



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IN NURSING FACILITIES

De-Escalation Toolkit

Self-Check

When facing a challenging situation, it is important to do a self-check. A self-check is an assessment of one's feelings, cultural identity, triggers, values, assumptions & biases. This self-awareness will help one manage their responses in a safe and effective manner.



Before engaging, assess personal readiness by asking yourself the following:

SELF-CHECK	CONSIDER	TIPS
What's happening?	What is being requested? What is the underlying issue?	Gather information from others when needed. Stay calm.
What's going on with me?	Be mindful of your triggers and emotions.	Know when to step away or ask for help. Have a code word so others know when to intervene.
What's going on around me?	Are other people around?	Keep a safe distance. Move the discussion to a private area when possible.



Remember to respond to the person with empathy, rather than react to your own feelings.

10 Tips to De-Escalate Challenging Situations



High levels of fear, stress, and anxiety can cause a wide range of behaviors.

These behaviors can be displayed as:



AGITATION



DEMANDS



THREATS



PROFANITY



PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

Here are 10 de-escalation tips to help provide the best possible care while maintaining safety.

1. Remain calm and speak in a neutral voice.
2. Listen to the concern(s) and answer questions.
3. Keep expressions and posture relaxed. Limit hand gestures.
4. Summarize what the person has expressed – “Tell me if I have this correct....”
5. Empathize with feelings and be nonjudgmental.
6. Set clear and enforceable limits. Avoid making threats or promises.
7. Allow the person to speak without interruption when appropriate. Being heard is a valuable tool.
8. Focus on the solution, not the problem.
9. Know when to step away, or request assistance from a peer or supervisor.
10. Don't take it personally.



Using the “5 WHATS” to Debrief

Debrief with team members following any incident. Debriefing offers an opportunity to discuss the event in a structured manner, while identifying improvement strategies. Use the “5 WHATS” as a guide in team debriefings.

