

Recognizing Potential Aggressive Behavior in Emergent Situations **By Michael A. Cint CERT Class 6/24/14**

Objectives:

1. Develop skills to recognize reduce and manage anxious, aggressive, and violent behavior
2. Use effective and compassion methods of dealing with aggressive or anxious people.
3. Gain personal confidence and minimize the potential for injury to yourself and others around you.
4. Reduce fear in stressful situations by learning confidence in your ability to react to aggressive and anxious persons.
5. Reduce Liability risk for inadequate, unnecessary, or improper techniques used when dealing with aggressive or anxious persons.

What is Violence?

"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."

World report on violence and health", World Health Organization, 2002.

Violence can be divided into three broad categories according to characteristics of those committing the violent act:

1. self-directed violence
2. interpersonal violence
3. collective violence

Strategies for preventing and diffusing aggressive behavior

Prepare yourself mentally

Communicate non-verbally

listen effectively

Communicate verbally

Manage the stages of conflict

approach individuals properly

Prepare yourself mentally:

The systematic repetition of some image, activity of behavior with no observable physical movements

1. In times of calm or training, visualize situations and how you will act to them
2. Relax: take a deep breath, close your eyes, unclench your jaw, un-ball your fists, put down any objects you are holding in your hands.

Mental conditioning improves and increases:

1. Decisiveness
2. Assertiveness
3. Speed you react to situations

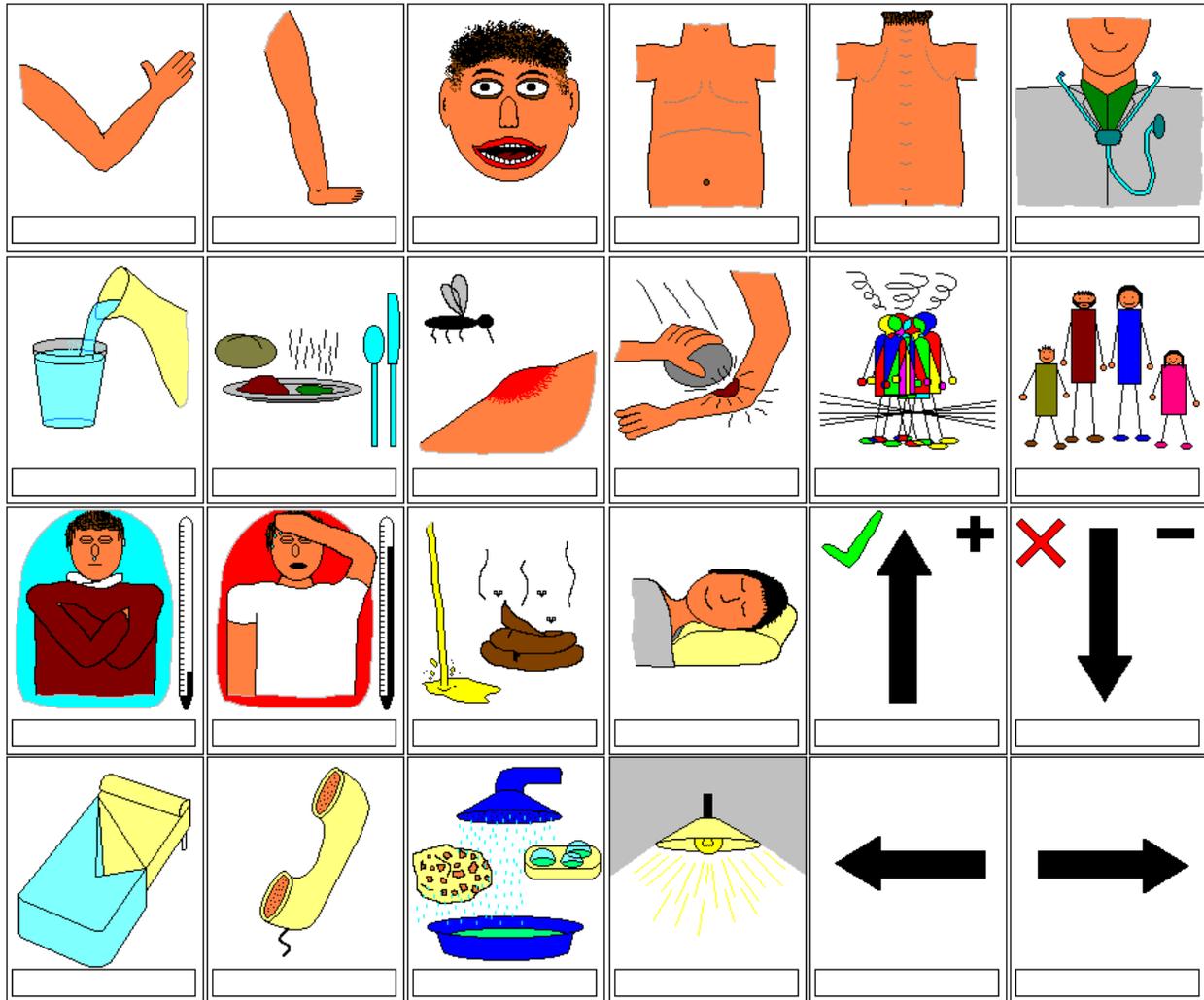
Communications

Five methods of communication

1. Non-verbal
2. Listening
3. Verbal
4. Reading
5. Writing

Of the five methods of communication, Non Verbal is the most important, it accounts for approximately 70% - 90% of all interpersonal communication.

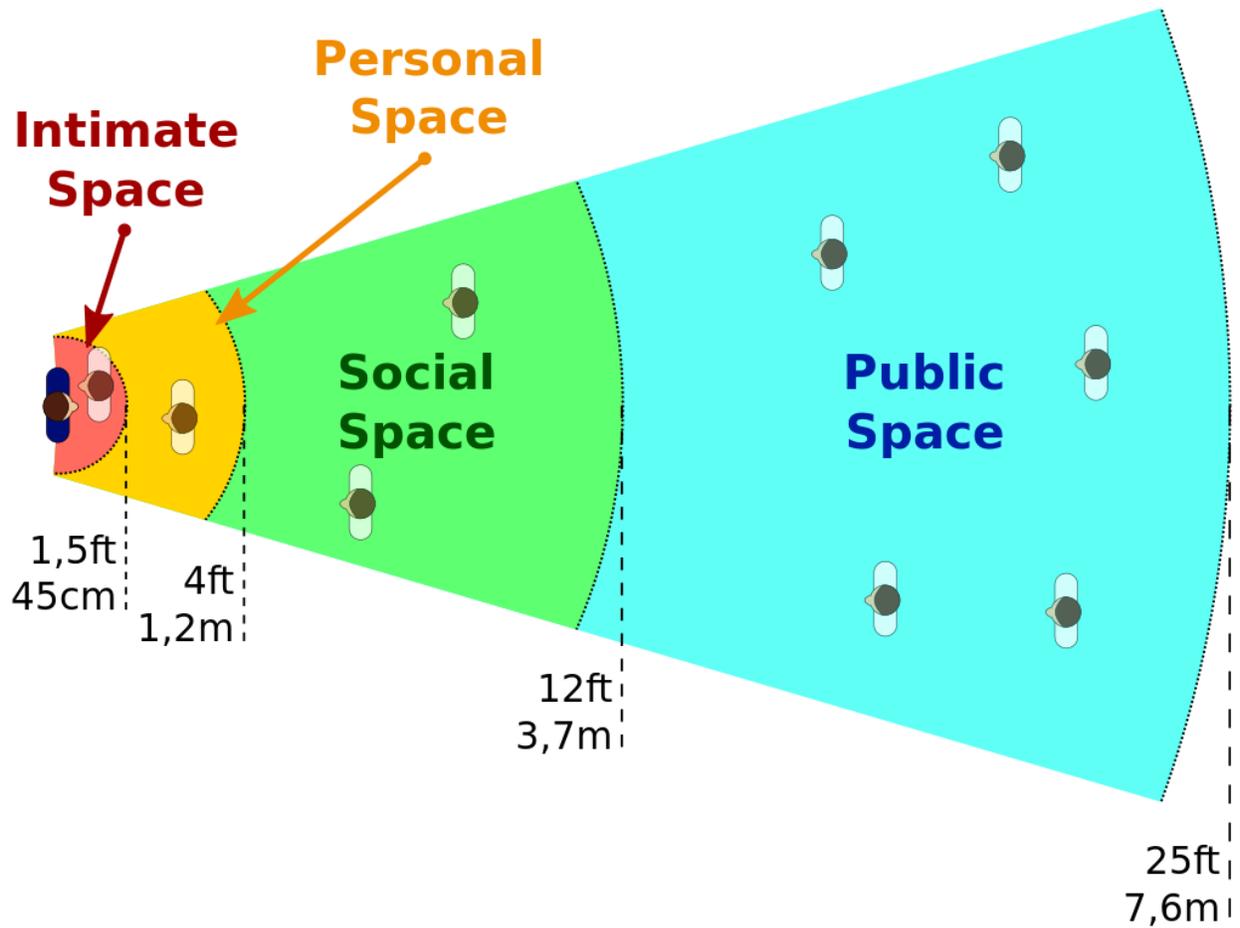
Non Verbal



Three Categories:

1. Personal Space and Reactionary Distance
2. Eye Communication
3. Gestures, posture and facial expressions

Personal Space



Personal Space is relative to:

1. Culture
2. Upbringing
3. Habitat
4. Environment
5. Age
6. Gender
7. Impairments

Reactionary Distance:

The recommended space you want to maintain when dealing with an upset (anxious) person is 4 FT.
At a verbally aggressive stage, you want to step back and maintain a distance of 6 FT.

Eye Communications

Eye Movements and signals that reflect our thoughts, feelings or state of mind

Eye Communications, when used effectively and show:

1. Compassion
2. Concern
3. Confidence
4. Empathy

Observing someone's eye movements can show:

1. Anger
2. Derangement
3. Pain
4. Violent intent
5. Looking for escape/attack
6. Submissiveness

What to look for:

1. Pupil size Pupils dilate (get larger) by stress, pain, anxiety
(PERRL: the Pupils should be Equal, Round and Reactive to Light.)
2. Sizing you up
3. Direct, uninterrupted stare
4. Jerking, darting
5. Looking around
6. Glazed
7. Empty
8. Looking though you
9. Widening
10. Target glance

Gestures, postures and facial expressions

Signals coming from different parts of the body that reflect thoughts and feelings

Gestures are:

1. Instinctive
2. Learned
3. Cultural

Signals to watch for:

1. Head
2. Shoulders
3. Breathing
4. Facial color
5. Expression
 - a. Eyebrows
 - b. Lips
6. Arms
7. Elbows
8. Palms/hands
9. Index finger
10. Legs
11. Stance
12. Leaning the body

If there is a discrepancy between the verbal and the non verbal messages BELIEVE THE NON VERBAL MESSAGES!

Three Stages of Conflict

Anxiety

Verbal Aggression

Physical Aggression

Conflict is a result of:

1. Unmet expectation
2. 90% of conflict is related to past experience

Stage One: Anxiety

Recognizing Anxiety

An unpleasant state of inner turmoil, often accompanied by nervous behavior, such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaints and rumination.

1. dizziness
2. tiredness
3. a noticeably strong, fast or irregular heartbeat (palpitations)
4. muscle aches and tension
5. trembling or shaking
6. dry mouth (licking lips)
7. excessive sweating
8. shortness of breath
9. stomach ache
10. feeling sick
11. headache
12. pins and needles
13. difficulty falling or staying asleep (insomnia)
14. Flushing in the face

Triggers of anxiety:

1. Frustration or anger
2. Fear
3. Sorrow
4. Distrust of authority
5. Losing control
6. Heat
7. *Your* body language
8. *Your* tone of voice

How to manage another person's Anxiety

1. Give them the proper space
2. Supportive eye contact
3. Supportive gestures and postures
4. Supportive facial expression
5. Empathetic listening
6. Supportive verbal communication
7. Supportive stance

Listening

"Hearing is a physiological phenomenon; listening is a psychological act."

Roland Barthes, Linguist

1. Level 1 is the most basic level, and that is not listening at all, but ignoring. Why might I do that? Because if I did, if I really listened to you then I might have to change the way I look at you. I might have to come out of my comfort zone and I don't want to do that. How many problems in the world, at home and between nations are caused by a lack of really listening and talking past each other?

2. The 2nd level is pretend listening. We are distracted, our mind is elsewhere. That is so common in our media dominated world where technology enables us to be only partially attentive to what is going on around us.
3. The 3rd level is selective listening- we pick out the bits that we think are relevant. The negative side of selective listening is that it can also be a form of control and manipulation of others.
4. The fourth level is attentive listening. It is listening to all the words that are said with all of your attention.
5. The fifth and final level is empathic listening. That is going beyond the words to the heart and feelings that lie behind the words. As the little child said to his distracted father, 'Daddy listen to me with your eyes.'

Next to physical Survival the greatest need for people is:

1. To be understood
2. To be Validated
3. To be Affirmed
4. To be Appreciated

Supportive Communication Skill:

1. Maintain a calm, reassuring voice
2. Communicate at their level (physical, social, emotional/age)
3. Speak with respect
4. Be in control
5. Use Paralanguage
 - a. Volume of speech
 - b. Tone of voice
 - c. Rate of speech
6. Introduce yourself
7. Avoid using "you"
8. Ask open ended question
9. Clarify implied statements, threats or key words
10. Isolate the problem from the individual
11. Redirect anger to the past
12. If appropriate, interrupt by using their name
13. Use "We"
14. Get them to sit down with you
15. Get them to walk with you
16. Use pacing techniques
 - a. Sensory – "I feel you are upset"
 - b. Visual - "I see you are upset"
 - c. Auditory - : I hear you are upset"
17. Avoid bias or stereotypes

Understanding Fear and Panic

Fear

Automatic reaction to real or perceived danger or threat.

Panic

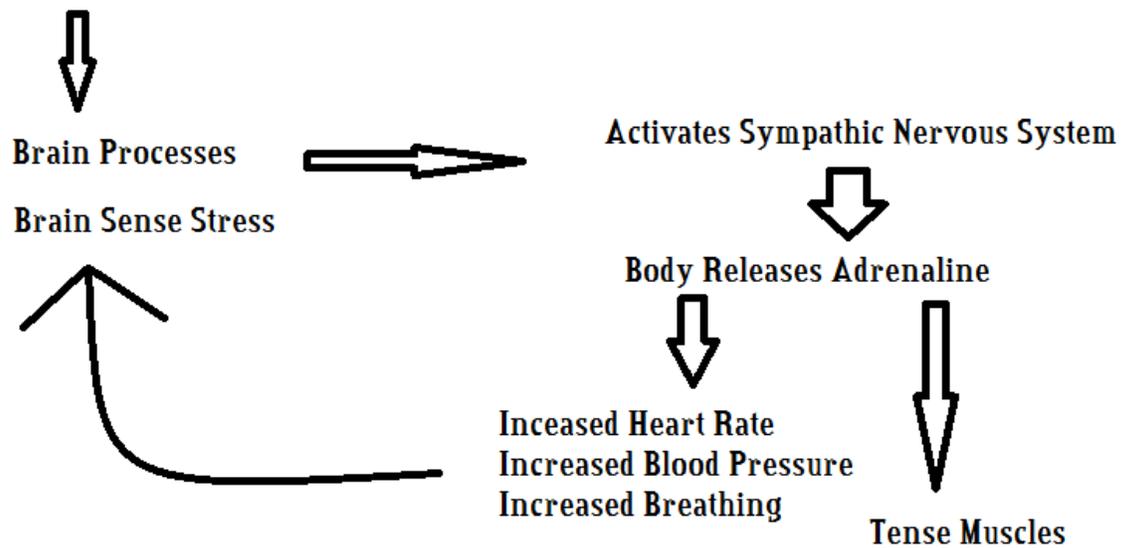
an Emotional reaction that takes the form of fight, flight or freeze.

Effects of Fear and Panic

1. Distraction
2. "Bullet Time" (perceived slowing of time)
3. Tunnel Vision
4. Auditory exclusion
5. Awareness Lapse
6. Freeze

Mind and Body Stress Feedback Loop

Stress Trigger: Traffic Jam, Work Deadline, Kids Schedule



How to break the Feedback Loop

1. Deep, regular breaths
2. Positive Self Talk "I can do this"

Next Month: Part 2 Verbal and Physical Aggression