

Episode 53: Conversation with an SLP Graduate Professor on Improving the Classroom-to-Clinic Connection with Problem-Based Learning Approach (SLP Spotlight)

Meet Louise Keegan, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology at Moravian College who was instrumental in developing the Master of Science program at the Pennsylvania-based institution. Louise walks us through the problem-based learning structure her graduate program embraces, how her background led her to that approach, and what advice she'd give to students seeking out an accredited Master's program.

Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Can you tell us why you became a speech-language pathologist and why you chose to go the Ph.D. route?
2. You recently founded your own Master's program at Moravian College. Tell us about what makes your program so special.
3. Your program embraces problem-based learning and includes a lot of group work. Can you give us an example of a group problem?
4. What are some words of wisdom you have for students who are going to be starting a graduate program?
5. You mentioned highlighting more mundane skills on your path to becoming an SLP. Can you give some examples of that?
6. What words of advice do you have for the student who needs to reach out to a professor for whatever reason?
7. When you have students who are getting ready to graduate, and they're getting ready to leave your program and launch their own careers, what words of advice do you have for them?

Quote of the Conversation

"Do the best you can because if you're graduating from an accredited program, you've got the tools you need. It's just a case of learning how to listen to others and apply them in the best possible way."

-Louise Keegan, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS

Louise Keegan, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS

Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology and Founding Program Director at Moravian College



Louise Keegan, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS, is an Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology and the Founding Program Director of the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology at Moravian College. Her primary research examines assessment and treatment of social and cognitive communication disorders after traumatic brain injury. In addition to clinical research, she also conducts

research in the scholarship of teaching and learning specifically as related to the areas of experiential learning and problem-based learning. Louise has numerous peer-reviewed publications, has received funding from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and has presented her work at many national and international conferences. In her free time Louise likes to play the flute, travel, and spend time outdoors with her family.

Keep the Conversation Going

Louise Keegan, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS

Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology
and Founding Program Director at Moravian College

keeganl@moravian.edu

Sanders, E., Culshaw, M. & Keegan, L.C. (2021). The Flipped Classroom Model: Empowering Future Clinicians. In J.C. Friberg, C.F. Visconti & S.M. Ginsberg (Eds.) Case Studies in Evidence Based Education: A Resource for Teaching in Clinical Professions. Slack Inc.

Meulenbroek, P. & Keegan, L.C. (2020). The life participation approach and social reintegration after traumatic brain injury. In A.L. Holland & R.J. Elman (Eds). Neurogenic Communication Disorders and the Life Participation Approach: The Social Imperative in Supporting Individuals and Families (pp. 181-207). Plural Publishing.

Keegan, L.C. & Togher, L (2018). An innovative clinical training model for students, using the context of a cognitive communication skills group. Perspectives of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Special Interest Groups, 3 (SIG 2), 21-30. doi:10.1044/persp3.SIG2.21

Keegan, L.C., Losardo, A. & McCullough, K. (2017). Problem based learning and civic engagement in undergraduate education. Communication Disorders Quarterly, 39, 1, 312-319. doi: 10.1177/1525740116685184

Aphasia Access Podcast Interview Episode #59 - LPA for Traumatic Brain Injury: INSIGHT's from brain injury groups and collaborative learning contexts: In Conversation with Louise Keegan. Aphasia Access. Available at aphasiaaccess.org/podcasts

To the speech path student, one of the biggest pieces of advice I could ever tell you as a student is to advocate for yourself and to work hard. Don't be afraid to ask and question your professors in a way that is respectful. Asking questions is how you can learn and grow.

Thank you for listening to *The Missing Link for SLPs* podcast! **If you enjoyed the show, I'd love you to subscribe, rate it and leave a short review.** Also, please share an episode with a friend. Together we can raise awareness and help more SLPs find and connect those missing links to help them feel confident in their patient care every step of the way.

Follow me on [Instagram](#), join the Fresh SLP community on [Facebook](#) or learn more at FreshSLP.com. Let's make those connections. You got this!

*Do you have a question you'd like answered on the show?
Interested in sharing your experience as an SLP with our audience?
Send a message to Mattie@FreshSLP.com!*

Not a substitute for a formal SLP education or medical advice for patients/caregivers

Mattie Murrey

I'm so excited about our guest today. I just finished a listening tour of The Missing Link for Fresh SLP's membership site, and that is where I invited some people to come be guests of the membership site and give me some feedback on what they liked and what they didn't like. And I found that the students who came and said, "Oh gosh, I'd love to do this," are the students that were just so top notch and looking to just be the best SLPs they could be. And one of the students came from a college that was so impressive. And I said, "Oh, what's your college?" And she told me, and I happened to have some connections, and so I reached out to one of the professors. So, we have Louise Keegan on today from Moravian University, and I'm excited to have this conversation with her.

Mattie Murrey

Hello, and welcome to The Missing Link for SLPs podcast. I'm glad you're here. Today's episode is part of the SLP Spotlight Series, where I talk with SLPs in a variety of SLP positions and settings, doing things that we knew SLPs did, but also working in areas that we've never thought or heard of SLPs working in. It is amazing the opportunities these SLPs have taken and where their careers have gone. This is storytelling time.

Mattie Murrey

Welcome to this episode of The Missing Link for SLPs podcast. I have Louise Keegan with us. She is an associate professor at Moravian University. And I'm excited to have you here, Louise.

Louise Keegan

I'm so excited to be here. So, thank you for inviting me.

Mattie Murrey

I should call you Dr. Keegan because you are a PhD faculty.

Louise Keegan

Louise is good, but thank you. And I guess I should correct you. We are in the process of changing to Moravian University, but right now our official title is Moravian College. But we hope by this summer our title will transition and we'll be called Moravian University.

Mattie Murrey

Congratulations.

Louise Keegan

And we're here in Pennsylvania — Bethlehem, Pennsylvania — which is about an hour and a half outside of New York and north of Philadelphia. About the same distance between Philadelphia and New York City.

Mattie Murrey



Alright, so one of the Eastern programs. You and I are connecting in a couple of different ways. I met one of your students, who I was so incredibly impressed with. She was just head and shoulders above some of the other students that I have talked with. And then I happened to mention your college to a colleague of mine and she's like, "Oh, well, I know one of the professors there." So, I reached out to you and I really wanted to invite you on today. There are so many speech pathologists — not tons — but there are some very focused speech pathologists who want to go on and get their PhDs. So, I wanted for you to share a little bit of your story with us on why you became a speech pathologist and went the PhD route, and a little bit about what makes your program so special.

Louise Keegan

Sure. I'm happy to share my background information, which is a little bit different to other people's backgrounds. I am from Ireland. I grew up in County Limerick, and I basically did my education all in Ireland. So, the education system is a little bit different there. I went through high school. And we don't typically have a gen-ed program or required courses at the college level. We specialize immediately. So, once you enter college, you enter with your degree track and you go that route. So, if you're medicine, you do medicine. If you're pharmacy, you do pharmacy. If you're accounting, you do accounting. And if you're speech-language pathology, that's what you do for four years. And so, I chose speech-language therapy coming out of high school at 18 years old, just because I really liked the courses on the curriculum. Back then, you got the college book that was the catalog. And I went through, and speech-language pathology — or speech-language therapy, as it's called in Ireland — stood out to me because it had a mix of everything. It had some anatomy and physiology. It had some linguistics and language science. It had some psychology coursework as part of it. And so, that was all really fascinating to me, the mix of different kinds of disciplines. And so, that's really why I chose it. I wasn't really thinking career-wise. I was thinking about what would be fun to study in college. And I went to UCC, which is University College Cork, to pursue my degree in speech-language pathology.

And so, because you specialize in speech-language therapy the whole time, you end up meeting the equivalency to the requirements of a Master's degree in the U.S. And so, when I graduated, I had my clinical hours behind me. I was certified to work clinically. After graduation, I got a job in a school. It was a small school in County Tipperary and it had a high proportion of individuals with autism. And so, I ended up working in that school supporting these students. And I had already been looking into PhD programs. I had been interested in it from the beginning. Not from the beginning, but I liked being a student. And so, that's my major reason for being interested in PhD programs. But working in that school really solidified the fact that I wanted to go back and do more learning. I really didn't feel like I was helping these students enough. And so, that's when I, I guess, became most intentional about applying to and pursuing the PhD program route. And so, I applied to a number in England and my department chair from University College Cork — Dr. Paul Fletcher — had a friend who was chair of this PhD program in Louisiana. And it was Louisiana. It was very far afield. But I said, "Hey, he's a friend there. I'll apply." The chair was from Wales and knew Ireland and lived in Ireland, and so, I felt like, it's not



that far afield. And I applied, and the thing that drew me to Louisiana was really the fact that it was covered. I got a tuition-covered position. I was able to get an assistantship, where I was able to earn a little bit of money for working in the program. And I figured, I've got nothing to lose. I may as well try it. If I don't like it, I can come home. I remember landing in Louisiana and getting off the plane, thinking, "This is not going to last. I'm not even going to last week because I can't breathe. There's no air here." I arrived in the middle of August with the heat.

Mattie Murrey

Very different from Ireland.

Louise Keegan

But it did. I stayed for four years, and I had a really wonderful learning experience.

Mattie Murrey

Excellent. And you're carrying that on into your program?

Louise Keegan

Yeah, well, that's the goal. I guess, to backtrack a little bit, my PhD program looks like, — because you had asked about students that might be interested in doing PhD programs — the PhD program in Louisiana, and I know different programs are set up somewhat differently. It looks like two years of coursework, which I was really excited about because I love learning. And I really enjoyed the coursework component. And then, two years of more primarily research and working on the dissertation. There I became — not that I became more interested in adults, I was always interested in working with adults — I just didn't know if I was very good at it. So, I became more intentional about working with adults and worked with some individuals in my research who had traumatic brain injuries. And that was the basis of my dissertation, to look at how they communicated their identity through language, which was really exciting to me. And I guess, that kind of informs my philosophy. I do approach things from a very... I guess, if you talk about the aphasia world, that life-participation approach and perspective, because I think that everybody has valuable things and experiences to contribute. And like I said, I'm super excited about learning. I feel like I learned from my students. I learned from my clients. And I think that's my approach to education, in terms of starting my new program, or this program here, this new program at Moravian College.

So, when I graduated from my PhD, — actually, a semester before I graduated — I moved to North Carolina and took a faculty position there at Appalachian State University, which was really great. I learned a whole load. I started teaching in a more lecture style, according to what most programs do — according to what the program did there. I had a really rough first semester of teaching, I think because I was getting used to it. Because I was also finishing my PhD. But I had a lot of support from the faculty there, and I was able to turn things around. And I want to say, it was maybe two or three years in, I decided this lecturing teaching is getting the students the information they need. And then, at the end of the class, I had a system set up, where, for example, my adult language disorders class. They had a binder of things that they



would have and they would be able to take with them and apply clinically. But it was a lot to sift through in terms of thinking about the application. And I had taught it all in terms of content. The aphasia section. The cognitive communication section. And it was all content related. And while I did do some case studies and exams and assignments and things, I felt like the students were sometimes having a hard time. Some students did a great job of creating those connections and applying it right away. But some students had a hard time taking the information they learned in the classroom and applying it to the clinic.

And so, it was when I was at App State, I called back to how I learned in my own program, and the program at University College Cork was a problem-based learning program. And so, really, this is not any new idea that I came up with or anything like that. I'm pulling it from what has been done elsewhere. And so, I decided to start implementing this in my adult language disorders class and to give it a shot. And so, I started introducing the content in terms of cases. So, the case was the primary piece of information that students worked on. And then, the content was ancillary to the case. And the case I had built so that it would tie back into the content. And so, this was just a single class that I had set up like this, but the students responded really well to it. There were definitely students who did not respond well and did not like that I was telling them exactly what they needed to know. But at the same time, for the most part, I think many of the students really learned it. I got really good feedback, especially when students started going out on placements and applying some of this information. And so, I bought into it completely. I decided to... Well, my decision to leave upstate was really more of a family reason rather than a professional reason. My husband's family are all from Pennsylvania, and he had more opportunities for jobs up here. And so, I randomly applied to this new program at Moravian College, thinking, "I don't know if they'd be interested in me to start a new program. But if I were to start a new program, I would make it completely problem-based learning and the whole curriculum would be set up like that.

Louise Keegan

And I pitched that idea on my interview, thinking that this will make it or break it. And Moravian College loved it, I think, because they're kind of like me, going back to my original reason for choosing this profession: the whole interdisciplinary nature. And Moravian College, being a very liberal-arts school with a very strong focus on interdisciplinary education, I think they liked the idea of drawing in all the disciplines and using these critical-thinking abilities. And so, yeah, here I am. I started a program, and we have our first cohort about to graduate here next month.

Mattie Murrey

Very impressive. Very impressive. Outside-of-the-box thinking.

Louise Keegan

It's outside of the box, but it's coming from what I know, too. So, I guess it's because of my diverse education. There are a number of problems. The history of problem-based learning actually came from the medical fields. McMaster University was the first program to use it. And they decided to implement it because they were noticing that a lot of their medical



professionals — their doctors — were graduating and didn't have a very good bedside manner. And so, they decided that, to make things more human to these doctors, they would introduce problem cases to present the content rather than just presenting the content on its own. And they noticed that it seems to help. And it caught on. I think this might have been in the '60s or '70s, maybe. I don't remember off the top of my head. But I know that Harvard adopted the approach, and a number of other med schools. And it's still popular in med schools to date. Speech-language pathology was a lot slower catching on. And I think — I don't know if this is true — but I think that's because a lot of our clinical education that we do really does approach things from this perspective, from the hands-on learning perspective. And so, we were already doing so much of this. We didn't think we needed to overhaul our curriculum or curricula. But I think it was a program in Hong Kong that started it. At least, I know that's the one that my program in UCC that I came through was based on. And I know that there's a number of other programs that are popping up around the world now. There's one in Sweden. A couple in Australia. One in England. And the one that I came through at UCC is still operating like that. And then, the one in Canada — McMaster — is a year ahead of us. It just started a year before us, and Lynn Terpstra is the director there. I've worked with her. She's been pretty helpful in the development of our program.

Mattie Murrey

Good to know the history. I am new to pedagogy. And I'm like you. I'm a lifelong learner. So, I am just gobbling up what you're telling me. I'm writing some notes down. I want to go look at some of these things. It's one of the things that I love about this podcast. It's just a collaborative effort of connecting and sharing and helping one another. So, being a graduate professor, what are some words of wisdom that you have for students who are going to be starting a graduate program?

Louise Keegan

That's a really good question. I think that what you just mentioned there — that lifelong-learning perspective — I think that perspective is really important. I think that students need to be ready and open to learning beyond the graduate program. I had a student, last week actually — a first year student who submitted a reflection — that said, "I really didn't understand what lifelong learning was. You know, it's a word that is thrown around. I really didn't understand until recently, and all of a sudden, it's just clicked that, hey, as a clinician, I'm not going to know everything. And I'm going to have to continue to be a learner. I'm going to have to do continuing education. I'm going to have to take that initiative to try to learn about things on my own." And yeah.

So, I guess that's my advice: to approach things with an open mind, be flexible, and acknowledge that you're always going to be a learner. I can also give a little bit of... I know our program here at Moravian College is a little bit different to many other programs in terms of how we do the admissions process. But I can give a little bit of advice about the admissions process from our perspective. We have, like many other programs, deemphasized the GRE, especially this year. And going forward, I think people will continue to deemphasize the GRE, as



it wasn't required for our applicants this year, and we don't anticipate requiring it going forward. We do look at GPA. But we also really, really value those things that students put on their resume and on their personal statement about their experiences. We look at their community involvement. Their ability to demonstrate leadership skills. We look at diverse kinds of experiences. We have a certain number of diversity points that we award for diverse perspectives and experiences because we really value those kinds of things as students bring them to the problem-based learning room, where everything is really discussion-based, and experiences really do hold a lot of value.

And so, my suggestion to students that are applying to programs like ours would be to not forget about how the more mundane things that they think are mundane — that they've done as part of their everyday life — really do prepare them for careers in speech-language pathology. We also do an interview portion, which is quite fun. I think it's fun for us and for the applicants. We do a group interview. And so, everybody gets to work together as a group. They get a group problem that's not related to speech-language pathology that they have to work together as a team of about eight or nine people to solve — or not completely solve, but come up with potential solutions for this problem. It's kind of like that problem-based learning component. And then, we do some mini-multiple interviews, where they go into a room for five minutes and have to deal with an ethical issue, or show their communication skills by apologizing for crashing into somebody else's car, or something like that. And so, it's really a fun, unpredictable interview process.

Mattie Murrey

That sounds unique.

Louise Keegan

It gives us a lot of perspective on how students are as communicators and how they are as problem solvers and critical thinkers. And I think that's the kind of student that we're looking for in the program, rather than somebody who scores high on tests alone. Does that make sense?

Mattie Murrey

It does. It does. Because you're not looking for students who look good on paper. You're looking for students who are going to take that position that you're offering them in your own way, and really implement it and go make a difference in the world.

Louise Keegan

I think people who already show through as potentially great commissions... You mentioned that on-paper piece. I think that's not always representative of the people who will be the most fantastic clinicians going forward.

Mattie Murrey

So, taking a step backwards, you mentioned being sure to include some of those mundane skills, mundane things. Can you give us some examples?



Louise Keegan

For example, the person who has worked in a restaurant for many years may think that is something that everybody does and not see its importance. But being able to showcase in their letter or on their resume that, hey, you know, I was in customer service, and I dealt with people who had communication difficulties, and I was able to solve problems from customer standpoints. So, I think that those kinds of things — being able to talk about how your experiences can contribute to what you would become as a clinician — is important. If that makes sense.

Mattie Murrey

Yes. You're connecting the skill set learned in an everyday, non-related SLP career and taking and targeting those skill sets that you are going to bring forward into your graduate-student career.

Louise Keegan

Exactly. You put that way more eloquently than I did.

Mattie Murrey

Just for fun, can you give us an example of a group problem? My curiosity is piqued.

Louise Keegan

Yeah, definitely. You mean for the interview, or for an actual typical day in the program?

Mattie Murrey

Both!

Louise Keegan

Okay. Let's go with a typical day in the program. It's easier to find an example without giving away too many secrets. With that regard. For a regular day in the program, you may have: Joanne just had a stroke. Her family are really concerned about understanding why she's not able to communicate with them. They don't really understand what's going on. They're not sure what to do in order to be able to communicate with her. They think that they need to make all the decisions about her medical care right now. And so, there are generally a number of learning issues that may be associated with this problem. And so, for example, depending on the details given, one may be what is a stroke and why does a stroke happen? Another... So, these are learning questions that would come up. The learning issues would be: Describe and understand the process of a stroke. Describe and understand what aphasia is. Identify assessment and treatment for aphasia, or describe assessment and treatment for aphasia. And then, maybe discuss the education component of family-centered patient care in individuals with aphasia. And so, those are the kinds of learning issues that the facilitator as the instructor would see. The students don't see that. They come up with questions. So, they get their problem, their specific case. They come up with their questions. And these are the questions —



which are a negotiation process and guided by the facilitator because we know the learning outcomes — these questions guide what they do in the week.

So, how it works in our curriculum is, a student gets this problem at the very beginning of the week [or] usually the end of the previous week. And so, the whole week will be spent working on this problem. They work on these problems in groups of eight, typically in our program. The group sizes can vary in different programs. And so, they get the problem, they do their background research, and they all come together on the Monday. For example, this semester, it was the Monday and the Thursday, our meetings were. And they spend three hours together on that Monday discussing the problem, highlighting the things they've learned, the literature they've read. Sometimes we'll provide more or less recommended readings. It depends on the level of the students in the program. Then the background information they found. The educational resources. They often do divide and conquer to a certain extent and focus on different areas and share all their information. And I feel like this negotiation of the information helps students understand it better and remember the information to a greater extent. And so, rather than receiving all this information in a lecture format, they're sifting through what they've already done the background reading [for]. They've been looking at some of the primary literature. And they figured out what might be most appropriate for this case, but also some other kind of treatment and assessment approaches that might be more or less appropriate for other cases. So, the process looks like, at the end of the week... So, they meet on the Monday for this. They go through things. They decide what they're going to work on and decide what they want to do for the Thursday at the end of the Monday class. And then they meet on the Thursday for another three hours. In the middle, on a Wednesday, we typically do a one-hour lecture — or a one- to two-hour lecture, depending on the semester — which is a lecture that provides background information. And it's a more lecture-style traditional classroom. We have oftentimes a guest speaker, but sometimes one of us, present to the class on this topic of interest and the important aspects about this particular case.

Louise Keegan

And then on the Thursday, they come back together. They sift through the information. They make sure they've hit all the learning issues. They make sure they understand it all in relation to the case. They also develop a product. The product is generally a tool that they can use in their future clinical careers. So, that can be... It's really wide open. For example, last week my group made an informal assessment as their product. Sometimes they make educational videos. I had a couple of groups this semester make TikToks for other clinicians. And so, generally, at the end of each problem, at the end of each week, they will have a number of things they'll turn in. They'll turn in their notes, which is their version of questions and answers related to the learning issues. They'll turn in their list of references, and the bibliography they've collected on this problem over the course of the week. They'll also turn in their product, which is this final tool that they may use in their future careers. And the product can be directed at either the client themselves [or] it can be directed at other SLPs. It can be targeted towards a general public — an information-type product. And then, the final thing they turn in... Oh, two more



things actually. They have an individual component they turn in as well. So, they also turn in a reflection on their contributions to the process and how the group process has worked during the week, as well as a reading forum where they've chosen one piece of primary literature and they've analyzed it in detail. And we have specific questions that we ask related to that. So, they look at one particular paper in great depth. They also do some self-evaluations and peer evaluations on just a regular rating form, survey style, that we have for each week. And I bring these things up to highlight the fact that I think this whole process helps students develop their teamwork skills. You talked about that one student that stood out to you. I feel like there's a lot of negotiation and conflict resolution within the group. There's a lot of collaboration necessary. The team definitely has to figure out how to work together. The students really do learn how to negotiate that environment in a professional manner, and learn how to see how their contributions... The reflection really adds to how their contributions impact things within the group. So, for example, to give you something more concrete to hold onto... I had a student early one semester, who was particularly upset that she felt like her group didn't appreciate her contributions. She didn't know how to manage it. And we had a good talk about how, you know, you're often going to be working on clinical teams where this is going to be the case. You're going to feel like you're not a valued member of the team. You're going to feel like it's just not a very functional team, and you can't just bow out. You have to, for the sake of your clients and your patients, keep working with this team and develop a system of negotiating the environment. And so, we were able to sit down, myself and herself, and talk about some strategies she could use to negotiate this environment [and] to try to help the team appreciate her contributions more. To show the team what she was doing in terms of contributing to the group to. To communicate with the team, I guess, in a different way, so that they would have a different perspective of what she was bringing to the table. And it was really fantastic... In this case, it worked really well. I know that's not always going to be the case. But in this particular example, by the end of the semester, the group were really appreciative of her contributions. She'd really changed her communication style and found a way to work within this group, where, if this had been working with real patients, she would have created a situation where she had a much bigger voice at the table and was really able to better contribute to their care.

Mattie Murrey

Sounds like a very comprehensive approach.

Louise Keegan

I think that it's helped students develop transferable skills for that kind of environment. And so, I really buy into it. I know I'm very biased. But I really do buy into the perspective that it helps students, [and] not only in their learning and their acquisition of knowledge. Because I do think that they remember a lot of the information better. The evidence suggests that they remember a lot of the information to a better extent. Even the students that we talked to... For example, a student last week, we were working on an aphasia case. And we had worked on aphasia earlier in their curriculum as well. And they were able to say, "Oh, I remember when so and so shared this really interesting paper that she had. Let's go back to that." Because they remembered that



conversation and discussion. And I think that those discussions and negotiations help with that memory of the information that's presented.

Mattie Murrey

Excellent. What words of advice do you have for the student who needs to reach out to a professor for whatever reason?

Louise Keegan

That's a really good question. I think it definitely depends on the professor. I think that, in general, being formal and being professional is really important. Acknowledging the fact that professors do have constraints on their time. And most of us do want to be available to students, but are not available 24/7 to students. And so, I think that it really boils down to that politeness, professional asking for help. And I can say that 99.9% of the people I know who are professors in the field are really enthusiastic about supporting students and really want to be there for students, and so, would be more than happy to reach out. So, I would suggest not being afraid to reach out. But do so in a way that gives the professor some flexibility in terms of meeting with you. Don't demand that they meet with you tomorrow, but ask when they might be available and if they might have 15 minutes to have a discussion with you about such and such. I think that this transition in the pandemic may have made it easier for some of these connections with professors. I feel like, when you're on campus — at least, when I'm on campus — I feel like I'm always busy and running around and have a million and one things to do. When you're on Zoom, I feel like it's easier for students to find a spot in my Zoom calendar to catch me more privately and be able to have some of these more specific conversations. And so, I guess there are pros and cons to the fact that we're able to meet in a virtual world these days.

Mattie Murrey

I like that positive positive outlook. Last question: When you have students who are getting ready to graduate, and they're getting ready to leave your program and launch their own careers, what words of advice do you have for them?

Louise Keegan

I think that I'll go back to my earlier point: that lifelong learning component. That lifelong learning phrase is such a cheesy phrase, but really, I think that idea that they don't expect to know everything. I still am very clear about the fact that I don't know everything, and I mentioned I still do learn a whole load from my clients and from my students. I guess that's one of the reasons I really like the PBL approach. Invariably, students will find new information that's really exciting to me, and I feel like it's a major learning process for me too. But I think that idea of being willing and open to learning, and being flexible. And being direct with clients about that. I know that some clients really do value that expertise, but I think they're there because they know you are an expert. I feel like they're there so that you can learn about their experience of the issues they're dealing with as well. And so, being open to learning from them and acknowledging that, while you do have a background on what works for most people, or



according to the literature is the most effective approach, you really want to work with them as an individual.

And this goes back to my philosophy. And the resources I shared in the resource page are... The things that I've written really do talk a lot about how as an instructor, as a professor, and as a clinician, I really do appreciate a lot of what Mark Ylvisaker has talked about. He's a researcher that was from New York City who worked a lot with individuals with traumatic brain injury. He talks a lot about being a coach, more so than then being a teacher or an instructor. And I think that we are more coaches to our clients, especially with adult clients. And I know I'm really coming from a perspective where I work mostly with adult clients right now. It can be different with pediatrics. But with adult clients, we do assume a role as a coach. We are there to serve them as such, and help them overcome their challenges and help them find that self-motivation. And I feel the same with students. I am there to help them find that self-motivation, find that passion for learning, and become advocates for themselves. And so, that's my advice as a clinician that's about to graduate. Know you're never going to know anything, but know that you can learn a whole load from your clients and from your colleagues — and I mean colleagues both within and outside of our field. And yeah, do the best you can because if you're graduating from an accredited program, you've got the tools you need. It's just a case of learning how to listen to others and apply them in the best possible way.

Mattie Murrey

Sounds like excellent words of wisdom. So, at Fresh SLP we are collecting from all of our podcast guests for a word cloud, one word that would surmise how you feel about our field or what we do as speech pathologists and audiologists. Can you give me a word for our word cloud?

Louise Keegan

That is tough. It's hard to boil it all down to one word. Can I make it two?

Mattie Murrey

Yes, some people do.

Louise Keegan

Can I say problem solvers to tie in with our problem-based learning component?

Mattie Murrey

Love it. That is signature you. Excellent. Well, thank you for coming on today. It was a treat talking to you and hearing about your program and your passion and your thought process.

Louise Keegan

Thank you for inviting me. I'm really excited to be able to contribute, and I hope I provided some useful information to somebody.

Mattie Murrey You did.

