

CRISIS INTERVENTION AND DE-ESCALATION

COMPETENCIES: CRISIS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

INTRODUCTION

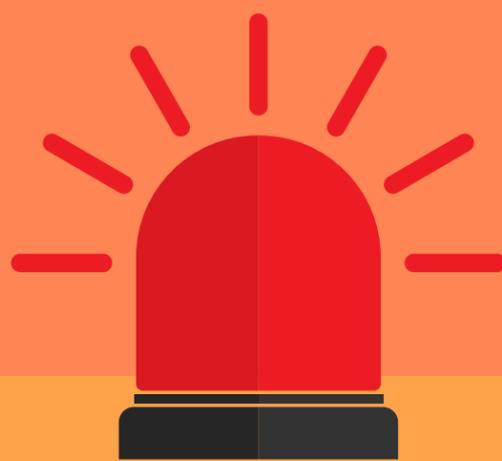
In your direct support to adults with Autism, it is possible that you will encounter moments of crisis. A crisis can be triggered by environmental, social and communication stressors, changes in schedules or routines, task anxiety, and other factors. Crisis looks different for every individual, but in each situation, there will be a period of escalation before the crisis and then a de-escalation. Below you'll find a helpful strategy for navigating how you can recognize and respond to an individual you're supporting when he or she is escalating, in crisis, or de-escalating.

BE ABLE TO SELF-IDENTIFY

It is important to know yourself and how you tend to react when you see an individual escalating or in crisis. Identify some of the feelings you may have when you see an individual escalating:

- You may feel anxious
- You may feel frustrated
- You may feel responsible for the behavior
- You may feel helpless

Now that you've identified your potential feelings, try to put any reactions or judgements aside. You can process these feelings with a supervisor or colleague at a later time.



INTERVENTION

First, it is important to ensure an individual's safety as well as your own when an individual is escalating, in crisis, and de-escalating. If it is appropriate, and if you can, identify and remove the triggers causing the crisis.

- Be familiar with an individual's Crisis Intervention Plan and utilize your own crisis intervention training when you recognize that a person is escalating or in crisis. Talk to the person you support and learn about his or her triggers. You may not know what he or she considers a crisis, and you need to know what "crisis" looks like to that person.
- Be clear and concise with your language, if you are speaking to the individual during the escalation, crisis, or de-escalation.
- Be aware of your voice tone and volume if and when you are speaking to the individual.
- Be aware of your body language around the person.
- If appropriate, ask questions to determine what the person needs you to do to help him/her through the crisis; it is good to determine where the person would like you to be, whether or not you should speak, and if there is anything you can get the person to assist him/her.
- Be able to recognize when it is appropriate to introduce coping strategies during the escalation, crisis, and de-escalation. Ask for help when needed through use of supervisors, individual's natural supports, and crisis intervention services.

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW!

- 1 A good first step in crisis prevention is to identify someone's potential triggers. You can do this by asking the person, colleagues, and family members or others who know him well then plan accordingly.
- 2 Seek assistance from your supervisor and colleagues whenever you observe increasing behavior challenges in someone you're supporting.