

## **Family Health**

# Strategies for Positive Patient Encounters

June 30, 2021

**Maria Chandler, MD, MBA**

CMO & Pediatrician

TCC Family Health


Clinical Professor of Pediatrics,  
UC Irvine

**Ali Zandi, PsyD**

Director of Behavioral Health

TCC Family Health





Remember, we can't control how people  
act towards us but we can control how  
we respond.

# Contextual Factors

## Client Factors

- Frustration with medical systems and procedures
- Traumatic or adverse prior experiences
- Stress (chronic or acute)
- Fear and worry
- Individual mental health and substance abuse issues

- Long wait times
- Crowding
- Administrative barriers

## Staff Factors

- Stress (chronic or acute)
- Training deficits
- Traumatic or adverse experiences
- Communication style
- Conflict resolution style
- Fear and worry
- Individual mental health and substance abuse issues





KEEP  
CALM  
DO NOT  
REACT,  
RESPOND

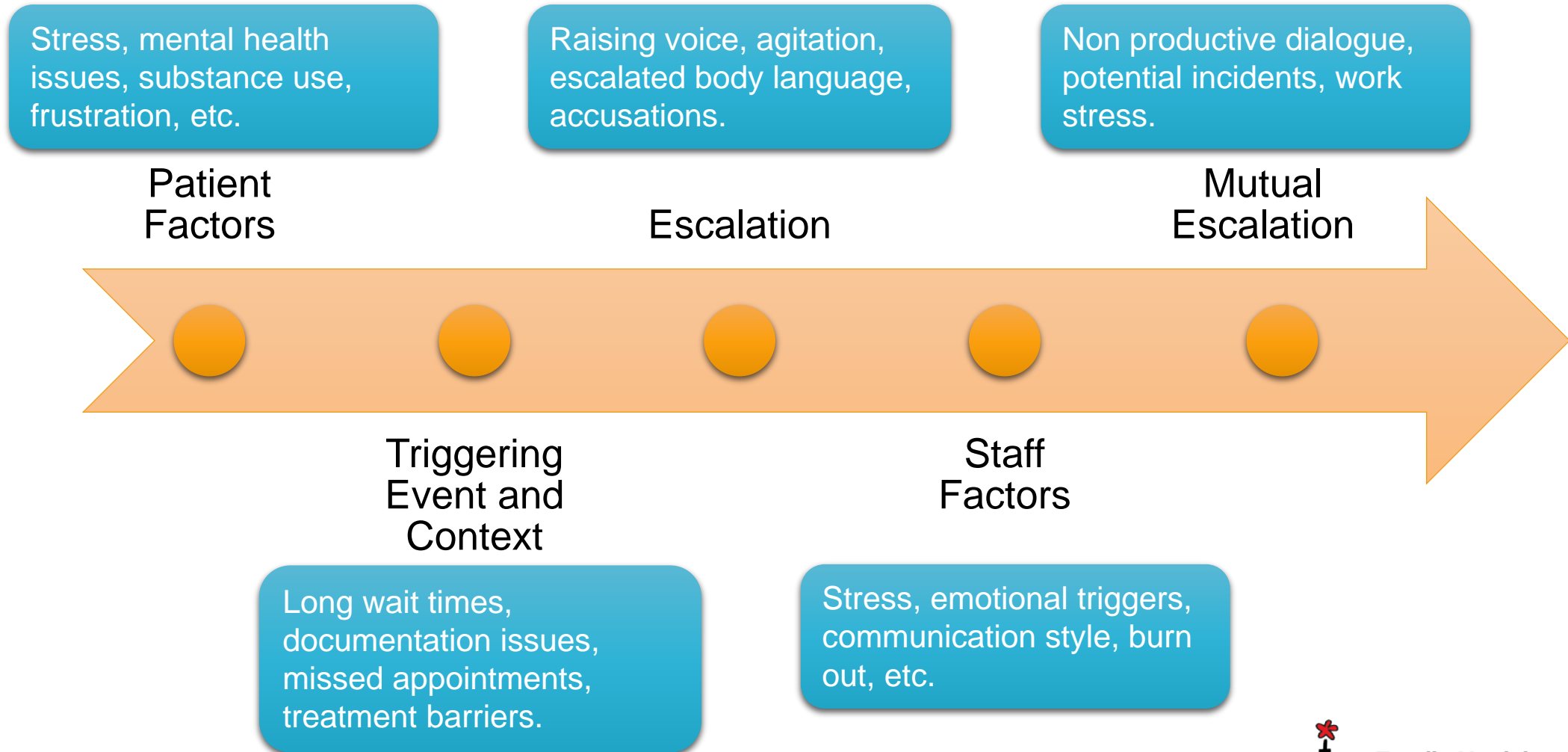
# De-escalation Skills

- Active Skills
  - Listening without judgement
  - Assertive communication
  - Tone of voice
  - Reflecting and summarizing
  - Empathizing
  - Problem solving
  - Boundary setting
  - Coordinating with other staff and supervisors

# De-escalation Skills

- Passive Skills
  - Provide space for the patient to share their concern
  - Body language
    - Posture
    - Undivided attention
    - Eye contact and eye level
    - Nodding and other acknowledgements

# Escalation Cycle in Healthcare





# Steps of De-escalating Others

## Step 1: Validate

- Avoid rushing to judgement. Take your time to gather all of the information.
- Communicate your understanding of their emotional experience. Let them know you “get it”.


## Step 2: Support

- Try to meet emotional and practical needs



What are some example of what you should say?

Please put it in the Zoom chat.



“I am sorry you are upset. Do you mind sharing what is making you feel this way?”

“I can understand why you might feel/think/want \_\_\_\_\_  
(emotion or need),...”

Pause!

Which 3-letter word are you tempted to use?

But



*Avoid using “but”. Instead use “because”*

“I can understand you are frustrated by the long wait, but...”

*Is transformed into:*

“I can understand you are frustrated by the long wait because you have been here all morning and you are in pain.”



*Avoid statements like “calm down” or “relax”*

“Calm down first and I will see what I can do”

*Is transformed into:*

“I can see how frustrating this situation is for you, let me help you”

Or

“I understand you are frustrated about \_\_\_\_\_ and I will do my best to assist you”




Thank  
You!

# De-escalating Others Starts with De-escalating Yourself

- What are your common daily stressors?
- What are your long term emotional triggers?
- How do you respond when emotionally flooded?
  - Fight, flight, freeze?
- What beliefs do you hold about the clients?







The Platinum Rule:  
“Treat others the way they would like  
to be treated.”

# Self De-escalation Skills

If confronted with a hostile situation, a coworker or patient take the following steps:

- Take a deep breath
- Take another deep breath
- Think before speaking
- Stay in the moment
- Maintain your perspective

# Self De-escalation Skills

- Utilize positive self-talk
- Take a break from interaction and debrief with manager
- Learn that you are not your emotions
- Learn from the interaction and grow
- Practice daily gratitude
- Make stress management a part of you daily life

# Taking Care of Yourself When Caring for Others

- Pay attention to your emotional world
- Breath
- Be mindful and stay in the present moment
- Exercise
- Eat foods with high nutritional value
- Sleep 7-9 hours per night
- Ask for help when you need it
- Prayer, yoga, and meditation
- Building time and stress management skills
- Nurture creativity and play
- Practice gratitude

# Remember...

Every encounter may not be what you wanted it to be or what you expected it to be.

We can make even challenging situations better.

**Your caring about them matters!**

# Resources

- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*
- *Crucial Confrontations: Tools for Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior*
- *Stress Free for Good: 10 Scientifically Proven Life Skills for Health and Happiness*
- Department of Mental Health Helpline  
(800) 854-7771
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
(800) 273-8255
- Substance Abuse Service Helpline(844) 804-7500
- ACEs Aware:  
<https://www.acesaware.org/>

# Thank you for attending!





## **Family Health**

# Strategies for Positive Patient Encounters

## **Questions?**

**Maria Chandler, MD, MBA**

CMO & Pediatrician

TCC Family Health

Clinical Professor of Pediatrics,

UC Irvine

**Ali Zandi, PsyD**

Director of Behavioral Health

TCC Family Health