

DE-ESCALATING ANGRY SITUATIONS

Whether an employee or a patient, there are tools and skills to develop to increase the chance of verbally de-escalating a situation.

- All behavior is a form of communication
- Anxiety: A change in typical behavior
 - Supportive: An empathic, nonjudgmental approach
- Defensive: Protecting oneself from a real or perceived challenge
 - Directive: Providing clear direction or instruction
- Integrated experience: Behavior influences behavior. Your approach changes everything
- Factors that can inhibit your ability to remain consistent and calm in your response:
 - Waking up late, lack of caffeine, not enough sleep, family stress, illness, trying to fit too much into one day, work dissatisfaction, financial worry
- Precipitating Factors: Factors that influence one's behavior
- Understanding precipitating factors helps you to:
 - avoid becoming a precipitating factor yourself
 - address the factors that lead to crisis situations
 - not take crisis personally
- Potential Precipitating Factors:
 - Impaired cognitive ability, communication skills
 - Fear, worry, trauma, phobias, anxiety, limited feeling of control
 - Feeling unheard, unmet needs, sensory overload
 - Received bad news, running late
 - Pain
- Rational Detachment: Recognizing the need to remain professional by managing your own behavior and attitude
 - Observe the behavior
 - a. What is the other person communicating?
 - b. How am I responding?
 - c. What am I expressing or conveying?
 - d. How are they responding to me?



DE-ESCALATING ANGRY SITUATIONS

Whether an employee or a patient, there are tools and skills to develop to increase the chance of verbally de-escalating a situation.

- Rational Detachment Tips:
 - Take a deep breath, choose your words carefully, ask for help
- When someone is anxious or defensive, they may exhibit:
 - Crossed arms, avoidant eye contact, slouching, fake smile, angling body away, wringing hands
- Supportive Stance: Position, Posture, Proximity
- Listening with Empathy:
 - Remain nonjudgmental
 - Give your undivided attention
 - Listen to facts and feelings
 - Allow time for silence and reflection
 - Paraphrase what you understand
- Limit Setting: Our response when someone is unwilling to cooperate or follow instructions
 - Respectful: phrase in a positive way
 - Simple: limit number of words
 - Reasonable: connect expectation to person's circumstances and level of ability
- Examples of Limit Setting:
 - Interrupt and Re-Direct: Laura, you're shouting. Please speak quietly. Thank You.
 - When/Then Pattern: Laura, when you lower your voice, then I'll be able to address your concerns.
 - Fail Safe Choice: Laura, would you like to talk about this now, or later in private?
- Framework for Planning a Difficult Conversation:
 - Planning: How will you remain rationally detached? Where and when will you have it?
 - Scripting: Develop a written or mental roadmap of what you will say. Stay factual.
 - Delivering: Respect the other person. Rationally detach. Deliver the facts. Listen and respond with empathy. Bring closure.
 - Documenting: Summarize the conversation. Note observations. Objectively assess your performance.
- Demonstrating Consistency with Communication:
 - Listen to understand the other person
 - Allow time to process
 - Remain flexible- situations evolve
 - Make the conversation private, if possible
 - Avoid power struggles

