


Keeping Everyone Safe:


Coping with and De-escalating Physical Crisis Situations



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For Each Child

- CRISIS IS CONFLICT THAT ESCALATES INTO AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION.....



For Each Adult

.....THAT CRISIS PRESENTS A TIME OF BOTH DANGER AND OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE



5 Reasons For Acting Aggressively/Offensively

- 1) Personal state of mind; angry & upset with "life"
- 2) They've had a past bad experience with students/teachers/school
- 3) They don't know any other way to act when they are emotionally upset.
- 4) They are expecting the worst.
- 5) They only have part of the story.

"I'M READY TO TALK"

- At the time of crisis, not several days later, people want to talk.
The nature of crisis causes this conversation to be emotionally charged.
- The person is distressed, and their communication is often irrational.
- It can be hard to listen to someone who seems unreasonable, argumentative, and willful. They say or do things that challenge our basic values.
- The natural instinct is to correct their irrationality.

Levels of Crisis Development

Student Level	Staff Response
ANXIOUS	SUPPORTIVE
DEFENSIVE (resistant or threatening)	SUPPORTIVE DIRECTIVE
PHYSICALLY ACTING OUT	SUPPORTIVE PHYSICAL
Tension Reduction	Therapeutic Rapport

VERBAL ESCALATION

- Questioning
 - Questions the directive
 - Question anything & everything but the directive
- Refusal: Total non-compliance
- Release: Total verbal expenditure of energy
- Intimidation: Verbally threats of physical harm
- Tension Reduction: Regaining rationality after expenditure of energy
- Listen. Avoid "faking" attention.
- Remain calm, avoid overreaction
- Remove onlookers
- Be prepared to enforce any limits imposed
- Be aware of student's nonverbal cues (read the body language)
- Avoid the use of jargon, it tends to confuse and frustrate the listener

7

What to Do Instead

- Validate the person's possible positive intentions
- Point out the impact of their negative actions
- Provide positive alternatives
- Help make positive choices by providing cues, reminders, and encouragement
- Support new and good choices with positive feedback (Strength Focus vs a Flaw Focus)
- Explain normal setbacks

8

Understand the Dynamics of the Conflict Cycle



"You feel the way you think"



*It is the way we think about an event not the event itself that sets off the feeling.

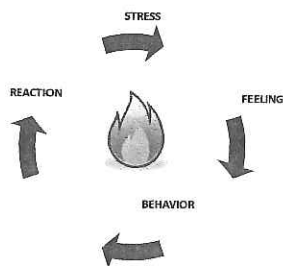
*You can be "speech-less" about something but never "thought-less."

*Thinking and feeling are not separate from one another.

9

THE CONFLICT CYCLE

STUDENT'S SELF CONCEPT
STUDENT'S IRRATIONAL BELIEFS



11

Levels of Insults



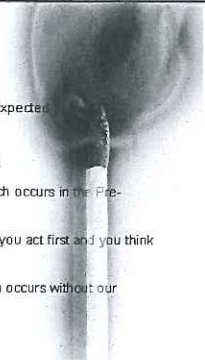
Thou fawning rump-fed bugbear!

12

Two Types of Anger

Spontaneous Anger:


- Happens when you experience sudden/unexpected frustration, disappointment or shock.
- Instantaneous, automatic survival response
 - Generated in your Primitive Brain
 - Bypasses the judgment of thinking which occurs in the Pre-Frontal Cortex.
- When you experience spontaneous anger, you act first and you think later.
- Most importantly, this physiological reaction occurs without our cognitive awareness.



Cognitive Anger


All personal anger that involves some level of thinking before it becomes counter-aggressive.

Counter-aggressive behavior is a learned behavior. It is not an automatic response




Personal

- This Understanding allows us to use our thinking to make better choices, see more options and be a better model of problem solving.



Proximity: Subtly decreasing the physical distance between you and the student

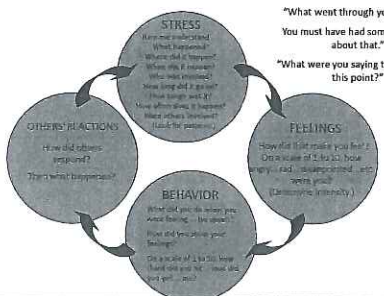
- Safety Stance



Drain Off and Timeline Skills:

- Lead to better trust between the adult & child
- Give the adult a new understanding and insight about the child's psychological world
- Provide the opportunity for a child to learn to put words to overwhelming feelings
- Open the door to discussions about the child's choices during a conflict

Questions to Ask to Obtain a Good Timeline



THOUGHTS
 "What went through your mind?"
 You must have had some thoughts about that."
 "What were you saying to yourself at this point?"

STRESS
 How did it feel?
 What happened?
 When did it happen?
 How long did it last?
 How did it end?
 How did you feel?
 How did you react?
 How did you respond?
 How did you cope?


FEELINGS
 How did it feel?
 How did you feel?
 How did you react?
 How did you respond?
 How did you cope?

BEHAVIOR
 How did you feel?
 How did you react?
 How did you respond?
 How did you cope?

OTHERS' REACTIONS
 How did you feel?
 How did you react?
 How did you respond?
 How did you cope?

HOW YOU SAY IT:

- Volume
- Tone
- Distance
- Facial expressions
- Verbal vs. nonverbal



WHAT YOU SAY:

- Communicate respect no matter what the child has said or done.
- Avoid fearful, angry expressions
- Keep instructions concise and clear
- Be careful with humor
- Use validating responses

Page 2012

Skills for Becoming an Even Better Listener

The word LISTEN contains the same letters as the word SILENT.
— Alfred Brendel

1. Give your full focus
2. Avoid judgment
3. Make eye contact
4. Ask clarifying questions
5. Listen to understand
6. Respond well


Page 2122

“The best time to stop a problem is before it begins!”
Horace 1st Century.

- **Concept 1** Anger and conflicts are a normal and inevitable part of my life.
- **Concept 2** I cannot expect others to act the way I want them to act or to be aware of my needs.
- **Concept 3** Aggressive behavior is an automatic response.
- **Concept 4** My anger is determined by how I think about it
- **Concept 5** My aggressive behavior is only one way I can respond to frustration and disappointment
- **Concept 6** I cannot control the weather, historical events, or my age

Calm the Lower Brain (Regulate)

- Make sure you are calm (no adrenaline):
*Importance of mirror neurons
- Limit words
- Breathe deeply and slowly.
- Acknowledge feelings and attempts at self-regulation
- Rhythmic movements



A child cannot “use their words” until the lower brain is calm.


22

CORRECTION

- 1) **Acknowledge** Positive Intentions.
- 2) **Behavioral Observation**- Say what you saw, noticed or heard.
- 3) **Impact**—What happens when you do that? What’s the problem with that?
- 4) **What’s a better Way?**
- 5) **Follow Up**-People Grow and Change when they are also told what they did right.

23

SODAS



SITUATION-	
OPTION #1	
ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
OPTION #2	
ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
OPTION #3	
ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
OPTION #4	
ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
SOLUTION-	

KEY POINTS

- **Involve students in decisions that affect them**
- **Model dignity and respect by giving it to the student even without the guarantee you will get it back**
- **If you realize you did or said something wrong, be honest about it.**
- **Give freedom of choice to the student coupled with responsibility**

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