

*Facilitating
Healing and Change*



Inspire Action for Social Change

Equity & Trauma-Informed Compassionate De-escalation in Supervised Visitation Services

Part 1: January 10, 2022

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Inspire Action for Social Change

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Introduction & Today's Learning Points

What does equity & trauma-informed compassionate de-escalation mean?

Making sense of how trauma shows up in supervised visitation.

Moving away from fear-based decision-making.



Learning Points

In Part 2 we will cover:

- The Escalation Continuum: how culture, identity & bias can shape our perceptions
- Starting with ourselves: self practices for escalated situations
- What to do when co-regulation isn't safe
- Tips for equity and trauma-informed compassionate de-escalation

What do we mean by “equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?”

Live Session Poll Now Closed

See next slides for results from the live session.

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

Fair and understanding

Being compassionate in stressful situations

Listening

Understanding we all come from different backgrounds and experiences, anger at us isn't what's always fueling big emotions or reactions.

Calm in a storm

Fair

Being able to calm a situation down through knowing what happened and being considerate of the situation

Individual client based response to emotionally charged behavior

Mindful of feelings

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

Validating feelings

Being Compassionate in stressful situations

Knowing how to bring a situation down without rising to the level of the person having an issue

Giving what is needed to return to a regulated situation

Being able to remain calm within oneself while helping to calm someone else

not being reactive- instead acting from empathy, understanding and patience

Remain calm and professional

Having the tools to treat everyone with understanding and compassion when dealing with emotional situations

Taking a breath before responding. Thinking through

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

Bringing Peace to the moment.

Calm and compassionate

Attempting to diffuse a situation while understanding where a person may be coming from.

restorative justice

confident and informed

More power within, less power over

fair

listening with heart

Considering individuals different needs during highly emotional events.

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

Showing those who have experienced trauma equal amount of support with understanding.

Understanding trauma and triggers and how to appropriately respond during the incident

empathetic and mindful

Unbiased communication with understanding of each party's perspective

Not judging

Understanding why someone is escalated and meeting them where they are at in an effort to restore stasis

Listening , considering the others feelings

leading with care and kindness

Being fair not in a way that treats everyone the exact same but fair to each individual and where they are in their particular journey and experiences.

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

H

Their journey is not the same as others

Understand where they are coming from

Intensification of emotions and responses

Realize that everyone has a different way of handling trauma.

Makes it difficult to take in and process information

Emotional roller-coaster, happy, sad, angry, sense of loss, confusion

withdrawn, disassociative, aggressive

Irrational behavior, defensive and not trusting

What do we mean by "equity & trauma informed compassionate de-escalation?"

Something seemingly small can trigger a big reaction.

Someone could be living in fight, flight, freeze modes more often through out their days, weeks, months, years.

Confusion, anger, loss of control

Withdrawal and less responsive to surroundings

Can be dismissive or normalize it

Self-Reflection Moment

Reflect & Write: What do you think culture, lived experience, and other aspects of identity have to do with the concept of ‘de-escalation’?”



Let's Dig Deeper

- For this learning on de-escalation, we are *not* focusing solely on heightened emotions.
- We are *not* focusing on any concepts that make it seem like emotional regulation is a requirement at all times (it is not).
- We *are* focusing on times when we are worried about safety and well-being.
- We *are* focusing on times when you need to navigate conflict.

Grounding Exercise

- Create a short affirmation or soothing words
- Close eyes (if you choose)
- Take a deep breath and repeat your affirmation to yourself
- Feel your bottom on your seat and/or feet on the ground
- As you exhale, repeat your affirmation
- As you breathe in again, recall someone you trust saying the affirmation to you





When it comes to moments of escalation, we believe:

- Investing in authentic relationships is foundational to any strategy.
- Equity & compassion are foundational and can't be dismissed.
- Proactive, solution-focused communications and processes with family members about how to handle escalation moments together are critical.
- Moving away from punitive responses towards connection and repair is possible and necessary.



What are some ways trauma can impact feelings and behavior, especially during times of great stress?

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What are some ways trauma can impact feelings and behavior, especially during times of great stress?

Trauma can make feelings disproportionate to the situation.

Withdrawal behavior

People can show up depressed or angry, disconnected.

Certain experiences can be triggering. I often want to shut down when feeling overwhelmed

Reminds them of that moment and they react in the same way

Physical/verbal aggression

The trauma could intensify everything happening during times of stress.

Body's defense takes effect and can create a stress response

their reactions to stress could be unhealthy because they're used to living in survival mode

What are some ways trauma can impact feelings and behavior, especially during times of great stress?

Heightened or over the top

Trauma drives survival behaviors.

The person effected will go into survival, or fight or flight, mentality.

Trauma can cause heightened feelings or seemingly inappropriate reactions to a situations

No longer be present

decreased patience

People potentially react with fight, flight or freeze

People can act out of character and have their feelings govern their actions instead of logic.

they may view certain situations, words and actions as threatening and act in self-preservation

What are some ways trauma can impact feelings and behavior, especially during times of great stress?

We can react rather than respond appropriately.

Small things can feel huge. You can convince someone by logic that what they feel isn't true

Trauma causes heightened response and dissociation

Trauma can cause people to be transported back to their original traumatic situation and that can cause them to completely freeze/shut down/be non responsive

Shut down

Could even be laughing and minimize the situation to cope with it

Triggers same reaction/response as when trauma happened

Trauma can look like little to no affection, miscommunication and confusion

Inability to think logically

Understanding how trauma responses can show up

- When our brains and bodies are flooded with stress or fear, it can trigger a trauma response.
- People who have experienced trauma and have trauma symptoms can become flooded with stress hormones when they experience rejection, harm, or lack of physical and emotional safety.
- Trauma responses are varied and based on multiple factors like culture, lived experience, disposition, environment, and whether or not people we trust are present.

Continued:

- Trauma responses can show up across a spectrum, from numbed out and dissociative (quiet and withdrawn) to obvious outward expressions that may look like yelling, physical reactions, etc.
- For many trauma survivors, their trauma responses are adaptive and survival-based.
- Trauma responses are not wrong, bad, or abnormal. They are a whole-body response to overwhelming situations that can impact us over time.
- Trauma responses are to be expected; how they show up can vary.

Continued:

- It's also important to remember that when we are experiencing trauma responses, our thinking brains are often not immediately accessible to us.
- Verbal processing and negotiation can escalate the situation. Because our thinking brains, including verbal negotiation skills, are often not accessible during active trauma responses, we should avoid complex verbal processing until people have returned to a relative sense of safety or regulation.

Where there is trauma,
there is also the potential
for healing.

IPV, Trauma, & Supervised Visitation

We never want adult and child survivors of violence to feel as if they are being punished or judged for their trauma responses.

We also must remember that people who use violence are also often trauma survivors.

Grounding Exercise

- Reflect back on your short affirmation or soothing words
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Moving Away From Fear-Based Decision-Making

What fears do you hold about your work in supervised visitation services?

Write down 2-3 fears you hold about your work in supervised visitation.



You Are Not Alone

- Fear of angry participants
- Fear for staff safety
- Fear a violent reaction when redirecting a parent
- Fear the person who caused harm will get unsupervised visitation before it is safe for the survivor parent or children
- Fear a child will be taken from the center
- Fear I'm going to miss something important
- Fear I will make something worse for a family
- Afraid the staff will be harmed
- Afraid harm will come to a survivor and their children
- Afraid I will be tricked or "conned"
- Fear my integrity will be compromised
- Afraid I will make a mistake
- Fear I will get it wrong

Small Group Breakout

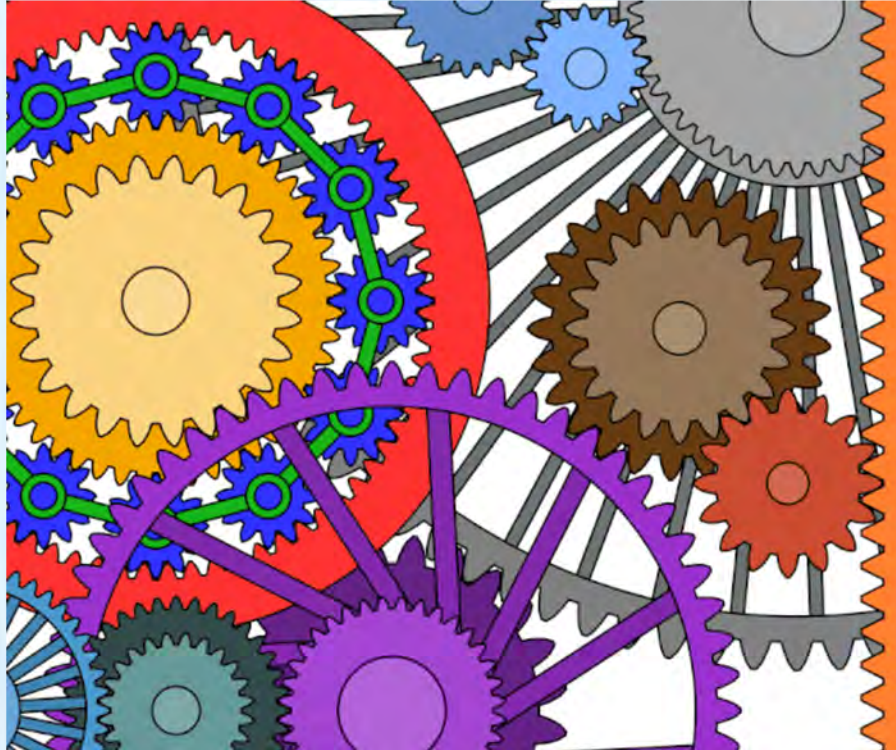
How do you think fear-based decision-making can impact your work? What might it look like?



Some Way Fear-Based Decision Making Can Impact Our Work

- Creates hyper-vigilance, feeling jumpy, on edge, not present.
- We can become overly controlling and rigid in our approach and become more cautious than a situation calls for.
- We can be gripped with and exude anxiety.
- We can fall back on biased thinking, which often increases during times of stress without careful intention.

It's Complicated!



Take It With You



In the chat, share one or two things from this session that you will apply in your work with families.



Thank you for participating.

We are here to provide you support - please contact us anytime!

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