

Date: Friday, May 18, 2018

Time: 9AM - 1PM

Location: Upper Merion Township Building

Attendees: Andie, Mike, Cliff, Ebony & others



THE LIBRARIAN'S
GUIDE TO HOMELESSNESS

Reduce problems/conflict AND be inclusive

TRAINING HANDOUT

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Tom Wolf, Governor.

By Ryan J. Dowd
www.HomelessLibrary.com

Introduction

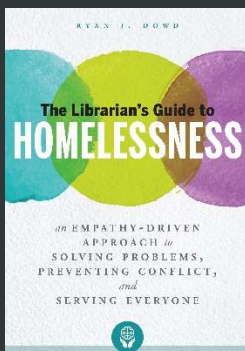
Four goals of this training:

- You will recognize the power you have to resolve problems;
- You will have greater confidence doing so;
- Your library will have fewer problems;
- Your library will be more compassionate and inclusive.

Ryan Dowd's website, can sign up for free email tips:
<http://www.homelesslibrary.com>



Ryan Dowd has spent most of his career running the second largest homeless shelter in Illinois. In addition he is the founder of the Homeless Training Institute, which provides training to libraries and other organizations around the world. He is the author of the ALA book, "The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness." He is ecstatically married and has two children. His favorite book is Dharma Bums by Jack Kerouac.



Don't forget to check out our book from the **American Library Association!**

Part I

Deeper Understanding of Homelessness

Three “Types” of Homelessness

Low, middle, and upper classes don't usually interact with each other. The library is one of the last places where they interact.

Chronic Homelessness

Three “Types” of Homelessness

1. Homeless individuals grew up poor.

"Culture of poverty": Just like children raised in middle-class homes tend to stay middle-class their whole lives, children raised in poverty tend to stay in poverty their whole lives.

2. Homeless individuals have a different communication style:

1. Homeless individuals speak differently than you.

Poorer people tend to live in more cramped living conditions. In such conditions, it's noisier, so they have to speak louder to be heard.

Formal Register:

How you would talk during a job interview, to someone in authority. Persons living in poverty seldom use formal register.

Casual Register:

How you talk to friends and family. Hey how ya doin. Slang. Cursing. Casual register is the most common register for homeless. They are not being disrespectful because they do not use formal register.

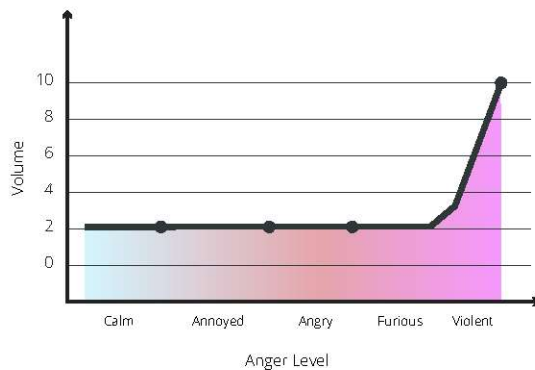
- Homeless individuals have a smaller vocabulary than you and pay more attention to nonverbal cues than you.

Instead of using a variety of vocabulary to express something, they have a more limited vocabulary and use tone and body language to express themselves. They do not learn formal register. HOW you say something, matters more than WHAT you say. Body language is important.

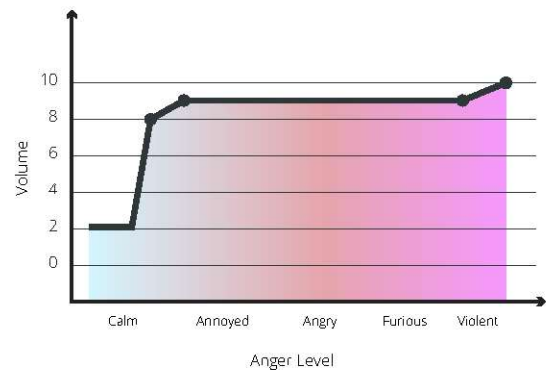
- Homeless individuals argue differently than you.

Poverty is LOUD. Because of the fact that they live in cramped living conditions, they speak loudly even if they are just a little annoyed at something (or even if they are calm). By contrast, a middle class person only speaks loudly when they are on the verge of violence (see graph below).

MIDDLE CLASS



POVERTY



- Homeless individuals have different life experiences than you.

- Homeless individuals have experienced more trauma than you.

- * More sexual and physical violence. Live 30 years less on average.
- * Trauma changes the chemistry in the brain.
- * Homeless assume everything is "bad" to be on the safe side. Treats a \$0.50 fine as a big deal not because of the money but because it triggers their threat stimuli.
- * Get angry quicker and stay angry longer.
- * Can't self-regulate their emotions

People with trauma:

1. Misperceive **threat** _____ stimuli.
2. Have difficulty regulating their **emotions** _____.

2. Homeless individuals have experienced more violence and danger than you.

PTSD: *Present* traumatic stress disorder -- They regularly experience violence, muggings, sexual assault. PTSD is a result of a prolonged sense of danger.

3. Homeless individuals have experienced more punishment than you.

"Habituated to Punishment":

Expect to be punished regularly whether they are being good or not--because often times they are punished for something even when they are going out of their way to try to be good.

3. **Homeless individuals have a different worldview than you:**

1. Homeless individuals look at time differently than you.

"Time horizon": How far into the future you plan for. For middle-class, it's how long you expect to live. For homeless, it's 24-hours because their needs are more immediate. Punishments that last beyond your time horizon do not increase deterrence. For example, if the punishment for murder was increased from 100 years in jail to 150 years, does that make you any less likely to commit it?

2. Homeless individuals view respect differently than you.

Middle-class: You give people respect by default unless they do something bad.
Poverty: You don't give someone respect until they've earned it. No automatic respect.

3. Homeless individuals view protection, retaliation and insults differently than you do.

	DIGNITY CULTURE	HONOR CULTURE
ORIGIN	4. Strong authority 5. Relative affluence	6. Weak Authority 7. High competition for resources
GEOGRAPHY	Middle-class U.S.A., Europe, Australia	Middle-East, Latin America, Africa, Urban Poverty
SOURCE OF PROTECTION	Government or authority (e.g. police, courts)	Self-Defense
VIEW OF RETALIATION	don't need to	retaliating proves to people that you will fight back
IMPACT OF INSULTS	little impact; "sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me."	percieved as if probing for weakness

8. Homeless individuals have different triggers than you:

1. Uninvited touch

Reminds them of trauma they have experienced in the past.

2. Differential treatment (unfairness)

They are charged for loitering for sitting in the park, removed from stores for using the bathrooms, ticketed for jaywalking.

3. Being treated as "lesser"

If you treat them no better or no worse than everyone else, they will respect you.

4. People enjoying their misfortune

This is the #1 trigger, the "Everyday sadist": Someone who enjoys enforcing the rules, giving people a rough time (10% of population); tend to seek out those who can't retaliate.

Part II

Punishment

What is Punishment?

- * Keeps you from doing a misdeed.
- * Most common form: making people feel bad
- * Works most of the time on most people

The Problem with Punishment

Less effective if you have a mental illness, suffer from substance abuse, are habituated to punishment, have a shortened time horizon, or are highly traumatized (i.e. homeless people)
Homeless people tend to be immune to punishment because they don't care.

Homeless individuals are immune to punishment.

In fact, it oftentimes has the **opposite** effect of what you intended.

Your Options

1. Continue using punishment-driven enforcement until your homeless patrons get **banned** and you **did** your job.
2. **Do not** enforce the rules. **but anarchy is not a plan. It is chaos.**
3. Find a way to get people to follow the rules **voluntarily, without the threat of punishment**

A New Paradigm

**PUNISHMENT-DRIVEN
ENFORCEMENT**

EMPATHY-DRIVEN ENFORCEMENT

TOOLS

Anybody can do
this

Not as simple but more effective.
HOW you enforce the rules

BENEFITS

simpler, easier to
enforce

more effective, compassionate

Part III

Empathy-Driven Enforcement™

Part III-A:

Psychology of Voluntary Compliance

Emotional Contagion

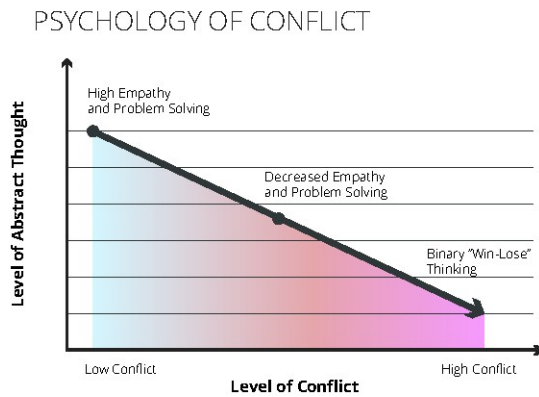
The Problem with Punishment

Mirror Neurons:

Make you feel the emotions that the people around you are experiencing. For example, if you see someone sad, you become sad yourself. Stronger in women.

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if you share good emotions.

Psychology of Conflict



Empathy and problem solving requires abstract thought. Low conflict levels allows for high amounts of abstract thought, which makes you better able to solve the problem at hand.

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if you **lower** the level of conflict.

Reciprocity

If someone does something good for you, you feel more inclined to do something good for them.
"Their perception is your reality"

Two caveats:

1. **Perceived** treatment, not actual treatment matters.
2. The **negative** version is stronger than the **positive** version.

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if they owe you a **favor** instead of 5x **revenge**.

"eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" sounds barbaric, but it's better than what people actually want to do which is more like "you take my eye and I will take both your eyes and the eyes of your family"

Psychology of a Relationship

5:1 Ratio:

For a relationship to be healthy, you must do 5 positive things for every 1 negative thing

4 building blocks of relationship

1. compliments
2. questions (convey care)
3. good deeds (even just smiling)
4. touch (in library: only do handshaking)

4 relationship destroyers

1. criticism
2. defensiveness (your expectations are the problem)
3. stonewalling-refusing to talk, same treatment over and over again
4. contempt ("you are worth less than me", often communicated non-verbally through body language like eye rolling)

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if you do five **positive** things before you ask.

Psychological Inertia

It's hard to change the direction that a relationship is moving in once it is started. A relationship moving in a negative or positive direction will keep going in that direction. This is why it's important to start relationships on the right footing--because it sets the direction.

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if you get their emotions moving in a **positive** direction instead of a **negative** direction.

Neurochemical chemistry of aggression and empathy

Chemicals	What they do	How you get them
Serotonin Dopamine Oxytocin	Reduce impulsive _____ behavior; Reduce aggression _____; Increase empathy _____	shaking hands releases brain chemicals that lowers aggression. Making eye contact helps.
Cortisol	not good Increase aggression _____	It takes 24 hours to metabolize cortisol

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if you help them have the proper brain **chemistry** _____.

Likeability

People tend to like people who like them. If they like you, they are more likely to comply when you ask them to follow the rules. If you do a favor for someone, they are more likely to like you. Therefore, if they offer to do you a favor, accept the offer (if you can)--they are more likely to like you that way.

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if they **like** _____ you, which you can accomplish by showing that you **like** _____ them and let them **do favors** _____ you.

Legitimacy **of Authority**

If they view authority as legitimate, they are more likely to follow the rules.

Three requirements for authority figure to be viewed as legitimate:

- The authority figure will listen to them if they have a complaint**

2. The rules must be predictable and consistent (but not dogmatic)
3. The rule enforcers must be fair (they must enforce the same rules for everyone)

What is not required for legitimacy:

1. toughness
2. seriousness
3. distance or aloofness (you can still be friendly)

Problem with rigid consistency: Can become unfair

People are more likely to voluntarily comply if they view you as legitimate _____.

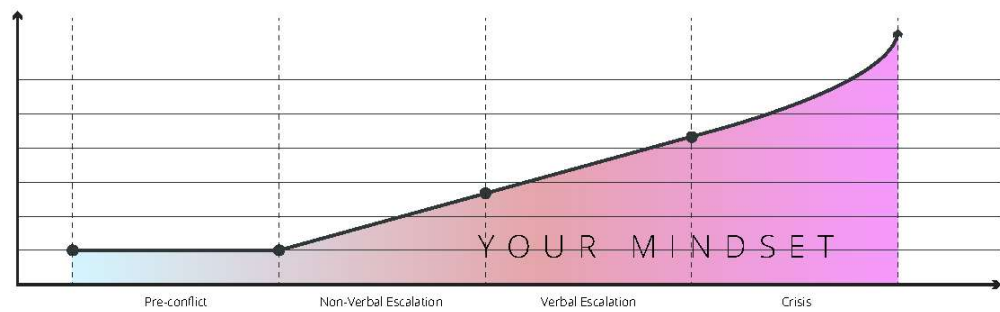
Part III-B:

Three Additional Concepts

1. Prepare for problems

2. Solve problems as early as possible

STAGES OF CONFLICT



3. You have a lot of tools (use empathy-driven tools first)

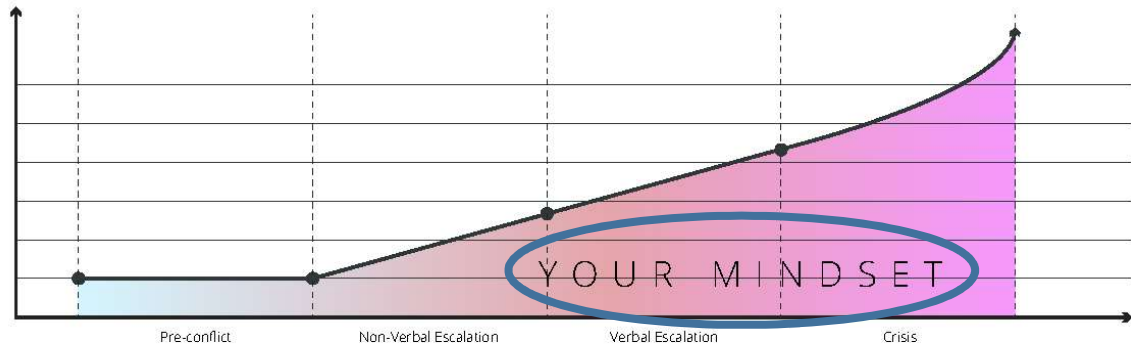
You have punishment tools and empathy tools. Use your empathy tools first. Only use punishment tools as a last resort. Once you use punishment tools, you cannot use empathy tools anymore.

Develop routine, "go-to" responses for things. Don't try to be witty and think of clever and innovative responses every time. Figure out what works and stick with it. That way, when you are distracted or nervous or in a tough situation, you will use "muscle memory". For example, think of what phrase to use when asking someone to silence their phone and use it consistently.

Part III-C:

Mindset Tools

STAGES OF CONFLICT



- **Tool: You have ENORMOUS influence over patron behaviour**

- **Tool: Lead, Don't follow**

Pull don't push. LEAD them where you want them to go, don't "follow" them into their tone or negative mindset.
Don't fight fire with fire, fight fire with water.

Whoever controls the **tone** _____ of the conversation, controls the **situation** _____.

- **Tool: Know your goal**

For example, when playing basketball, throwing the ball at another player will not score you points.

The only legitimate goal: Get people to follow the rules.

Focus on what your patrons **do** _____, not what they **think** _____.

- **Tool: Don't Judge**

Having a bad childhood often leads to homelessness.

2 tools for stopping judgment:

1. **Treat patrons as you would want your family to be treated.**
2. **Assume patron has had a lousy childhood.**

- **Tool: Be calm**

When you get tense, you stop breathing, which only makes you more stressed. Therefore, when you get tense, take deep breaths. As you walk towards a patron TAKE A DEEP BREATH. If you sense your anxiety level increasing ask yourself if you are breathing. Take the time to breathe. It WILL calm you down.

- **Tool: Be respectful**

Be the first to show respect, such as basic common courtesy, "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry to interrupt you, but..."

Especially:

1. When you **first** _____ meet someone.
2. During **conflict**. During conflict turn up the "respect-o-meter". Don't let reciprocity kick in. For example if a person is bearing down on you, shake their hand and say "I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name"

The three times when it is helpful to be disrespectful:

1. never
2. never
3. never

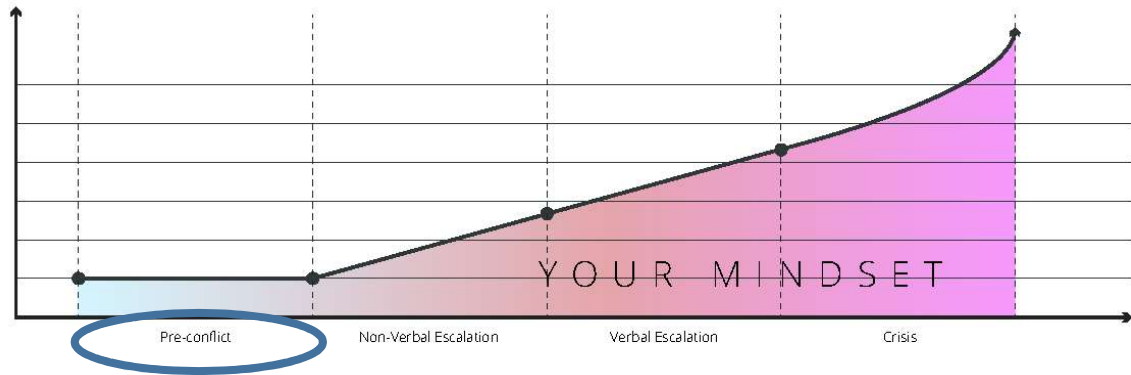
- **Tool: Slow down**

"Slow is smooth, smooth is fast"
Homeless people don't like being rushed.

Part III-D:

Pre-Conflict Tools

STAGES OF CONFLICT



- **Tool: Cup of Pennies**

Saying a nice thing (e.g. "Good morning") adds a penny to the cup. Enforcing a rule takes 5 pennies away.
Get as many pennies as soon as you can so that it's easier to enforce the rules later on
Focus on problem patrons first.

- **Tool: Use names** +pennies

Use first names
Offer your name first before asking theirs.
Or, call them "sir" or "ma'am". Never say "hey you"

Use your name and their name.

Ask patrons to call you by your first name

- **Tool: Small talk** +pennies

Give compliments, ask them questions (conveys care)

- **Tool: Be Walmart**

Walmart greeters both lower shoplifting and increase customer satisfaction.
The shoplifters hear "we're watching you"
The customers hear "we hope you find what you're looking for"

- **Tool: Shaking hands**

Profoundly efficient way to increase pennies. Brain releases chemicals that dramatically lowers aggression.

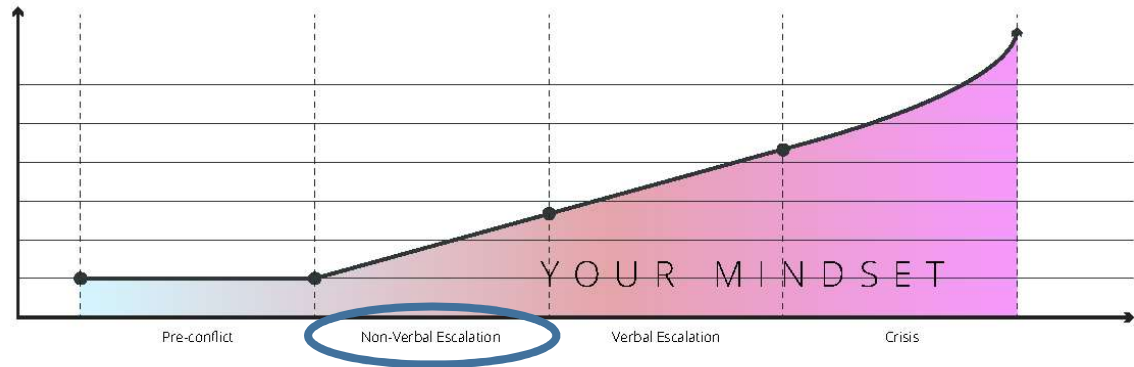
5 Tips:

1. The handshake should be balanced. Both hands should be _____.
2. The handshake should be equidistant between us.
3. Your left hand should be kept out of your pocket.
4. How many shakes? 3, then let go.
5. How hard should you squeeze? You should squeeze the same pounds per square inch as checking a peach for ripeness. Then buy the peach!

Part III-E:

Non-Verbal Tools

STAGES OF CONFLICT



- **Tool: Where to stand**

When you need get someone to follow a rule, talk with them somewhere less public. If their friends can hear your conversation, they will be more combative because they need to prove that they are tough.

- **Tool: Body "Language"**

We tend to remember what we SAY (verbally). We tend NOT to remember what our body language says.
"Resting jerk face": When you have a resting "bitch" face it projects contempt whether or not you are feeling contempt.

- **Tool: How to stand**

Don't back away from aggressive patrons. Calmly move toward them or at least don't move at all. Fully facing someone is confrontational. Turn your body 15 degrees away, as if a third person was in the conversation (picture the emotional tension escaping in that direction). Do this no matter if the conversation is confrontational or not--that way, you will commit the behavior to "muscle memory" so that you will do it automatically when it matters.

Don't

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Don't back away from aggressive patrons.

Instead

1. Move forward - message is I can physically dominate you.

- **Tools: Your Hands**

- **Tool: Don't do this with your hands**

Don't

1. point
2. cross arms
3. clench fists
4. put hands on hips

- **Tool: Do this instead**

When not in danger:

1. hands in pockets *
 2. hands behind back *
- * unless person is paranoid (rare) in which case your hands should be visible

When in danger:

- Get your hands in a position so you can protect your face if necessary
1. put hands in "flat" praying position--move hands side-to-side, do not "chop"
 2. rest hand on chin like you're thinking
 3. hands on heart



- **Tool: Don't touch**

Don't touch their body or their stuff.
Waking a person up: Never touch them because it could cause them to think they are in danger and punch you. If you have to touch them, touch them in the small of their back--they can't reach you when you are immediately behind them. Remember, you are just protecting yourself from the reflexive impulse that they have immediately after being woken. Do not knock on the table or drop something on the table (rude). Do not crouch next to them because you are at elbow level and could get hit. **Ideal situation:** Stand across the table/desk (if present) so the table protects you.

- **Tools: Your face**

The effect of a smile is that chemical levels change. An adult smile is not as good as a baby's smile but is nevertheless equivalent to "22 lbs. of chocolate".

- **Tool: Smile**

Very powerful, but only as a pre-conflict tool. When you smile during conflict, it looks like you are laughing at them or enjoying punishing them.

Your smile is equivalent to 22 pounds of chocolate.

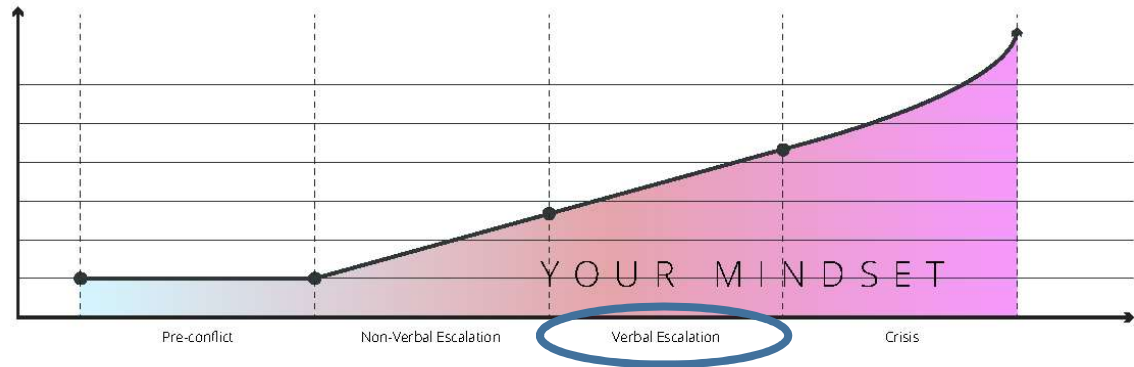
- **Tool: Eye contact**

When conversing with someone, you should maintain eye contact 60-70% of the time. Anything more than that is aggressive and anything less than that makes it look like you're not paying attention. The rest of the time you should look at the floor, because it makes it look like you are deeply concentrating on what they are saying. Try looking at only one eye and stick with that eye.

Part III-F:

Verbal Tools

STAGES OF CONFLICT



- **Tool: Talk quieter**

They will will louder so let them, but lower your own decibel to lead them where you want them to go. They will match the volume you speak at, but be one notch higher. So adjust your volume to be one notch lower than what you want them to speak at.

- **Tool: Talk calmer**

If you speak calmly, it will help the other person to be calm.

Do this:

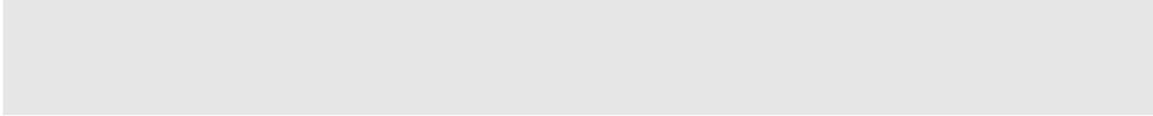
1. Pause in the middle of sentences
- 2.
3. Slow your speech down, but not in a condescending way

- **Tool: Listen**

Just let them talk. And then repeat back to them your understanding. Say "what I think you're saying is...". Don't say "what you're saying is..."

Reflective/Active Listening:

Repeat back what you heard them say. Every conversation has a technical issue ("I can't gain access to my email") and emotional issue ("passwords are stupid they are impossible to remember"). We tend to focus on the technical issue without addressing the emotional issue.



- **Tool: Be sad**

Don't hesitate to express how you do not enjoy enforcing the rules. Apologizing while enforcing the rules shows that you don't enjoy it. Don't undermine the rule though.

- **Tool: Six phrases never to use**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

- **Tool: Explain. Don't debate. Don't dictate.**

Good rules are not up for debate. But do not dictate the rules either. Don't follow patrons down the path of debating the validity of the rule. Give them a one-two sentence explanation. If they continue to debate, then pivot (see below)

Debate:

Dictate:

Explain: If they don't accept a one-two sentence explanation of the rule, then pivot.

- **Tool: Explain. Blame the rules**

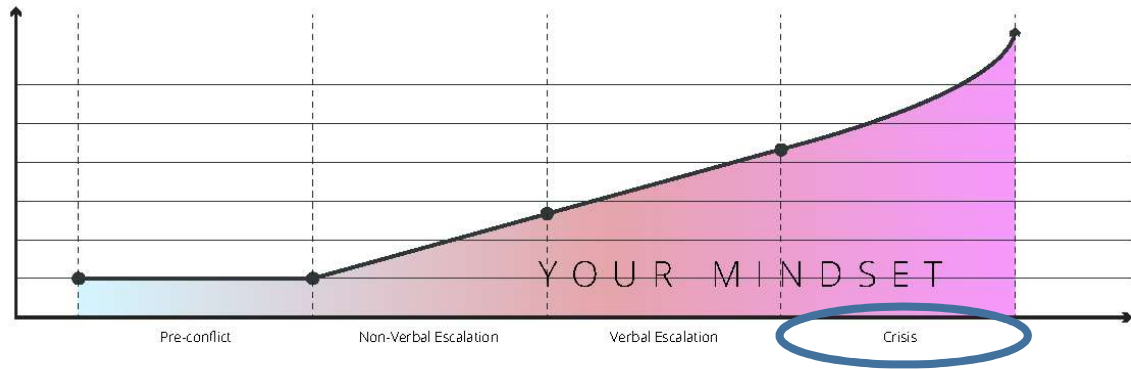
"I don't make the rules, but I have to enforce them."
"I'm just doing my job."
"I don't care, personally. If it were up to me, I'd let you eat food here"
Shift blame to someone not in the room: "The board of directors made it rule. I just have to do what they say."

- **Tool: The Staff Switch**

Part III-G:

Crisis Tools

STAGES OF CONFLICT



• **Tool: When to call the police**

Only as a last resort.
The more you call the police, the less they take you seriously. They also take longer to come.
When people see police, it is highly disruptive and scares patrons.
If you do have to call them, step away--there is no need to call the police in front of the trouble patron.

2 conditions when you should call the police:

1. genuinely dangerous, such as a fight or a shooter.
2. person flat out refuses to leave after you've asked them to

"Please leave or I'll have to call the police and I don't want to have to do that."

Extra rules for calling the police:

1. Do not threaten to call the police unless you are truly ready to do so and have exhausted all other options
2. Do not call the police _____.

• **Tool: Have a code name for the police**

• **Tool: How to do backup**

Do not do this:

How to do backup correctly:

Need to have a strategy.

Primary Person's Role: To talk to the patron. Only one staff person at a time should be in on the conversation with the patron. You can "tag out" but don't "gang up" (think WWF wrestling).

Backup Person's Role:

1. monitor the situation, but NOT be part of it.
2. call the police if needed
3. control the crowd

Backup person should be 5-10 feet to the side, visible by both.

In high-stakes conflict, who should be primary person? supervisor

In low-stakes conflict, who should be primary person? staff in training

- **Tool: How to break up a fight**

Peacocking fights are slow and loud. starts far apart, they don't really want to fight.

How you should handle: break it up--they want you to.

Real fights are fast and quiet.

How you should handle: Do not try to stop them from fighting. Clear the room and call the police

- Tool: How to ask someone to leave

Take them to a more private place so others don't overhear the conversation. Have them bring their things with them and try to lead them to a place near the exit. Don't break the news to them until you have done these things. Chances are they will keep going, relieved they don't have to do a walk of shame. Having lots of pennies in your cup helps.

Five tips for kicking someone out with empathy (and effectiveness):

1. Take a minute to listen - give them a chance to plead their case
2. Make it clear that you don't think negatively of the person. (so they have something to lose if they act out--their good relationship with you)
3. Offer a fresh start.
4. Be sad about it.
5. Take baby steps.

Appendix

Your Personal Phrases

It is helpful to have specific phrases you use whenever a situation arises. If you use the same phrase every time, you won't make mistakes when you are tired or stressed.

1. You want to ask someone to speak more quietly.

- "Would you mind turning down the volume a notch or two?" (while turning an imaginary dial in the air).
- "Would you mind speaking more quietly? My ears are very sensitive."
- Your own:

2. You want to ask someone's name.

- "Hi. I'm Ryan. I didn't catch your name."
- "Hi. My name is Ryan. What is yours?"
- Your own:

3. You want to use someone's name without alarming them.

- "Good afternoon. It's 'Bob,' right?"
- "Good morning. Wait. Don't tell me. You are 'Susan,' right?"

- Your own:

4. You want to tell someone they are breaking a rule without making them defensive.

- "You probably didn't realize we have a rule about this, but . . ."
- "I'm sure you didn't know, but . . ."
- Your own:

5. You want to "blame the rules."

- "I would let you do that, but the boss would probably fire me."
- "I would let you do that, but the board of directors is really picky about that rule."
- "I would let you do that, but the bosses are really cracking down on that one."
- Your own:

6. You want to do "reflective listening."

- "I think what I heard you say, was . . ."
- "If I'm understanding you correctly . . ."
- "Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you feel that . . ."
- "Let me be sure that I understand you . . ."
- Your own:

7. Someone is in your personal space while talking.

- "I'm going to take a step back. I forgot deodorant today."
- "Do you mind if we talk from a little further back? I had a lot of garlic for lunch."
- Your own:

8. You want to use the skill of "being sad" to show that you do not enjoy using your authority on homeless individuals.

- "I don't like enforcing the rules, but I have to."
- "If you don't stop that I'll have to ask you to leave, and I don't want to do that because you are a fellow Stephen King fan."
- Your own:

9. Someone asks you why you don't allow sleeping in the library.

- "We have had people with medical conditions, so we ask everyone to stay awake so we know they are ok."
- "We have had people snore really bad, which disturbs other patrons, so we ask everyone to stay awake."
- Your own:

10. Someone asks you why you don't allow multiple large bags in the library.

- "We have limited space, so the board passed a rule to make sure that everyone has space."
- "The lawyers are really worried about people tripping over bags. We always listen to the lawyers."

- Your own:

11. Someone is panhandling in the library.

- "Sir, you can't do that."
- Your own:

12. Someone brought in a pet, and you want to verify if it is a service animal.

- "Is your dog required because of a disability?"
- "What work or task has the dog been trained to do?"
- THERE ARE NO OTHER LEGAL QUESTIONS!!!

13. A non-homeless patron is complaining.

- "We take the needs of all of our patrons seriously, regardless of their socio-economic status."
- "Thank you for your concern. We have the situation under control."
- "Thank you for your concern, we are keeping an eye on the situation."
- Your own:

14. A non-homeless patron is being nosy.

- "It would really not be appropriate for me to talk about other patrons."
- Your own:

15. Other: _____

- Your own:

16. Other: _____

- Your own:

17. Other: _____

- Your own:
