

ABA: For a Balance Between Science and Love

- Dr. Marilu Cruz, BCBA-D

Abstract:

In this lecture, we will discuss love from bell hooks' perspective, making an intersection with Behavior Analysis, and pointing out some ways for the Behavior Analyst's behaviors towards the client and towards themselves to be guided by loving actions. We will discuss love not only as a feeling, but as a series of behaviors. Love is actions. We will also talk about transversal concepts such as compassion, self-compassion, assent, social validation, values, ending with some examples of more direct but no less complex behaviors, such as listening to others, dialoguing, playing, paying attention, smiling genuinely, forgiving, starting over. We will discuss what actions we can take as a community so that the adoption of love becomes a value to be incorporated into the culture of the professional who works in Applied Behavior Analysis. So that our loving actions allow the client to have choice, freedom and to be able to develop actions of self-love, including setting limits for the Behavior Analyst.

Behavioral science is not possible without love, or it should not be. Love is a political and social act and the role of the Behavior Analyst should be to promote social justice. Love is a path to this, in addition to being an essential element for creating bonds, developing the client and acting professionally based on loving ethics.

About the Speaker:

Psychologist Dr. Marilu Cruz holds a degree in Psychology from the Federal University of Pará — UFPA (2007), a master's degree (2009) and a doctorate (2014) from the Postgraduate Program in Behavioral Theory and Research — UFPA, and a postdoctorate from the University of North Texas (2018 – 2020) and is certified by the Board Certified Behavior Analyst — Doctoral® (BCBA-D®). She has advanced training in Reinforcement Contingency Therapy with Children (2019) and certification in the Program for Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) (2023). She is currently studying Mindfulness and Self-Compassion. Director of the companies Iluminar and Iluminando em rede. She has been working with children, adolescents and adults with neurodivergence since 2012. She has been the director of the Iluminar clinics since 2016, and of Iluminando em Rede since 2023. Note the name change in bibliographic citations (from Borba to Cruz.), starting in 2022.

