina.

>> Somebody also mentioned shortening meetings and enforcing better boundaries so that breaks and reflection time can happen.

>> Yeah, yeah, it's so important. It's so important. We don't realize how important it is until again, we're completely drained at the end of the day, and you've got nothing left. So thank you, all. All right. This was fun. This was exciting. And thank you so much for all of the tech help, Audrey, and thank you, everyone, for listening. So I hope you can now take a breath and go reflect and enjoy the rest of your day.

>> Great. Thank you. And thank you for all of the positive comments in the chat box. A lot of really great, good kudos to you, Claire.

>> Thanks. Thanks, everyone.

>> Okay, bye-bye.

>> It was good to see you. Bye.