Alexis Kirk ([00:00](#)):

I'm wondering, you know, it, it's one thing to talk about unearthing these issues of powers and stepping outside of our, our current roles and taking off whatever hats we may have been wearing for decades from our position. It's one thing to kind of talk about that, but I'm sure it's another thing to practice it, and I'm sure that it sometimes caused some friction and really, you know, had you guys having to lean into that go slow to go fast to really appropriately manage some of that friction that may have been coming up. Can you talk a little bit more about your experience there?

Mark Lapiz ([00:38](#)):

Sure. You know, it's kind of when you look at how I describe practice models in terms of the different layers of how a system interacts with each other as well as with their children and families for a desired outcome. You know, I think it's, you know, underlying that all is requiring us as individuals to make changes. One of several wonderful things I learned from our community partners that has always stuck with me was this idea that a community partner once said, Systems are comprised of individuals and if individuals don't want to change, the systems won't change either. And so there was was one of those aha moments where we as leaders however you define it, have to look at our own personal behavior to figure out our behaviors, perpetuating that of which we're, what we're trying to eliminate, and really trying to figure out what are those behaviors that we're exhibiting that are an alignment with the power dynamic and what do we need to change.

Mark Lapiz ([01:45](#)):

So those were a lot of the things that bubbled up for myself and the folks around me that were in charge or responsible for implementation around this kind of self reflective piece around change. But then how did that come about? When, when we interacted with our staff, because there were moments where even those staff really bought into the practice model everything about it, they themselves still had hadn't come to, and I don't know if they ever will, but were still on a, on a different part of the journey where it hadn't kind of landed onto where my own privilege and power also intersects with the way I think about the people I interact with. And so there were, there were moments where, you know, I would have to meet with staff who would complain about how our community partners behaved in meetings, how they themselves.

Mark Lapiz ([02:46](#)):

And there were these opportunities of listening to them and then also pointing out how do we, where do we leave space for people to come to their own conclusion that they may have made a mistake or they have made a misstep are where do we ourselves as part of the system get to decide a person misbehave based on the fact that we didn't like their reaction? Or is it truly something that was inappropriate? So, you know, these were from the macro to the micro, to the internal, to the external things that myself and the implementation team members and even our community partners and the, the champions behind the, our practice model really started truly trying to understand. And so I think this, this practice model and implementation science and co-creation, you know, I really can honestly say that is a very transformational approach to a system because it doesn't just transform the system itself. It transforms the individuals within the system again to make that change.

Alexis Kirk ([04:00](#)):

And it sounds like, you know, although it is very transformative and clearly had a broad impact on not just the single project of putting together your practice model, but just how your whole agency operates

in general and your philosophies, it sounds like even though it was super transformative, it wasn't a process that was easy for you guys, that there were, were lots of struggles along the way.

Mark Lapiz ():

Yeah, absolutely. I think with these struggles and with these courageous conversations, if I were to really look at what could get you through all that is fundamentally comes down to relationships and building those relationships and taking the time. I think we look at our experience with this implementation science and co-creation and kind of put academic terms, these theoretical frameworks to them. But I think one of the things that we really understood through this project around working with diverse communities was understanding that communities themselves have answers to these questions based on the fact of how they behave, that we have totally disregarded for in these larger systems, communities that we worked with are all based on relationships. They are very self-reliant and very open with each other about when they have problems and struggles and find ways to make that happen. And I think that was always kind of part of this, this kind of focus on co-creation was let's look to them to guide us through this process.