

PATH IN PRACTICE

Day 2 Participant Workbook · Putting It Into Practice

Saturday, April 25, 2026 · 1:00 – 4:55 PM · Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehabilitation Center

Facilitator: Monique Thompson, Raindrop Naturalist

Day 2 at a Glance

12:15 – 1:00	Room setup and arrival
1:00 – 1:20	Welcome back — reflections from April 11
1:20 – 1:50	Injury Redirect & Reframe
1:50 – 2:20	Difficult Questions Lab
2:20 – 2:30	Break
2:30 – 2:45	Timing & Transitions
2:45 – 4:15	Small-Group Story Practice
4:15 – 4:25	Break
4:25 – 4:55	Closing Reflection & Certificate Presentation

Today is about doing, not just learning. You've already built your foundation.
Come ready to practice out loud, give honest feedback, and support your handlers.

OUR MISSION

Conserve our raptor population through education and rehabilitation.

— Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehabilitation Center

Your Why Revisited

On April 11 you wrote down your Why. A lot has happened since then — you practiced, you thought about your bird, and you showed up again today.

Before we begin, take five minutes to check in with where you started.

On Day 1 you wrote why you showed up. Does that reason still hold? What would you add?

What shifted for you between April 11 and today?

What do you want your audience to walk away with after your next program?

One word that describes where you are right now as a presenter:

Your Why is the reason your audience will feel something when you present.
Keep it close today. Every step of your story should serve it.

Injury Redirect & Reframe

Someone will ask about an injury. You don't have to answer it the way they asked it.

You don't have to bring the injury into the room.

Most audiences won't notice a missing eye, a drooping wing, or an amputated tip — at least not right away. If you lead with the bird's superpower instead of its story of harm, that's where their attention goes. Don't open the door. If someone else does, you're ready. But here's the reframe: the three-move redirect isn't about hiding the injury. It's about deciding what to do with it. Sometimes the injury question is the best door into the conservation story — the very thing that harmed this bird is something the audience can help prevent. You're not dodging the truth. You're choosing where to take it.

The Three-Move Redirect

1. Acknowledge	"Great question. That's how Athena came to us."
2. Bridge	"What that experience showed us is actually pretty extraordinary."
3. Pivot to Adaptation	"Because of how she's built, here's what she can do..."

Modeled Examples — The Three-Move Redirect in Action

Study how the redirect works with real Soarin' Hawk birds before you practice.

Indy — Barred Owl

Audience: "Something seems off with her eyes. Is she okay?"

1. Acknowledge: "You're reading her exactly right — Indy's eyes have a story. She came to us after a car strike, and her vision was already compromised before that."
2. Bridge: "But what her story opens up is actually one of the most remarkable things about barred owls."
3. Pivot: "Indy doesn't rely on vision the way we do. Barred owls hunt by sound — their facial disc works like a satellite dish, funneling sound to asymmetrical ears that let them pinpoint prey in total darkness. Her eyes may be compromised. Her hearing is extraordinary."

Jefferson — Bald Eagle

Audience: "What's wrong with his wing? It doesn't look right."

1. Acknowledge: "Jefferson carries the story of how he got here with him. He came to us with a wing injury that ended his life in the wild."
2. Bridge: "But what his story opens up is a look at what a bald eagle is actually built to do."
3. Pivot: "That wingspan — over seven feet — is built to ride thermal currents and cover huge distances with almost no effort. Jefferson still shows us that every time he spreads them."

Ehr — Turkey Vulture

Audience: “Why does it look like that? Is something wrong with it?”

1. Acknowledge: “Ehr gets that reaction a lot — and it’s actually a perfect place to start.”
2. Bridge: “Everything about the way Ehr looks is a precision tool evolved over millions of years.”
3. Pivot: “That bare head isn’t a flaw — it’s sanitation engineering. Feathers would trap bacteria from carrion. Bare skin is easier to keep clean. Ehr is one of nature’s most efficient recyclers.”

Georgie — American Kestrel

Audience: “Is that a baby? It’s so tiny. Is something wrong with it?”

1. Acknowledge: “Georgie gets that every single time, and I love it.”
2. Bridge: “Her size is actually exactly the point — it’s not a limitation, it’s the whole strategy.”
3. Pivot: “American Kestrels are the smallest falcon in North America, and they hover into the wind with the precision of a helicopter. Georgie can see ultraviolet light — she tracks the vole or rodent urine trails they leave behind, invisible to us, then drops like a stone.”

Sheyenne — Harris’s Hawk

Audience: “What’s wrong with this one too?”

1. Acknowledge: “I see you’re looking closely now — that’s exactly what a good observer does. Sheyenne’s wings and feet were damaged, and yes, they look different.”
2. Bridge: “But here’s what her story actually reveals — Harris’s Hawks are the only raptors in North America that hunt in family packs, like wolves.”
3. Pivot: “Sheyenne didn’t survive because of her wings. She survived because of her relationships. That cooperative strategy makes Harris’s Hawks one of the most effective hunters on the continent — and Sheyenne still carries that social intelligence every time she’s on a glove.”

Athena — Great Horned Owl

Audience notices her eyes. “Did something happen to her eyes?”

1. Acknowledge: “Good eye — yes, Athena’s pupils are uneven. She came to us as an orphan, and we noticed it right away.”
2. Bridge: “And honestly, it’s one of the things that makes Athena such a perfect ambassador.”
3. Pivot: “Because Athena is the queen of the night sky. Her talons exert over 300 pounds of pressure per square inch. You’re looking at the bird at the top of the food chain — and she is completely unbothered by this room.”

Oakley — Eastern Screech Owl

Audience: “What happened to his eye?”

1. Acknowledge: “Good eye — yes, Oakley is missing his left eye. He came to us after a car strike, and the damage was severe enough that it couldn’t be saved.”
2. Bridge: “But what his story opens up is something remarkable about screech owls in general.”
3. Pivot: “Screech owls are masters of disguise — their bark-like feather patterns make them nearly invisible against a tree trunk. And they hunt by sound as much as by sight, so Oakley still has everything he needs to read the world around him. He doesn’t miss anything that matters.”

When there's no injury to redirect

Not every bird has an injury story. Some of our birds — Napoleon, Monet, Chewie, Duke, Honey — came to us from breeders or were hand-raised from a young age. Handlers sometimes hesitate when audiences ask “where did you find him?” because the honest answer feels less dramatic than a rescue story. It isn't. A captive-raised ambassador is a different kind of conservation story, and it deserves the same confidence.

The move is the same shape as the Three-Move Redirect — just with a different first step.

Napoleon — Burrowing Owl

Audience: “Where did you find him?”

1. Acknowledge: “Good question — Napoleon wasn't found. He was raised by a falconer in Maryland and came to us at nine weeks old.”
2. Bridge: “And his story is actually the reason burrowing owls need more attention than they get.”
3. Pivot: “Burrowing owls are one of the only raptors that live underground — they nest in abandoned prairie dog burrows out west, and their populations depend on those burrows staying there. Napoleon isn't here because he couldn't survive in the wild. He's here to remind people that habitat matters.”

Note: The same frame works for Monet, Chewie, Duke, and Honey. Lead with what the bird is for, not what happened to it.

Try It — When There's No Injury

If you handle Napoleon, Monet, Chewie, Duke, or Honey, draft your version below.

Audience prompt: “Where did you find him?” or “Is he hurt?”

My Bird:

1. Acknowledge

2. Bridge

3. Pivot

Now You Try — Injury Redirect Practice

Partner practice. One handler presents. Two listeners each give one Glow and one Grow. 60 seconds — acknowledge, bridge, and pivot. Use one of these prompts:

- “What happened to that bird?”
- “Can it fly at all anymore?”
- “Does it hurt?”

My Bird:

1. Acknowledge

2. Bridge

3. Pivot to Adaptation

Difficult Questions Lab

Someone in your audience will say something unexpected. Maybe they challenge you. Maybe they ask something you're not sure how to answer. Maybe they're an expert, or a skeptic, or a six-year-old who just wants to touch the bird.

Your job isn't to correct them. It's to stay curious, stay present, and use a question instead of a lecture. That's the only move available to you in this lab.

Six scenarios. One rule: no correcting, no lecturing. You may only respond using facilitation moves.

Modeled Facilitation Responses

Study these before you rotate. Each one shows what a facilitation move sounds like in practice — not a correction, not a redirect, just a question that opens the door.

The Skeptic

"Do these birds even want to be here?"

With Sheyenne (Harris's Hawk):

"That's worth sitting with. What are you seeing that makes you wonder? ... What do you think an animal shows when it's comfortable?"

The Expert

"Actually, I read that red-tails are invasive in some areas."

With Orion or Freckles (Red-tailed Hawk):

"Interesting. What did you read — was it about a specific region? ... What do you think the research was measuring?"

The Animal Rights Challenge

"Should these birds really be in captivity? Shouldn't they be free?"

With Chewie (Eurasian Eagle Owl):

"That's a question I think about too. What would 'free' look like for a bird that can't hunt on its own? ... What do you think their options are?"

The Conservation Pushback

"Why should I care about birds? I'm not a birder."

With Puck or Frankie (Eastern Screech Owl):

"Fair enough. Can I ask — do you have a garden? Do you hate mosquitoes? ... What would it mean to you if the animals that manage rodents and insects disappeared?"

The Child Pivot

"Can I pet it?"

With Georgie (American Kestrel):

"What do you think Georgie might feel if a hand came toward her really fast? ... What's another way you could connect with her right now?"

When the conversation goes deeper —

"They can't hunt on their own because you took them and made that impossible."

"You're not wrong that captive-raised birds like Chewie can't be released — that's real. But the alternative wasn't a life in the wild. Chewie was bred in captivity and donated to us. The wild was never his starting point. For birds like him, the question isn't 'captivity vs. freedom' — it's 'this life or no life.'"

"For our rehab birds, the story is different — they came in injured, and we released every one we could. The ones who stayed couldn't survive on their own. Their injuries made that choice, not us."

"There's one more thing worth knowing, specifically about owls. Research shows that owls brought into captivity after age two struggle — sometimes developing what's called Learned Helplessness, where they cooperate not because they're comfortable, but because they've given up. That's not the life we want for them. So these days, we bring in captive-bred or young owls whenever possible. A few of our older owls came to us as adults, from an earlier time — they stay because release isn't an option. But every choice we make now reflects what we've learned since then."

When the question stays —

“They can’t hunt on their own because — instead of being raised by their parents in the wild — you took them and made that impossible.”

“Chewie wasn’t taken from the wild — he was captive-bred and donated to us at two months old. Every bird here has a different story — orphans, injured birds, captive-bred birds — but none of them were taken from a life they could have survived.”

The Egg Question (Kids)

“How can she lay an egg if there’s no boy bird with her?”

With Georgie (American Kestrel) or any female bird:

“Great question — birds are actually a lot like chickens that way. You know the eggs we buy at the grocery store? Hens lay those regularly, even without a rooster around. Same idea here. Georgie can lay an egg on her own — but without a partner, there won’t be a baby bird inside it. No partner, no chick.”

Note: the grocery store analogy is the right tool here. It’s age-appropriate, accurate, and closes the question without opening a biology lecture. Use it confidently.

The Egg Management Question

“What do you do if the birds lay fertilized eggs?”

When bird pairs are housed together:

“That’s something we take seriously. Soarin’ Hawk is a rehabilitation and education center — not a breeding facility. If a pair lays a fertilized egg, we work to make sure it doesn’t develop further. It’s not a decision we take lightly, but it’s the responsible choice for birds in our care and for the species as a whole.”

Now You Try — The Lab

Six scenarios. Rotate through them as a group. One rule: facilitation moves only. No correcting, no lecturing, no redirecting.

My Bird:**The Skeptic**

“Do these birds even want to be here?”

My facilitation move:

The Expert

“Actually, I read that red-tails are invasive.”

My facilitation move:

The Injury Question

“What happened to her wing?”

My facilitation move:

The Animal Rights Challenge
“Should these birds be in the wild?”

My facilitation move:

The Child Pivot
“Can I pet it?”

My facilitation move:

The Conservation Pushback
“Why should I care about birds?”

My facilitation move:

After the Lab

Take two minutes to write. No performing, just notice.

Which scenario was hardest?

Which facilitation move surprised you?

What’s one question you’re more prepared to answer now than you were this morning?

Small-Group Story Practice

2:45 – 4:15 · 90 minutes · 6 groups of 4–5

This is the core of Day 2. Every handler delivers their full story once and receives feedback.

My Bird: _____

Format per Handler

3–5 min	Deliver your full 5-Step Bird Story
3 min	Glow + Grow from each listener (one Glow, one Grow)
1 min	Handler response — what did you notice?

While you listen to others, use the Glow + Grow pages at the back of this workbook.

Notes from your group practice:

Handler name:

Bird:

★ Glow — One thing that shined

Pick one specific moment that landed. Be as concrete as you can.

Your Hook made me —

The moment that got me was —

Your Superpower description —

I felt connected to your bird when —

△ Grow — One thing to strengthen

Pick one specific suggestion. Use “I wanted...” or “I would have loved...” language.

I wanted more of —

I got a little lost when —

The Connection/Transition could —

I would have loved to hear —

One Glow. One Grow. That's it.

Specific is kind. Vague feedback is hard to use.

Glow: “I liked hearing about the bird’s personality” vs. “The detail about Poe hoarding dog toys made me laugh — it made him feel like a real individual, not a species.”

Grow: “I wanted more personality” vs. “Tell me one thing Poe does that nobody would expect — a habit, a preference, a moment you’ve watched. One small detail opens the whole bird.”

Handler name:

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One Glow. One Grow. That's it.

Specific is kind. Vague feedback is hard to use.

Glow: “Your opening worked” vs. “Your Hook wasn’t a fact — it was an invitation. I had to find out what bird could be small enough to fit in your hand but brave enough to stare down a hawk.”

Grow: “Your Hook could be stronger” vs. “Try opening with a question next time — something like ‘What raptor lives underground?’ — so the audience has to stay with you to find out.”

Glow + Grow · Handler

After your story: read the feedback you received. What landed for you?

My name:

Bird:

★ Glow — What worked in my story

What moment felt strongest? What did you feel most confident delivering?

My Hook landed when —

I felt most connected to my audience when —

The step that felt strongest was —

I surprised myself when —

△ Grow — What I want to strengthen

What felt rushed, unclear, or not quite right? Be honest.

I wanted more time on —

I got a little stuck at —

My transition could —

Next time I will —

One Glow. One Grow. That's it.

Specific is kind. Vague feedback is hard to use.

Glow: "My ending worked" vs. "My Transition wasn't a goodbye — it was a handoff. I left the audience curious about the next bird before the next handler stepped up."

Grow: "My Transition could have been stronger" vs. "Next time, end by naming what's coming — set the audience up for the next handler's bird, so it feels like one story with many voices instead of a program of separate birds."

Closing Reflection

Before you receive your certificate, take a few minutes with these questions. There's no right answer — just yours.

What is the one thing you're most proud of from your presentation today?

What surprised you — about the feedback you received, or about yourself?

What is the single most important thing you're taking into your next program?

What would you tell a new Soarin' Hawk volunteer on their first day of handler training?

What I'm Taking Home

You've built something real over these two sessions. Here's how to keep building it.

Before Your Next Program

- Review your 5-Step Planning Card and Handler Planning Sheet.
- Say your transition line out loud at least three times.
- Know which audience you're presenting to — and adjust your Hook before you walk in.
- Know which conservation action fits this audience and this program.
- If a difficult question is likely, run through your acknowledge-bridge-pivot once in your head.

My Commitments

Three specific things I will do differently in my next program:

Keep Going

"Our hearts are huge — and they beat for the birds."

— Lynne Ostergren, Program Coordinator, Soarin' Hawk

Bring your story. Bring your bird. Bring your voice.
Every program you deliver is the reason Soarin' Hawk exists.

"Raptors are built to survive in extraordinary ways — and the world around us depends on that. You just spent the afternoon learning how to make an audience believe it."