



Verbal De-escalation

Overview:

Individuals with complex health and social needs can have complicated communication and agitation that comes from many sources - a history of childhood trauma, current life trauma, psychiatric illness or addiction. Understanding how to honor an authentic healing relationship in the moment of care and create safety and effective communication is an important competency for providers. Verbal de-escalation is an evidence based practice that can be very effective for individuals with complex needs.

Read the following Guideline for a description of Best Practice with Verbal De-escalation:

- [Best Practices in Evaluation and Treatment of Agitation](#) - American Association for Emergency Psychiatry. The authors detail the proper foundations for appropriate training for de-escalation and provide intervention guidelines, using the “10 domains of de-escalation.”

Reading the principles and evidence based best practices for verbal de-escalation gives you the foundation for changing practice. The next series of videos will give you the opportunity to see verbal de-escalation in action and learn how you might apply it with the people you work with.

Review the following short videos from the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance and the University of Colorado School of Medicine:

- [Verbal De-escalation – Understanding Agitation – Psych patient](#) (9 min)
- [Verbal De-Escalation – Chapter 1, BARS EB score](#) (8 min)
- [Verbal De-Escalation – Chapter 2 – Basic Skills](#) (11 min)
- [Verbal De-Escalation – Chapter 3 – Opioid use disorder](#) (7 min)
- [Verbal De-Escalation – Chapter 4 – Teams and modeling](#) (8 min)
- [Verbal De-Escalation – Chapter 5 – Personal Safety](#) (4 min)

Reflection and Case Study

Considering what you have learned through reviewing the article and videos, write a case study of when you applied verbal de-escalation well in a situation with an escalated individual OR when you did not apply verbal de-escalation with an escalated individual.

Case Study – Effective or Ineffective Verbal De-Escalation

- Describe the situation with the individual
- What role did you play in that situation and how did you practice verbal de-escalation or not practice verbal de-escalation?
- What impact did that practice have on the individual?
- How will you carry that practice into your new team or how will you change your practice with your work in complex care?



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Situation:

BARS assessment score:

Your role and verbal de-escalation practice:

Impact on the individual:

Practice you will carry into your new team:



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