

# Dealing with Aggressive Behavior



Presented by  
**Bob Thornton**  
Community Corrections Institute, LLC



Robert L. Thornton, Director  
P.O. BOX 130, SPRINGDALE, WA 99173  
509-258-7426-Email [CCI4414@gmail.com](mailto:CCI4414@gmail.com)  
[COMMUNITYCORRECTIONS, LLC](http://COMMUNITYCORRECTIONS,LLC)

*Dealing with Aggressive Behavior*

**Dealing with Aggressive Behavior Manual and Workbook**

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**Mail inquiries to Community Corrections Institute, LLC, P. O. Box 130, Springdale, WA 99173**

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## INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

**Robert L. (Bob) Thornton**, M.Ed., is Director of Community Corrections Institute, LLC, a company dedicated to providing training and consultation specifically designed for corrections and law enforcement agencies. Previously, he served as a Pretrial, Probation, and Supervising U.S. Probation Officer for over 27 years, during which he served as a faculty member of the Federal Judicial Center and has developed, and continues to provide training in, enhanced supervision, officer safety skills, dealing with aggressive behavior, effective communication and management skills. Since 2010 Bob has served as Project Director for Project Safe Neighborhoods grants focusing on gang issues in Native American and rural jurisdictions.

He also conducts training for the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA). He co-authored the 1993 National Institute of Corrections monograph, *New Approaches to Staff Safety*, and is the author of *New Approaches to Staff Safety-Second Edition*, released in March, 2003. He also authored the 2008 publication *Guns, Safety and Proactive Supervision: Involving Probation and Parole in Project Safe Neighborhoods*, 2012 article *Gang Supervision: The “Off-Duty” Safety Issues*, and co-authored *Practical Action Tips on Officer Safety for Tribal Probation Personnel*, and *Is Safety Training Taking a Backseat to Everything Else?* between 2014 and 2016.

He writes the “**Spotlight on Safety**” column for the APPA “*Perspectives*” magazine and has published numerous other articles on officer and staff safety. Bob also serves as a subject matter expert for the National Institute of Justice “Incident Commander” simulation training website, the APPA and Relias Learning On-Line Safety Training Program, and the APPA Audio Broadcast Safety Training and Firearm Interdiction Programs.

Bob also conducts agency audits for NIC, is a certified use-of-force analyst, and has provided expert witness testimony on issues relating to officer safety, use-of-force and probation/parole practices.

He is a member of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association, Federal Probation & Pretrial Officers Association (FPPOA) and the American Probation and Parole Association, serving as Chair of the associations Health and Safety Committee from 2001-2011.

He was the 1990 recipient of the Line Officer of the Year Award for the Western Region of the United States and the 1998 recipient of the Doyle Award, presented by FPPOA in recognition of his contributions to effective offender supervision issues. He was also the 2002 recipient of the Sam Houston State University Award presented by APPA “...in recognition of his outstanding contributions to scholarship in Community Corrections”, the 2007 Sam Houston State University Distinguished Service Award for “exceptional service and commitment to the Texas Probation Training Academy”, and the 2009 recipient of the George M. Keiser Award presented by the National Association of Probation Executives. “This award is presented to administrators who have demonstrated exceptional leadership under challenging conditions which provided value, added activity or service to the organization and community they serve.”

# PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this program you will be able to:

- Assess your “*conflict resolution*” skills.
- Understand the “*Color Code of Awareness.*”
- Evaluate why some people “*under-react*” and some “*over-react.*”
- Practice “*Crisis Rehearsal.*”
- Understand the role “*angering*” behavior plays in the communication process.
- Identify your “*early warning*” system that alerts you to perceived threat.
- Recognize the verbal and nonverbal indicators associated with “*bluff*” behavior.
- Apply the “*appropriate intervention*” for the corresponding level of behavior.
- Recognize “*danger*” behavior and your options for safe resolution.



## HOSTILITY AND ANGER: THE MISUNDERSTOOD EMOTION

How you and the people you deal with act when dealing with anger and hostile people depends largely on how you and that person perceive anger. Many feel that they have no control over anger and that it is something that is caused by others. Anger, and our emotions, become almost a “third party” to the situation.

Somewhere, many have learned to treat emotions as something that is separate from ourselves. Consider the following statements and their implications:

*“Whenever I encounter stress...”*

*“She is makes me so angry.”*

*“I was so upset I had no choice but to...”*

At the point our feelings become problematic, we tend to embody them with a life of their own. When we transform our feeling from verbs (action words) to nouns (things), we begin to excuse ourselves from behaving responsibly.

Angering (not anger) is a behavioral choice like all other behaviors. It is one of many behaviors people can choose in their attempts to get what they want. People choose angering because it has worked for them in the past. They will continue to choose it as long as they believe it will work again, or they find a better way to deal with the situations and the feelings they are experiencing.

You can't stop people from “angering,” but you can help them find more effective behaviors. You can also direct your behavior and effectively influence the results. While you may not always be able to “control” other people, you can choose to control yourself.

In order to effectively deal with high intensity situations, e.g., angering, resistive people, we need to thoroughly learn techniques to effective intervention. To do this we should:

- Learn the appropriate skills and practice them in a realistic, dynamic manner.
- In times of crisis, learn to act in a positive, controlled manner. This involves directing and controlling your “total behavior,” (thinking, feeling, doing and controlling your physiological responses) toward effective resolution.
- Learn to evaluate different types of situations in their true perspective, not allowing your emotions or preconceived expectations to color the situation or your reactions. You need to diagnose a situation based upon specific criteria that will lead you to an objective decision-making process and appropriate intervention.

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## **SELF AWARENESS**

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**The first step in dealing effectively with other people is to deal effectively with yourself. We cannot control the behavior of others, but we can influence their choices by practicing self awareness and control. Take a few minutes and answer the following questions.**

**1. What happens to your body when you feel anxious or threatened?**

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**2. What do you tell yourself when you begin to feel threatened?**

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**3. What do you do when you begin to feel threatened?**

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**4. What are some of the things other people do that irritate you or make you feel threatened?**

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**5. Are there certain people or groups of people that make you feel uncomfortable?**

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**6. What information or skills do you need to learn to be safe and effective in dealing with angry, aggressive, or combative people?**

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# THE FOUR STAGES OF COMPETENCE

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- Unconscious Incompetence
- Conscious Incompetence
- Conscious Competence
- Unconscious Competence



*“Responders will have to take their fundamental knowledge and adapt it to the situation they face”*

*Dave Spaulding*

- **Your Effectiveness Starts with How You Think!**
- **The bottom line is, the more skills you possess the more likely you will prevail in a confrontation situation.**

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## WHY STAFF UNDER-REACT

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- Failure to understand the *dynamics* of aggressive behavior
- Failure to *be mentally prepared*.
- Failure to *receive* training.
- Failure to *believe* in training.
- Failure to believe in their *ability*.
- *Mythical Thinking*.

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## REACTION BALANCE<sup>1</sup>

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### ***OVER-REACTING***

- Taking more action than necessary.
- Over extending beyond your capabilities.
- Rushing up on dangerous situations or people.
- Rushing into threat locations.
- Acting on impulse.

### ***UNDER-REACTING***

- Not taking enough action.
- Underestimating your adversary (misread capability).
- Exhibiting carelessness.
- Giving into complacency.
- Refusing to make a decision.

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<sup>1</sup> Adams, McTernan and Remsberg, op. cit.

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## ELEMENTS OF MENTAL PREPARATION

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- Personal Commitment
- Mental Awareness
- Crisis Rehearsal

There are three elements to all behavior; *thinking, feeling* and *doing*. We will address all three areas and how we control all three elements so we preform effectively in all situations.

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## PRESUMED COMPLIANCE

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As most of our contacts will not result in any type of conflict, it is easy for us to *presume* there will be compliance in all out contacts. *Presumed compliance* results in:

- **Overconfidence**
- **Apathy**
- **Diminished motivation to train**
- **Increases reaction time**
- **Dulls intuition and instincts**
- **Force option tunnel vision**
- **Dulls communication skills**



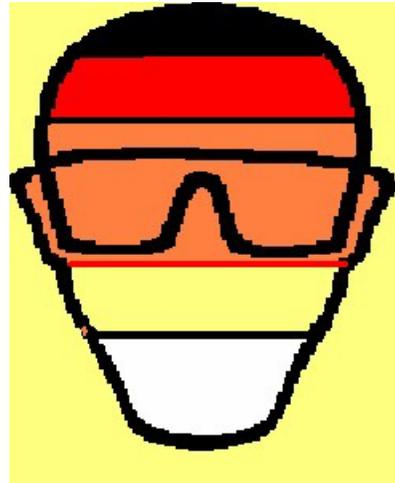
Thanks for coming in.

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## COLOR CODE of AWARENESS <sup>2</sup>

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- **Condition BLACK**
- **Condition RED**
- **Condition ORANGE**
- **Condition YELLOW**
- **Condition WHITE**



- **Condition WHITE** *Totally relaxed state of mind. In familiar surroundings and unprepared to respond to any type of threat.*
- **Condition YELLOW** *Relaxed awareness. In a typical environment but realizing that threats can occur*
- **Condition ORANGE** *State of alarm. You have perceived a threat and the body and mind has started to respond. You are considering the appropriate force options.*
- **Condition RED** *State of combat. You are a physical target. A confrontation is imminent.*
- **Condition BLACK** *Blind panic. The threat overwhelms you and you fail to control the adversary.*

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<sup>2</sup> Cooper, Jeff, *Principles of Personal Defense*, Paladin Press: Boulder, Colorado, 1972.

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## DEFENSIVE REACTION CYCLE<sup>3</sup>

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- *Perception*
- *Evaluation*
- *Reaction*

*Action is always quicker than reaction.*

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## FIGHT, FLIGHT or FREEZE REACTION

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- New or dangerous situations trigger the "fight or flight" response.
- Whether you face real or imaginary fear, physical danger, or emotional stress, the reaction is the same.
- Our reactionary system can become so overwhelmed that we "freeze," failing to take the proper reactions to the threat. This freeze reaction can be overcome by dynamic training and "stress inoculation."
- Stressful reactions will cause adrenaline dump, thus speeding up the cardiovascular system.
- Adrenaline dump becomes energy.
- Your pulse quickens.
- Your muscles tense.
- The resulting rush of adrenaline equips you for any extra effort you might need.



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<sup>3</sup> Desmedt, John, Police S.A.F.E.T.Y. Systems, Inc., 1989, as instructed by R. Scott Schlechter, Master Instructor, Protective (Police) S.A.F.E.T.Y. Systems.

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## CRISIS REHEARSAL

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*Crisis Rehearsal* is the use of mental images (internal movies) to develop appropriate reactions to confrontations. By repeatedly imagining yourself in a crisis where you successfully defeat a threat, you condition yourself to respond with the same proficiency in a real encounter. Your visualization of practicing proper tactics, physical and equipment skills, programs your nerves and muscles to respond automatically and lessens your susceptibility to stress interference.

Most techniques for dealing with potentially dangerous situations are simple and based upon easily retained skills. However, they require extensive use and application to be successful. They must become a natural and conditioned reflex. Under stress, in a crisis, you will instinctively revert to the way you have trained.

The most effective means of practicing *crisis rehearsal* is to continually review or discuss with a partner “what if” scenarios, e.g., what if the person is intoxicated, in the middle of a drug deal, fighting with a spouse, etc. The more we practice *crisis rehearsal* the better prepared we will be.

- Visualize the threat/issue.
- Visualize your response, both verbally and physically. Be specific!
- See yourself successfully resolving the situation.



# DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

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**OBJECTIVE:** To explain the role angering plays in the communication process, identify your early warning system that alerts you to potential threat, identify the verbal and non-verbal behaviors associated with bluff and danger behavior, and incorporate guidelines for effectively dealing with emotionally disturbed persons.

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## THE FIVE UNIVERSAL TRUTHS<sup>4</sup>

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1. All cultures want to be respected and treated with dignity, regardless of the situation. When not treated with respect, all people want revenge and fight.
2. All people would rather be asked than told what to do. To ask is a sign of respect. To tell is often a sign of disrespect.
3. All people want to know why they are asked or told to do something. Telling people why is another sign of respect and it calms 70 percent of difficult people. Not telling people why is a sign of disrespect and lowers morale in organizations and creates resistance in people.
4. All people would rather have options than threats. Again, offering people a choice of action shows respect and allows people to save face. Threats are not only disrespectful, they force people to resist and fight if they have any backbone!
5. Finally, all people want a second chance to make matters right. We err and act in ways we wish we hadn't. Whenever appropriate, people value being given a second chance to get it right.

Think of the officer that calls the defendant and says—"You need to be in my office tomorrow at 10 or you're going to jail!" How many of the "Universal Truths" were violated?

**EXERCISE:** List at least one reason you think people violate each of the five "Truths".

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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5.

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<sup>4</sup>

Thompson, Dr. George, *Winning tactic for speaking with subjects*, Police.com News, 2011

## **THE FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE SYNDROME**

To deal effectively with angering behavior, we need to have some idea of what is happening physiologically, since recognizing and dealing with this part of the behavior system is vital to effective resolution.

We must understand that as a “control system,” the primary purpose of our behavior is need- satisfaction/system survival. Whenever we perceive something to be potentially need-threatening, we begin to use whatever behaviors are necessary to survive the threat.

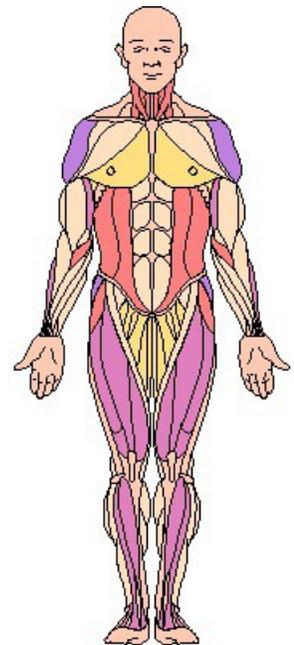
The behaviors we use basically come from “two brains,” each with very separate and sometimes conflicting responsibilities. We will talk more about the brain and aggression later, for now, it is important to understand that the “old brain” (or mid-brain area) deals with physical survival; the “new brain” (cerebral area) deals with our psychological needs and interaction with the “real” world. In dealing with aggressive behavior situations, the physiological part of our behavior system has commonly been described as the Fight or Flight Response.

Basically, this involves the following process:

When there is a perceived threat the central and sympathetic nervous system is activated, which in turn activates the pituitary and hypothalamus. With the activation of our neurotransmitters in the brain, the adrenal glands are activated which produced adrenaline and cortisone which in turn provides us energy to respond.

### **Instantaneous Physiological Changes**

- **Dilation of pupils**
- **Decrease in salivation**
- **Increase in rate, strength and regularity of heart**
- **Increase in blood pressure**
- **Redirection of blood to “gross motor” muscles**
- **Partial blood clotting**
- **Bowel/bladder control loosens**
- **Senses sharpen/focus**



## TOTALITY OF CIRCUMSTANCES

We can handle some degree of changes in our lives. There comes a point, however, when we are having too many things change all at once-or one change is so difficult (e.g., divorce, threat of incarceration, etc.) that we can't take anymore without getting angry and feeling threatened or overwhelmed. We call this *totality of circumstances*.

*Recognition: The point at which our "status quo" behaviors are interrupted so severely that we respond inappropriately.*



## PROBABILITY

Have you ever noticed that you tend to do the same things over and over, e.g., go to work, eat lunch with the same people, go home, watch certain television programs, go to bed at the same time, etc? The way we live our lives tends to follow *patterns*.

Behaviorists have traditionally explained this type of behavior as a result of stimulus response conditioning, i.e., behavior is a function of its consequences. The problems with this type of thinking are:

1. There is a strong implication that control of our behavior is external to us and that we can control (or be controlled by) other people.
2. Since we aren't in control of ourselves, we can't be held responsible for what we do.

This kind of thinking is typical with angering behavior. Consider all that is involved in the often- heard statement, "she (he) made me mad!"

The perception/belief becomes, "I'm not in control of myself and you are responsible for what I do." As we continue this process of responding with anger to what is being said, or to what we are not getting, we continue the angering pattern.

Unless our needs are met, or we realize that we are in control of our responses, it is predictable that our "angering" behavior will continue and we will tend to elevate our angering response in an effort to get what we want.



One of the best predictors of future behavior is past behavior. If a person has a history of responding in a certain way, it is predictable that response will continue until they learn a more effective way.

## **COMMUNICATION**

**Communication is the interchange of thoughts, messages and information through verbal and non-verbal means.**

**It is imperative that we are aware of how we communicate with others verbally and physically.**

**Various sources differ on what percentage of our communication is verbal and how much is non-verbal. A common percentage offered states that only 7 percent of our communication is from the spoken word, 38 percent is from voice and tone, while 57 percent is from our body language. Obviously it is important that we convey the same message not only by what we say verbally but by what we say non-verbally.**

**Our non-verbal communication is a function of our:**

- **Facial expressions**
- **Posture**
- **Focus and eye contact**
- **Territory, that is, the space that we require around us and how we interact with others space requirements**
- **Timing of our speech**
- **Gestures that we make**



## DEFUSION QUESTIONS

The following questions are designed to provoke thought in a potential aggressor. Remember, one of your goals is to try to keep the person in the thinking area of the brain. Asking questions helps to accomplish this.

Ask: *“What do you want?”*

- Try to clarify the issue
- Listen and reflect

Ask: *“What are you doing?”*

- If they don't answer, describe what they are doing, e.g., yelling, cursing, threatening, etc.

Ask: *“Is that helping?”*

- Get them to evaluate their effectiveness in using the behavior they have chosen. Offer a non-violent option.
- Provide them other options to get what they want!

When making plans with people, consider the “SAMS” principles. Plans should be:

*S*imple

*A*ttainable

*M*easurable, and

*S*pecific

## **BLUFF BEHAVIORS**

**Bluff behaviors are those behaviors used to communicate, deter, or attempt to frighten through intimidation. Bluff behaviors come in three stages, Anxiety Behavior, Defensive Behavior and Aggressive Behavior. You may see the individual build through these stages, or you may come in at any of the levels. Your job is to accurately read, and appropriately respond, to the behavior.**

## **ANXIETY BEHAVIOR**

**Definition: Seemingly purposeless behavior signaling low-level fear and/or confusion.**

**Recognition: Excessive movement or talking, catastrophic expectations, furtive eye movement.**

- Pacing
- Twitching
- Tapping fingers
- Shaking

**Response: Remain calm. Reassure, ask questions, provide information.**

- Listen
- Acknowledge feelings
- Be non-judgmental
- Be positive and reassuring



**As you are listening, acknowledging the feelings expressed and provide reassurance.  
At this point:**

- **Offer little to no content, judgement or evaluation.**
- **Convey acceptance of the concerns expressed and a willingness to keep listening.**
- **Encourage the person to keep talking with responses such as: “I see,” “OK”, “Really”. Be careful saying “I understand” unless you really do.**

**While you are actively listening, maintain eye contact with the person and suspend other things you may have been doing.**

**Convey that you are sincerely interested in what the other person is saying.**

**Be aware of your personal feelings and opinions. If you need to state your views or provide information do so only after you have listened to their concerns.**

**Ask for clarification of questions when necessary and restate or summarize their message for clarification if needed.**

## **DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR**

**Definition:** Purposeful behaviors designed to protect against mid-level perception of threat.

**Recognition:** System shut-down or focusing, including auditory, visual, and cognitive functions. The focus is on the immediate source of the perceived threat or conflict.

**Response:** Ask questions, provide choices, clearly define limits and consequences, discuss what may be negotiable and what is not, increase personal distance (6-8 feet).

- **Use the *Rule of Five*: Communication with sentences of no more than five words and words of no more than five letters.**

### • **INQUIRY TECHNIQUES**

- **Ask questions to get good information and reduce defensive behavior.**
- **Find out facts and details.**
- **Try to understand their point of view.**

- Get them to evaluate their behavior and whether it will help resolve the issue by using the defusion questions.
- **TYPES OF QUESTIONS WE ASK**
  - **Close Ended**: limits the answers to yes or no.
  - **Open Ended**: allows the responder freedom in answering and can be tailored to help the client explore options.
  - **Direct**: ask for specific information. Limits answers to brief fact statements.
  - **Probing**: follow up other questions to solicit additional information.
  - **Hypothetical**: present a theoretical situation to which the receiver responds.
- **ROADBLOCKS TO ACTIVE LISTENING**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ordering, Directing, Commanding</b></li> <li>• <b>Warning, Threatening</b></li> <li>• <b>Moralizing, Preaching (shoulds &amp; oughts)</b></li> <li>• <b>Probing, Questioning, Interrogating</b></li> <li>• <b>Judging, Criticizing, Disagreeing, Blaming</b></li> <li>• <b>Labeling, Stereotyping</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analyzing, Diagnosing</b></li> <li>• <b>Excusing</b></li> <li>• <b>Determined to Win (having the last word)</b></li> <li>• <b>Withdrawing, Distracting, Humoring, Switching topics</b></li> <li>• <b>Denying importance of another's feelings</b></li> </ul>
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## AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

**Definition:** Active intimidation perceived for high-level fight/flight situation.

**Recognition:** Incessant questioning, verbal and non-verbal refusal to cooperate, verbal abuse/explosion.

**Response:** Prior to the verbal explosion, provide limits and choices: after the verbal explosion, wait for the system to relax.

Ask questions  
Provide choices  
position

Increase personal distance  
Keep relaxed yet defensive

- **DISARMING TECHNIQUES**

- Acknowledge the person's issue.
- Agree with the person in principal.
- Reflect what the person has said.
- Emphasize personal choice.
- Emphasize personal control/responsibility.

*You can keep yelling and I'll have to ask you to leave, or you can lower your voice, have a seat, and we can see if we can resolve the issue. What do you want to do?*

## DANGER BEHAVIOR

As we experience greater degrees of perceived threat, our brain function begins to pull inside toward the area that is vital to system survival, the cerebral (thinking), to the limbic (feeling), to the reptilian core (physiological survival). In essence, as we anger, we progress (or digress) from thinking, to feeling, to our fight or flight response, e.g., *danger behavior*. The implication is evident, as the person regresses, our efforts in keeping them in the thinking mode become harder.

### *DANGER BEHAVIOR*

**Definition:** Instinctive fight/flight action designed to ensure system survival.

**Recognition:** Verbal and non-verbal focusing; quiet yet deliberate preparation for violence/action.



- **Quiescent period**
- **Feet spaced**
- **Elbows bent and on vertical plane**
- **Leg, neck and hip muscles contracted**
- **Mouth slightly open, nostrils flared**
- **Eyes set, focused**
- **Face flushes**
- **Fists clenched**
- **Persistent theme evident**

**Response:** Ask questions. Clarify potential consequences of aggression.  
Identify and use escape routes.

### **RESPONDING TO DANGEROUS INDIVIDUALS**

- **Reaffirm the consequences of any violent act.**
- **Increase the space between you and the aggressor.**
- **Maintain a non-threatening body language while maintaining a defensive posture.**
- **Look for escape routes.**
- **Assess the arrangement of the room so that obstacles can be placed between you and the assailant if there is an attack.**
- **Summon assistance should an attack appear imminent.**

# **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**

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## **KNOW THE SUBJECT AND THEIR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**

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- **Review information from treatment clinicians.**
- **Understand diagnostic impressions-axis 1 & 2.**
- **Know the effects of medications and their withdrawal symptoms.**
- **Look for any “Red Flags” in file-history of assault, drug abuse, failure to take medication.**
- **Be alert to signs of inappropriate affect.**
- **Study the symptoms of common mental health disorders.**
- **Be aware of “situational triggers.”**
- **Be alert to delusional thinking patterns.**
- **Acquaint yourself with treatment programs available and their approaches.**
- **Be alert to-**
  - Signs of increase paranoia**
  - Unkempt appearance**
  - Drastic change in clothing and overall appearance**



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## **EXPERIENCE INCREASES OUR AWARENESS**

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- **Obtain as much background information as possible from collateral sources.**
- **When dealing with mental health offenders be aware of your nonverbal communication.**
- **Mood swings of the offender can be a “red flag” indication that the offender has quit taking their medication or that their condition is worsening.**
- **Pay attention to what may seem to be casual comments-they can give insight to their thinking behavior.**
- **Be aware of inconsistent behaviors.**

- Pay attention to your “gut feelings”-if it seems wrong it probably is!
- Listen to what the person describes as their “physical symptoms,” they can be indicators of their state of mental health.
- If possible, talk with other people that have worked with the person and get their impressions and experiences.
- Seek “off the record” information by treatment staff and others that have contact with the offender, especially treatment support staff.
- Realize that you will probably need to spend more time with people suffering mental issues, both in direct contact and with collateral sources, to get a true picture of the mental state of the person.
- Ask open-ended questions and use simple words and terms.




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## INCREASE YOUR MENTAL AWARENESS

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- Schedule the initial contact in the office, treatment facility or other safe location, not the person’s home.
- Never let an offender know your address or details about your family or personal life.
- Plan your interviews to:
  - Determine the risk of the offender to themselves and others.
  - Demonstrate caring in your conversations.
  - Be open in your communications.
  - Plan your conversations to gather relevant information from the offender and others.
- Monitor the offender’s access to weapons.
- Ask for help from clinicians, staff, and law enforcement when warning signs occur.
- Use the concepts of “contact and cover”-but be sure to educate your partner regarding the special issues of mental health clients.
- Use family, neighbors, coworkers, etc., to provide current information on the person’s activities and mental health condition.

- **Plan method and location of contacts, i.e., announced or unannounced, office or residence, number of staff.**
- **Showing respect tends to establish positive bonds. Many people with mental health issues are commonly dismissed and want someone to listen to them.**
- **Pay special attention to their, and your, space. Remember your “reactionary gap.”**
- **Keep escape routes open.**
- **Don’t escalate a situation by your behavior.**
- **As always, expect the unexpected**
- **Show concern after a crisis.**
- **Be persistent in your requirements regarding treatment and supervision requirements without being demanding.**
- **Take a vital role in the treatment plan by maintaining contact with treatment providers and the offender. BE PROACTIVE!**

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## **RED FLAG INDICATORS**

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**These are signs that can be in case files or criminal records that indicate individuals present risks to harm you or anyone else.**

- **Fighting**
- **Cruelty to animals**
- **Stealing**
- **Setting fires**
- **Assaultive behaviors (charges or convictions)**
- **Instability (job, family, moving constantly for poor reasons, bursts of anger, etc.)**
- **Threatening communications**
- **Stalking**



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## **ATTACK MANAGEMENT**

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### **SHIELDING**

- **Shielding (also known as cover) is something that will absorb the power of attack.**
- **Shielding will deflect or slow down an attacker, bullets or other types of weapons or projectiles. It is meant to protect you from bodily injury.**
- **Shielding awareness applies whether you are in your car or on foot, approaching a location or subject, or eating your lunch.**

### **DISTANCE**

- **Stay at least two (2) arm lengths away; this removes you from striking distance.**
- **If you are less than two arm lengths from the subject, you cannot count on stepping to evade. You will not be able to step out of the way of a sudden attack, even if you are paying strict attention to the subject. To do so is beyond the limitations of your nervous system.**

### **MOVEMENT**

- **The effect of an assault is harmless outside of the power envelope; that is, close to defend from a strike before it develops power, or moving out of the power envelope.**
- **If you are the proper distance from a subject, you have a good ability to evade an assault by stepping out of the power envelope.**
- **It is harder to hit a moving target.**

### **PROPER COUNTERMEASURES**

- **Proper Countermeasures means being equipped with a planned response and use of the appropriate force options available.**

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## REDUCING THE ODDS OF ASSAULT

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WHILE SITUATIONS MAY BE CLASSIFIED AS-



FOR SAFETY PURPOSES THINK OF EACH SITUATION AS-



*You reduce the odds of being  
attack by:*

- **70% with 1 other person present**
- **90% with 2 or more present**

## **DEBRIEF EACH SITUATION**

Too often we use a conflict situation to place fault/blame rather than an opportunity to learn and enhance our skills. Anytime you have had a conflict, use the following evaluation questions as soon as possible after the situation to evaluate your performance and the techniques used.

- **Question 1: What happened and exactly what did I/we do? Be very specific about what was said and done, when, where, how and by whom.**
- **Question 2: Which of those things we did/said worked? Divide your list into two parts.**

**Part 1: All the things I/we said or did that worked.**

**Part 2: All the things I/we said or did that didn't work.**

***Remember, if what you're doing isn't working, why keep doing it?***

- **Question 3: What can I say/do to become more effective? Use the planning principles of "SAMS" to make a plan to refine your skills.**

**Simple**

**Attainable**

**Measurable**

**Specific**