

Calm in the Storm: Practical De-escalation Strategies

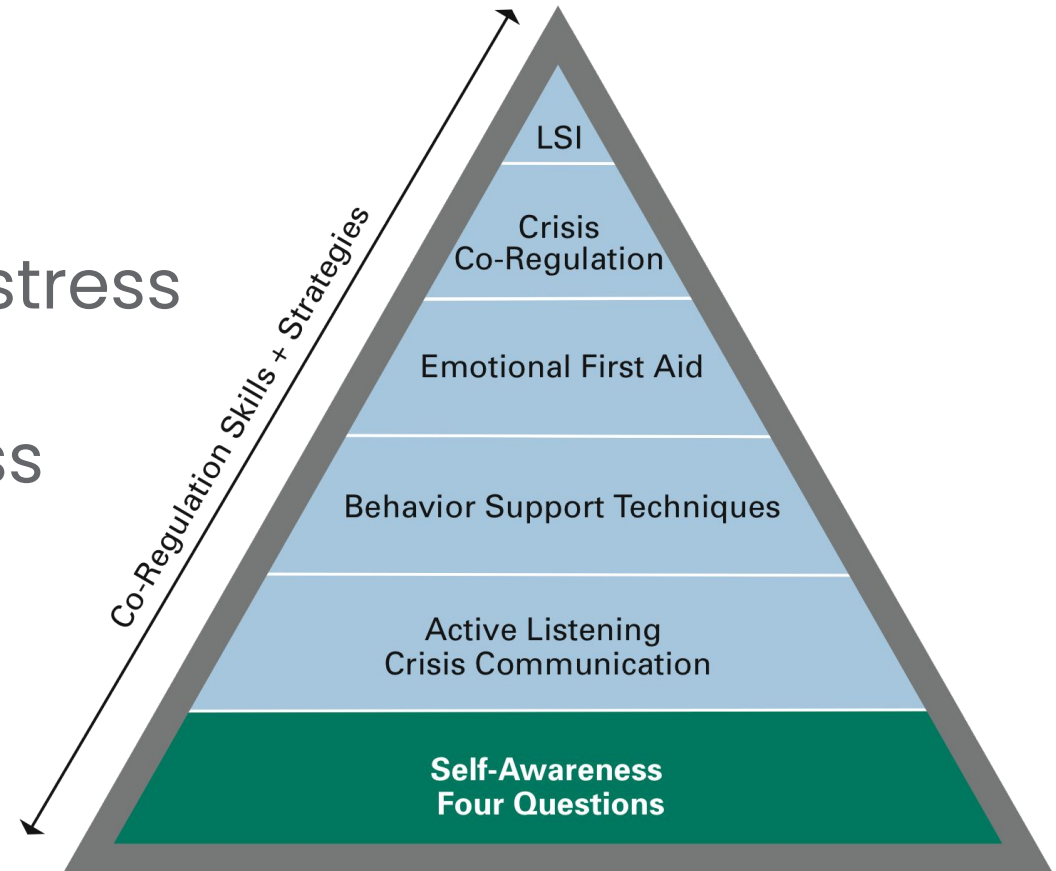
Presenter:
Dr. Keiley Pfeiffer



Agenda for Practical De-escalation Workshop

SKILLS BUILDING FOR CO-REGULATION STRATEGIES IN TCI

- Expectations and requirements
- Introductions to the course and creator/presenter
- Defining Stress
- Exploring the impact of chronic stress
- Understanding trauma
- Defining a Crisis
- Personal triggers/Self-awareness
- Managing the environment
- Avoiding the power struggle
- Intervention techniques
- Repairing the relationship
- Conclusion/Discussion



Professionally:

Who am I?

Dr. Pfeiffer has worked serving families and children with cognitive, behavior and mental health challenges for the last 17 years. Variety of settings throughout the duration of her career include residential programs, home-visiting programs, communities, clinics and school districts.

Majority of focus is in the early childhood behavioral intervention with an acute focus on the impact that childhood traumas play on cognitive, behavioral and mental health development. I was previously a registered behavior technician providing early intervention supports for families across Upper Eastern NY region. I also hold a C.A.G.s in Applied Behavior Analysis from UMASS.

Graduated from NOVA Southeastern University with a Doctorate of Education degree, where she studied the philosophy of early childhood development/education in regards to environmental exposure and behavioral impact in grades Pre-K through 2nd grade.

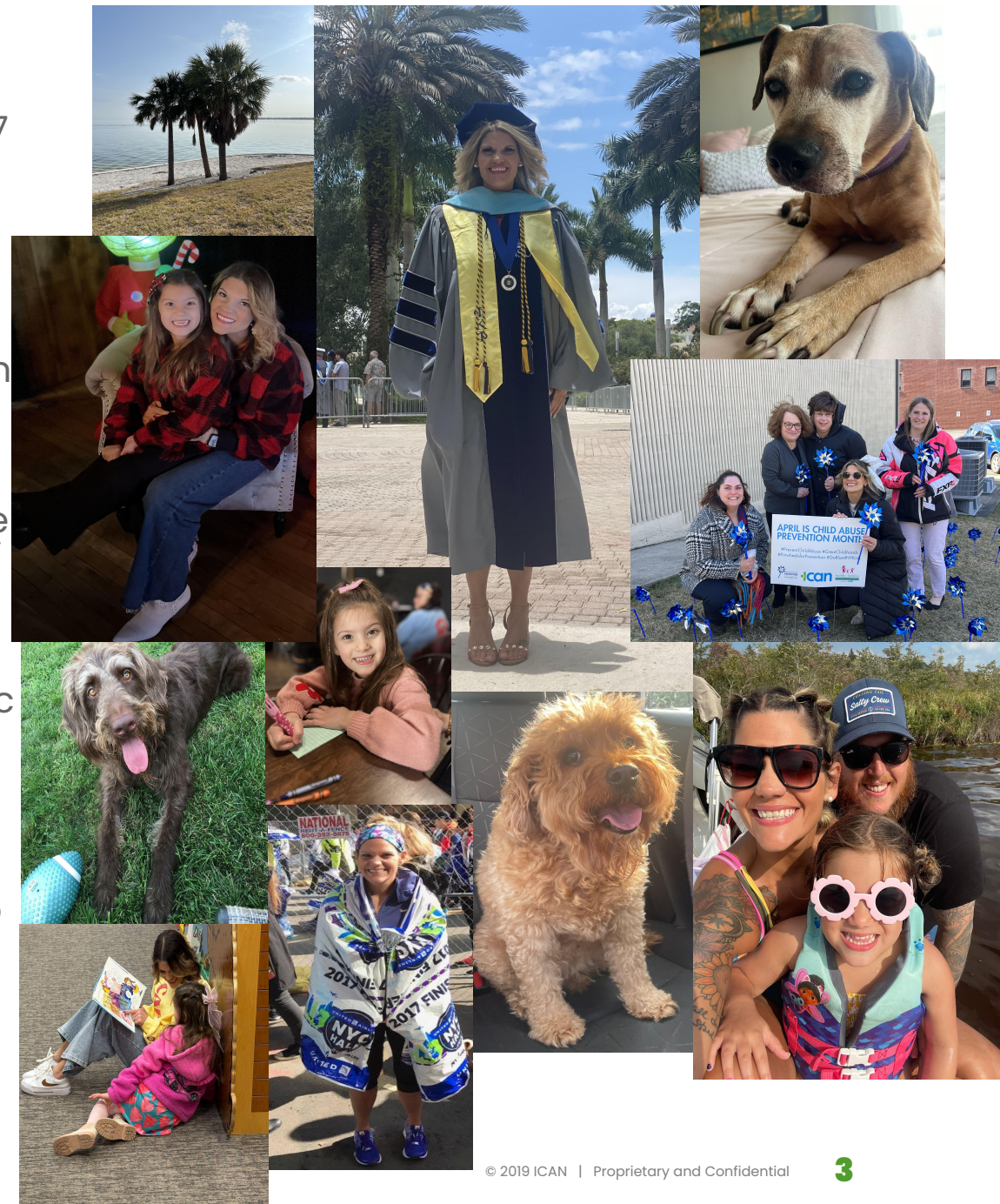
Through ICAN, I was given the opportunity to attend Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCIS) train the trainer training and become certified in TCIS. I'm currently the Program Manager for Healthy Families Montgomery and Schoharie Counties.

Personally:

Keiley is a wife, a mother, a runner, and a sunshine chaser, who loves spending time with her family and friends. She finds peace by the water whether on the lake or by the ocean. She loves to read and can often be found with her nose in a book alongside a cup of coffee. She fills her cup being silly with her daughter and enjoys viewing live music with her husband.



Keeping Families
Together™



Defining Stress

Ice Breaker.

Direction: On the plate in front of you, write down all the different things that are on your mind or that you are taking care of this week.

Different examples:

- Children
- Conflict with someone
- Case notes
- HVL
- Home visits
- Project deadlines
- Upcoming vacations
- Health
- Meetings
- Work travel
- Missed events
- School events
- Practices/Misc scheduled items
- Work
- Education
- Aging Parents/Family Members
- Paying bills
- Errands
- Dinner
- Errands
- Broken items that need repair

Defining Stress

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), stress can be defined as a state of physical, mental or emotional strain or tension caused by difficult situations or challenges.

Types of Stress:

- Acute (short-term)
- Chronic (long-term)
- Traumatic



Stress Response

Physical Effects:

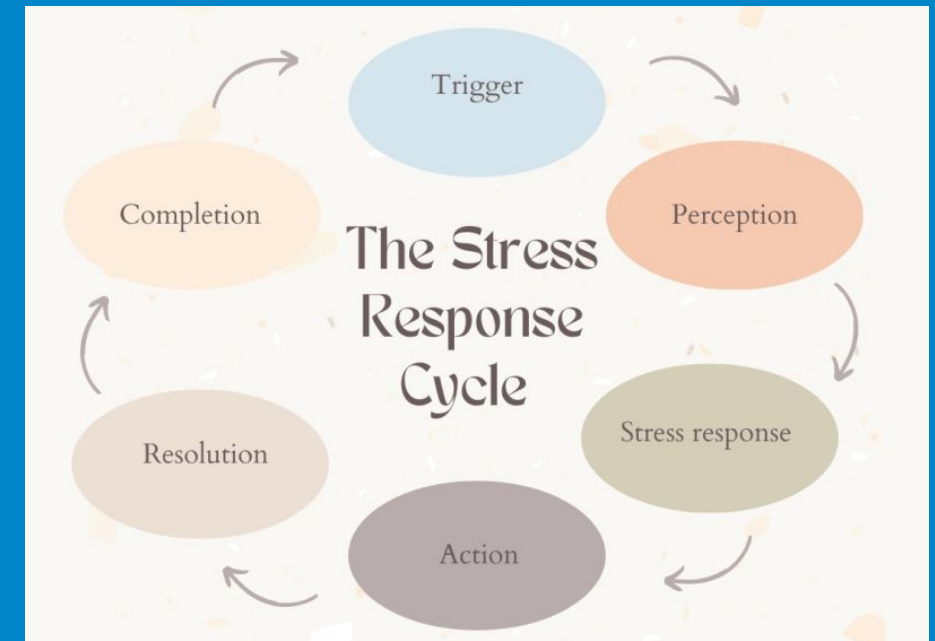
- Increase in heart rate, blood pressure
- Presences of sweating, headaches
- Over/Under-eating, weakened immune system
- Trouble sleeping
- Increase use of alcohol and drugs

Emotional Effects:

- Loss of focus
- Forgetfulness
- Easily Angered/Crying

Mental Effects:

- Impact thoughts and cognitive functions
- Harder to remember things
- Decrease self-esteem/sense of self
- Increase in self-comparison
- Inability to find joy/motivation
- Trouble maintain and making connections in relationships



The Science of Stress

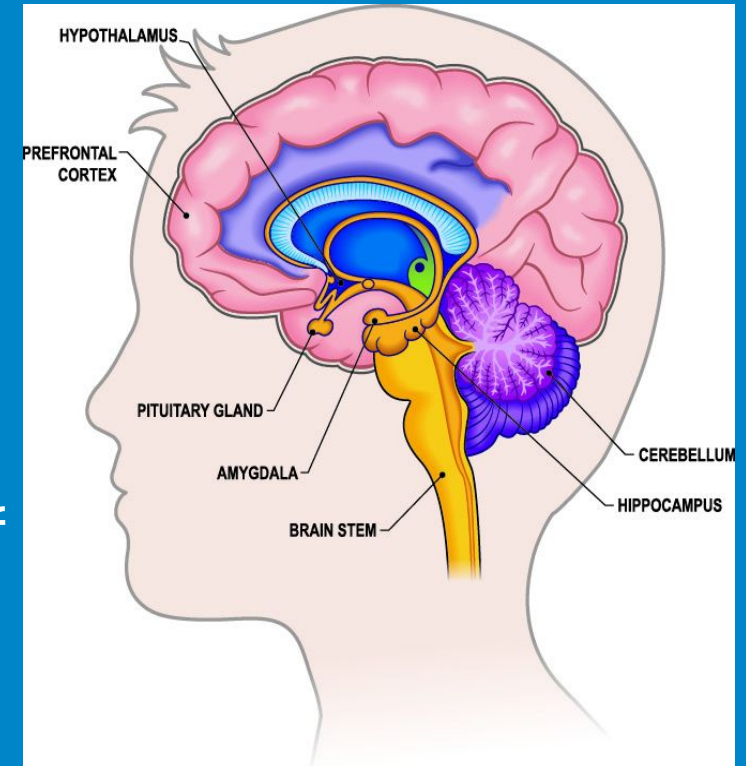
According to neuroscientist, at the foundation of stress there are two particular sections of the brain that are the key players.

Parts of the brain:

- Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)
- Amygdala

Statistics:

- The brain is only made to stay in the state of chronic stress for a short period of time.
- 7 out of 10 people are in a continuous state of chronic state of stress



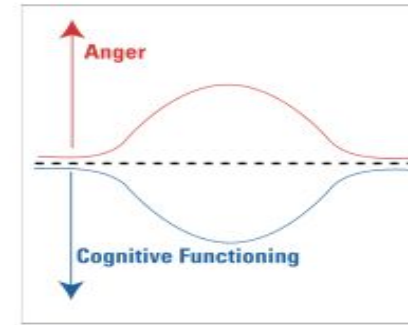
What the science tells us:

“When we are unable to regulate our emotions appropriately, when we are in a chronic state of stress, when we are in immediate danger or have traumatic experiences ... our brains ... their responses on at their lowest ability to clearly communicate.”

This is also known as: “when we are at our angriest, we are at our stupidest” theory.

Effects of Anger

“When we are at our angriest, we are at our stupidest.”



KNOWING OURSELVES 2



TCI – Therapeutic Crisis Intervention

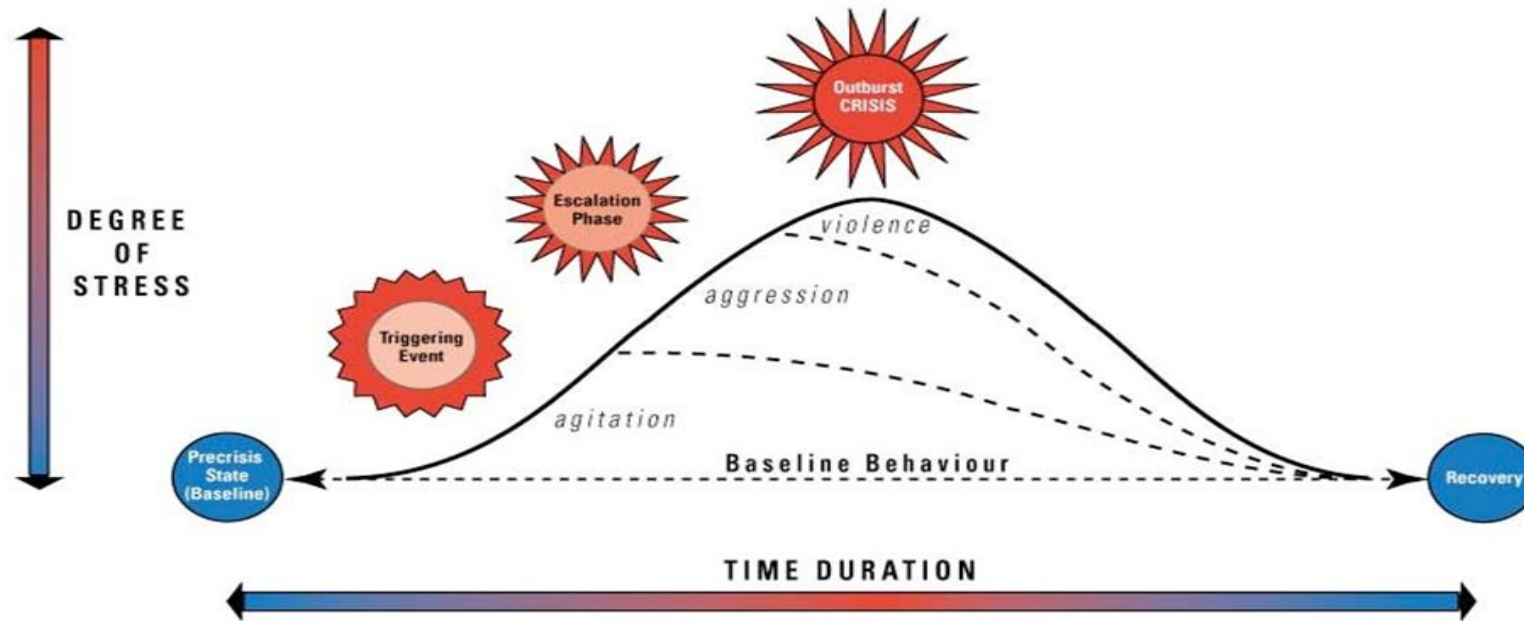
TCI – is an evidence-based intervention technique that helps adults to respond to aggressive behaviors in ways that empower others to recognize that aggression maybe a result of past trauma.

TCI is most effective when the adult is in a place to be therapeutic and assist the person who is deregulated and/or in crisis.

Managing a situation (crisis or emotional response) in a therapeutic manner and promotes growth and development through connection and empathy.

It is not a one size fits all intervention. Each application of this intervention will depend on the state of mind of the adult you are working with.

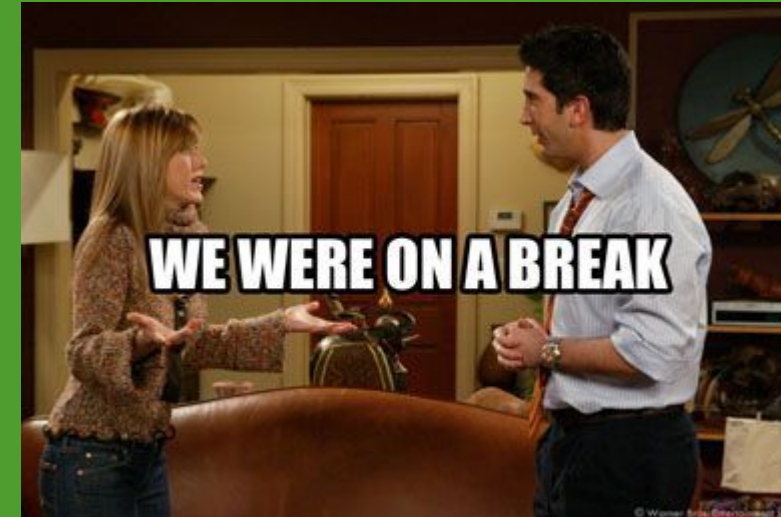
Stress Model of a Crisis



Self-Awareness and Personal Triggers



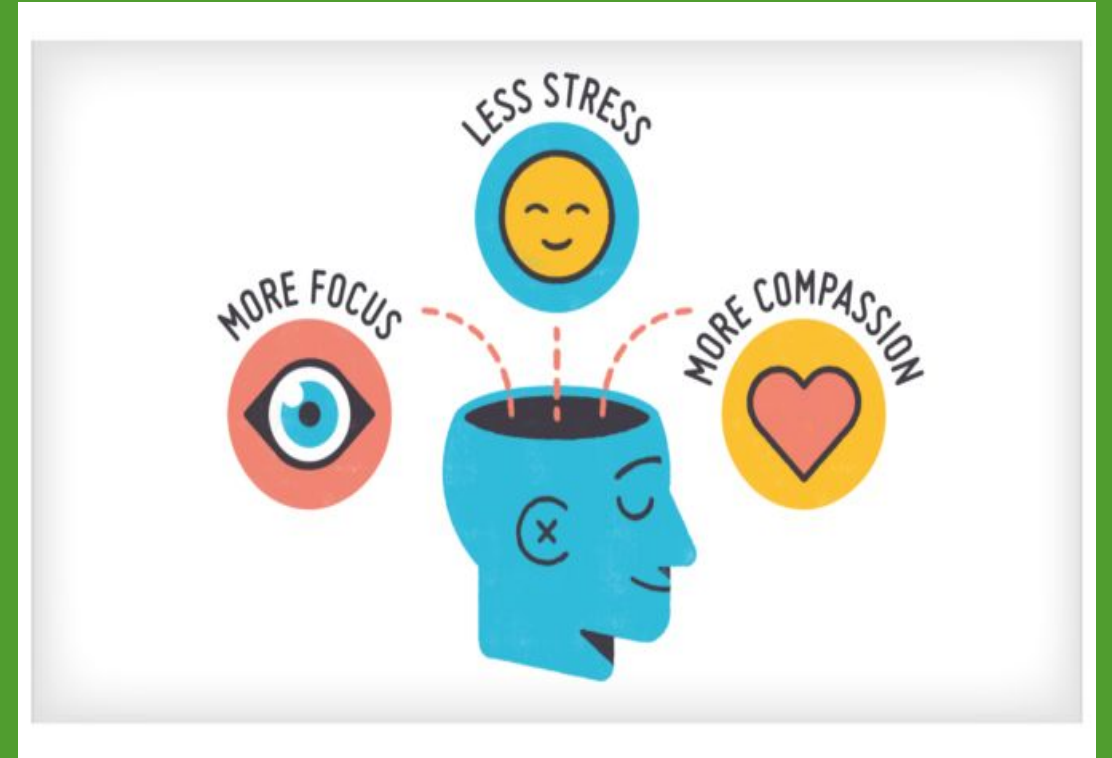
Impact of Perception



Self awareness and self-care

- As humans, we can be triggered by our own personal beliefs, bias, negative thoughts and day to day incidents.
- If we are feeling stress ourselves, then our responses to their behaviors may actual fuel their state of mind and emotional state.
- We can either keep it professional and person-centered focused or let our own bias impact our ability to assist the adult in a state of crisis to return to baseline.

Check yourself.



- 5 minute break -

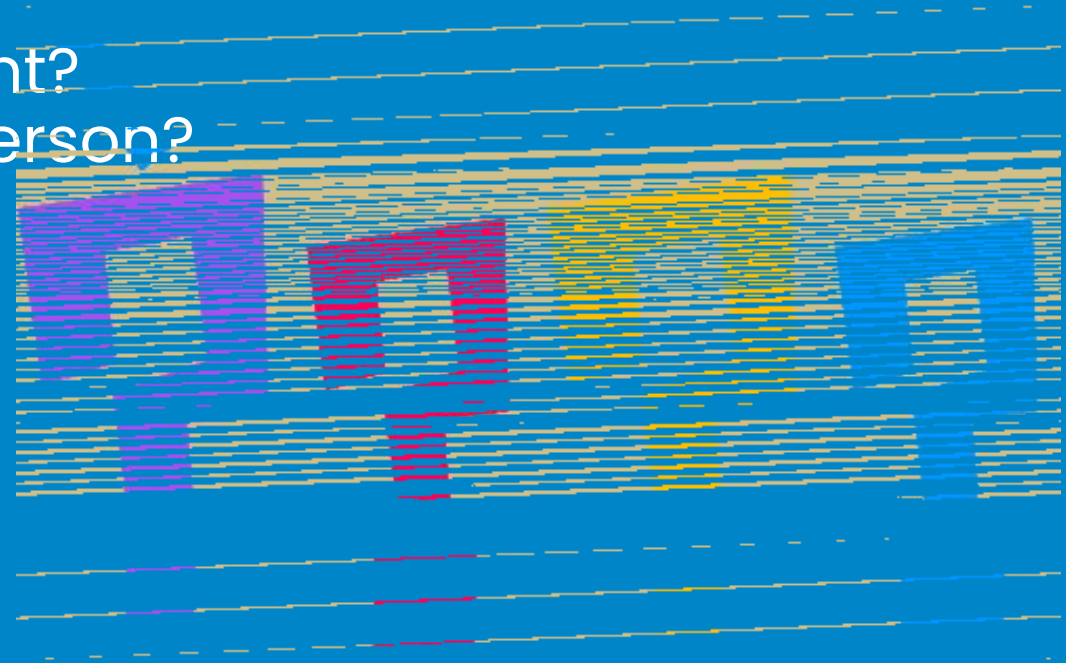


How to Respond to a Crisis Situation



First Step: Four Questions

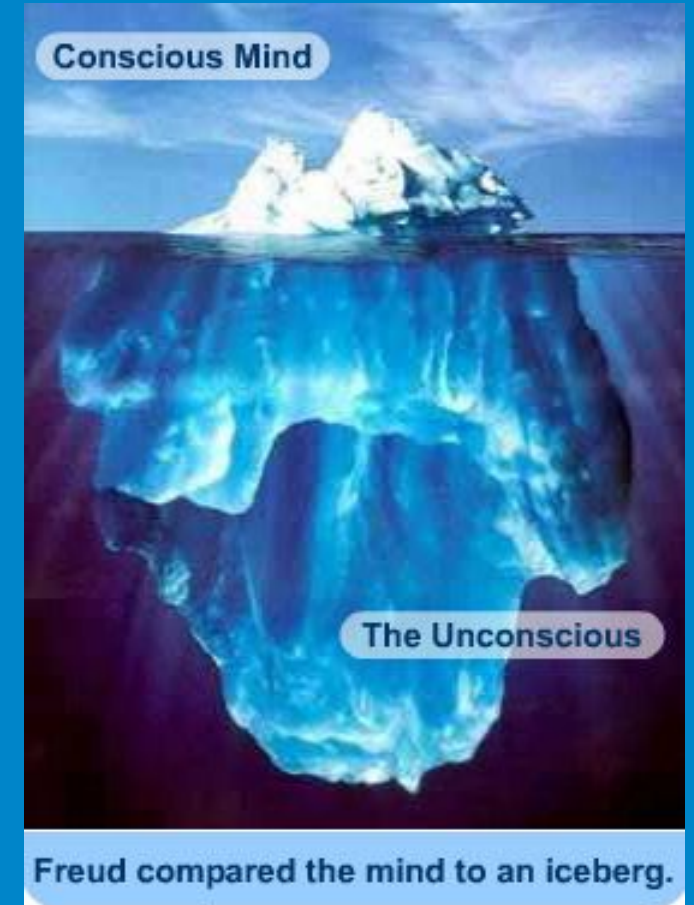
1. What am I feeling now?
2. What does this person feel, need or want?
3. How is the environment affecting the person?
4. How do I best respond?



Step Two: Assessing the Environment/Person in Crisis

What is the root cause of this behavior?

- Trauma
- Environment
- Relationships
- Personal or family problems
- Mental health diagnosis
- Substance abuse
- Etc



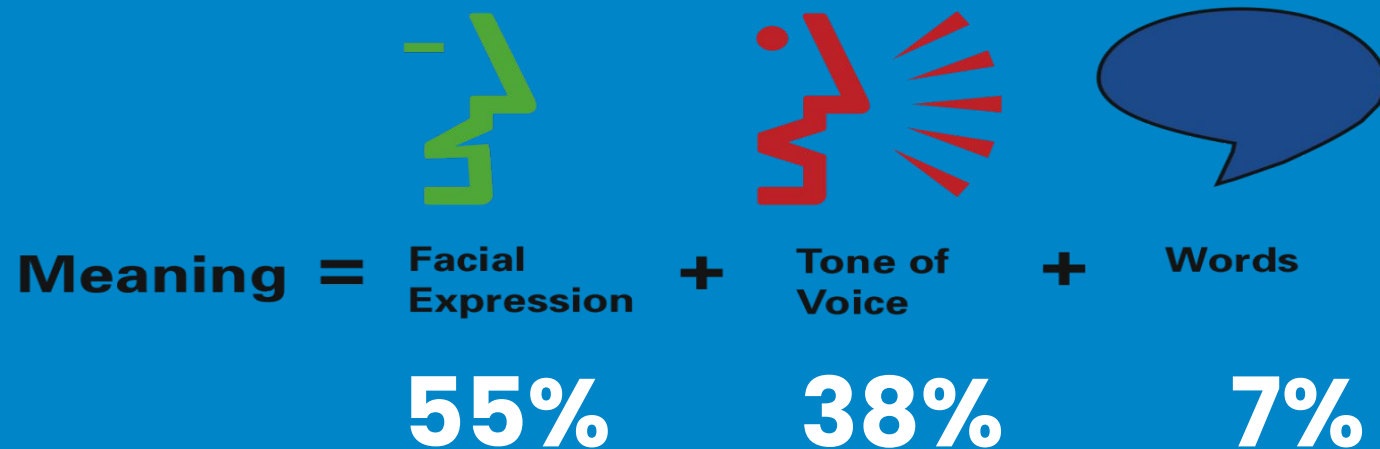
The Environment

- Managing the environment is the **least intrusive and lowest arousal approach** to support a person in crisis and/or with chronic stress
- What things in the environment send the message to potentially harm or trigger?
 - **Examine the physical setting** for possible weapons, stimulating lights or noise levels, crowding, chaotic/messy, frequent interruptions by others
 - **Are the instruction, activities, and routines...** causing frustration, boredom or anger?
 - Is the house chaotic? Lack of sleep? Additional stress in the home?
 - Did something occur right before your interaction with this person?

Ask the Audience:

What percentage of your communication (facial expression, tone of voice and words: are being absorbed by a person during a crisis/state of stress?

MEANING IN SPOKEN COMMUNICATION DURING TIMES OF CRISIS



Step Three: How do I best Respond?

- Provide an environment that supports the person in crisis.
 - Step back
 - Sit down if it is appropriate
 - remember the importance of body language and facial expression
- Provide emotional support by using open-ended questions and reflection
 - I can see, When you., I know we, I am sorry, etc.
 - Be comfortable in the quiet, give the situation time
- Control your tone of voice
 - Get comfortable in the silence
- Exercise self-control over own feelings
 - Take a deep breath
- Modify when possible

What to avoid:

- Talking too much
- Giving solutions

Importance of Active Listening

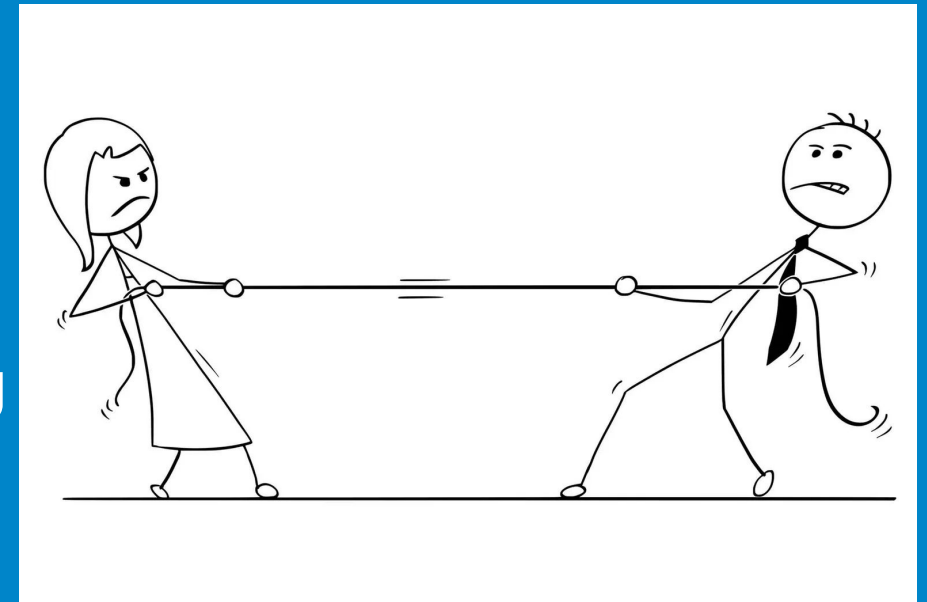
Active Listening – the ability to identify what a person is feeling and then communicate that understanding back to them.

1. Limited understanding of their emotions/actions
2. When you meet someone at their level you decrease the possibility of creating a power struggle and increase reflect validation of the person's feelings and de-escalation can begin.



Step Four: Avoid Power Struggles

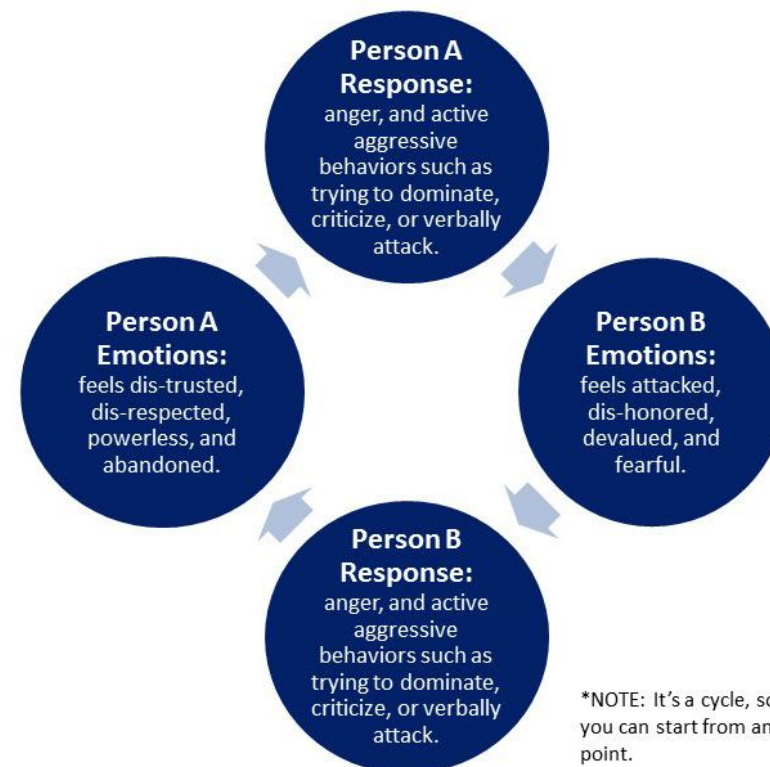
- What is a power struggle?
 - a situation where two individuals, become locked in a verbal or physical conflict while trying to assert control over the other person or the situation.
- Assertive behaviors
 - gain control using forceful language, ultimatums or threats
- Escalation
 - spiral out of control/resistant
- Loss of connection
 - shift the original relationship/damaging



Step Four: Avoid Power Struggles

- Breaking the Power Struggle:
 - Use positive self-talk
 - Listen and validate feelings
 - Manage the environment
 - Remove the stimulation/audience
 - Give the person choice and time
 - Redirect to another potential activity
 - Appeal to the person's interests
 - Drop and/or change expectation
- It's the person not in crisis/stressful state to break the cycle

Example of a Power Struggle*



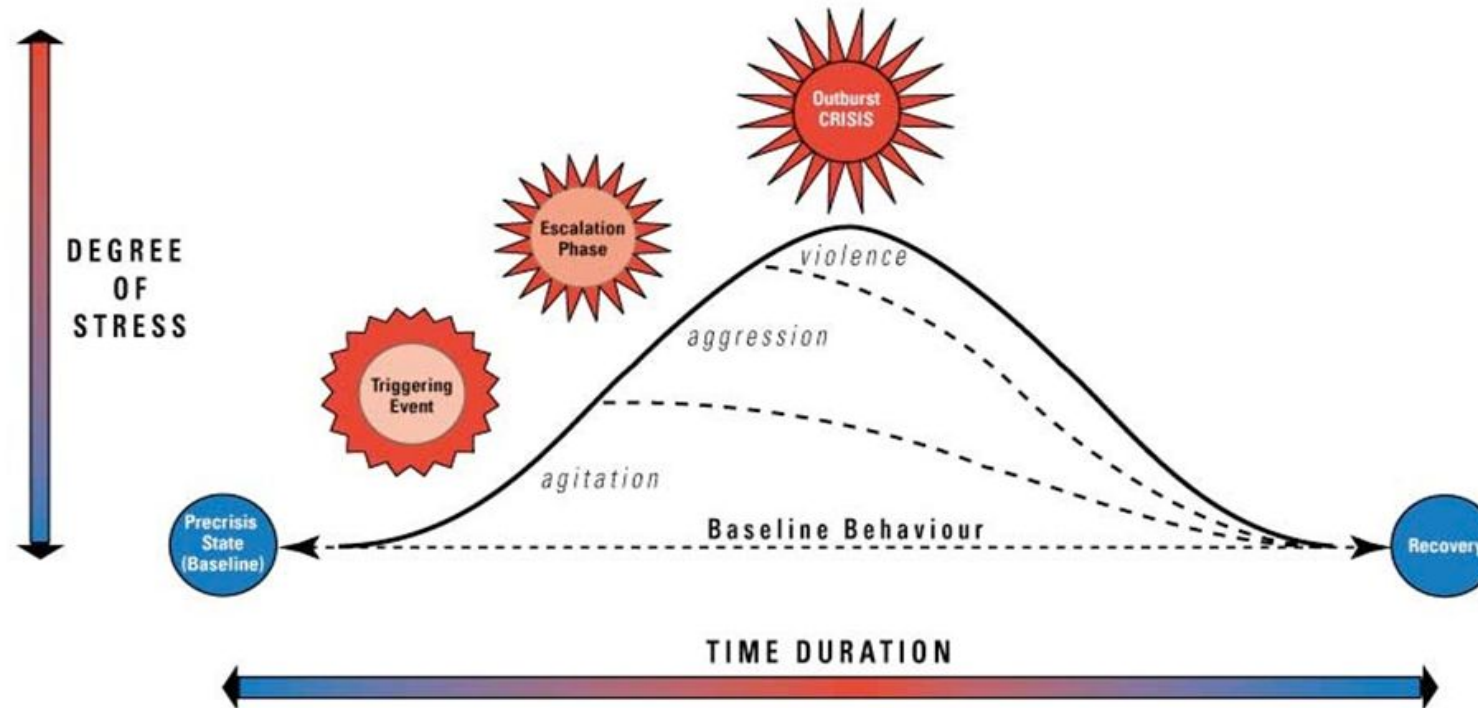
Step Five: Behavioral Intervention

- Managing the environment
- Prompting
 - Verbal or non verbal
 - Helps transitions to difficult topics with predictability
- Caring gesture
- Hurdle Help
 - If a task seems too overwhelming and that they are going to fail, adult may need assistance to overcome the roadblock
 - i.e. inability to complete paperwork or applications
- Redirection or distraction
- Proximity
- Directive Statements
- Time away
 - Time away does not mean isolation or banishment – it means getting away from the stimulus and help provide space to regain control of emotions.

Step Six: Co-Regulating and Restoring Baseline

- Self-regulating vs co-regulating
 - Adults who have never learned to manage their emotions will need someone to co-regulate and teach them how to regulate their emotions.
 - Persons who experience trauma and/or chronic stress are unable to use their executive functions
 - We cannot expect them to have “appropriate” responses in these moments
 - We must teach them through example but teaching can only be done once they are at baseline

Returning to Baseline



Goals of Crisis Intervention

Short Term:

- Alleviate the stress of the event
- Return the person to baseline
- Establish a safe and secure environment

Long Term:

- Strengthen the person's ability to cope in the future with similar situations and when to seek help

Repairing Relationship Post Crisis

- Debrief (only should happen once the person has returned to baseline)
- Debriefing repairs and restores the relationship
- Opportunity to teach a new coping skill
- Conversation is known as Life Space Interview

Life Space Interview

Steps of a LSI:

- Isolate the conversation
 - Explore the person's point of view
 - Summarize the feelings and content
 - Connect the student's feeling and behavior
 - Alternative behavior discussed
 - Plan develop/Practice new behavior
 - Enter back in (Move forward with the day/visit)
-
- Easy way to remember steps – "I – ESCAPE"

Questions/Open Discussion

