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MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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De-escalation Techniques for Housing Professionals

Wednesday 5/25/22
Russ Turner, MA, MS, Director

Class time:

10:15AM – 11:45AM

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Thank you for joining us!

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Escalation:

*An increase in
the intensity or
seriousness of
something*

De-escalation:

*Decrease in
intensity or
magnitude*

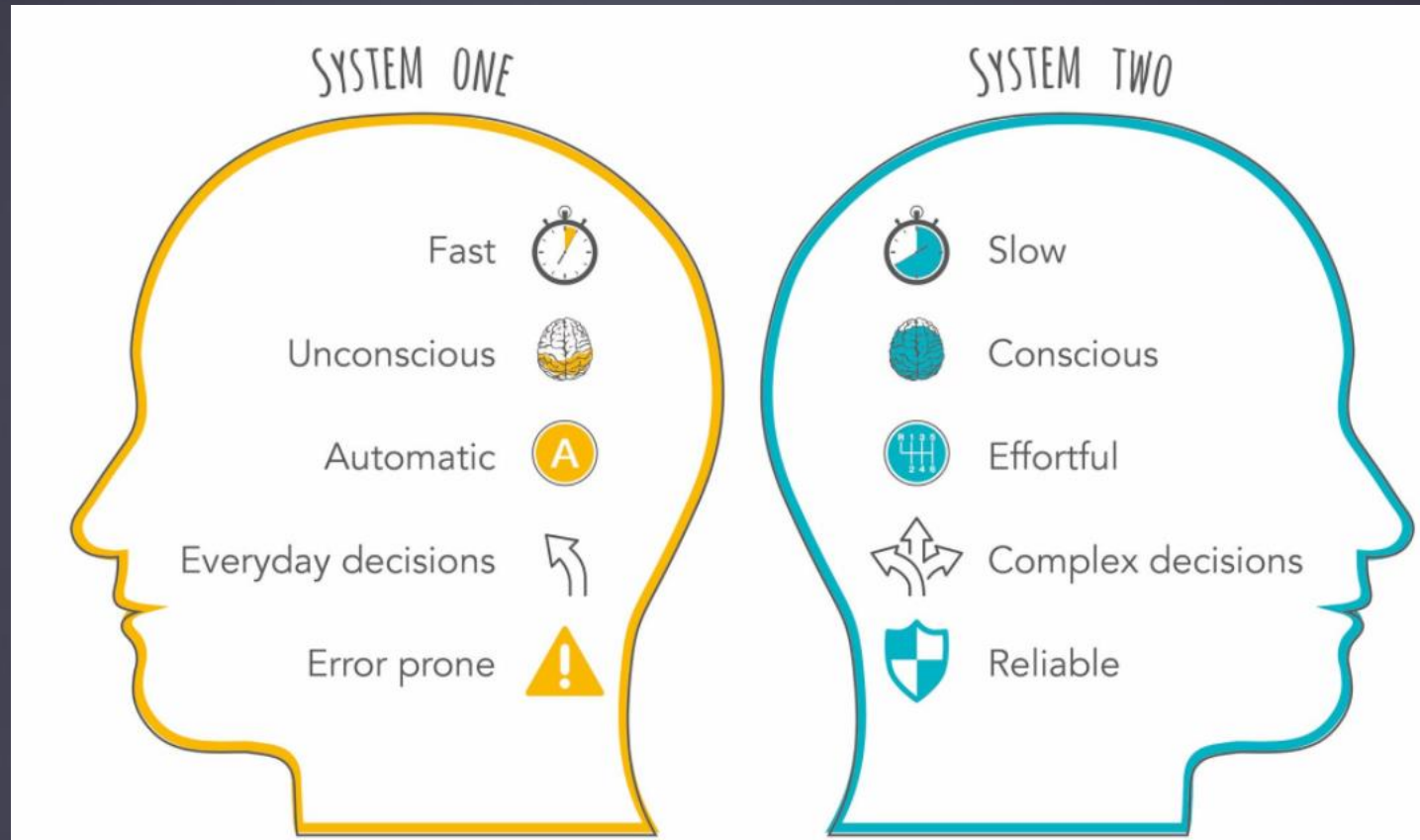


Philosophy:

People can better self-regulate when they feel a connection and understanding with the people around them



95%



5%

De-escalation

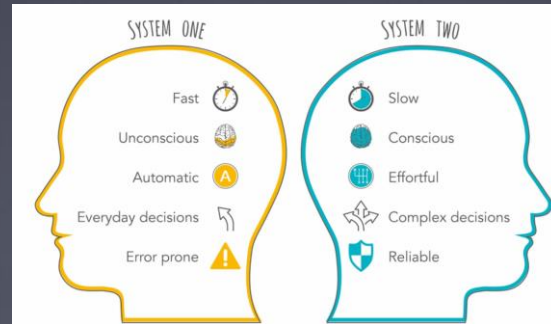


1. **Pause**
2. **Listen**
3. **Respond**

Intensity

- Incident(s)
- Asking for compliance
- Enforcing rules

De-escalation “SPACE”

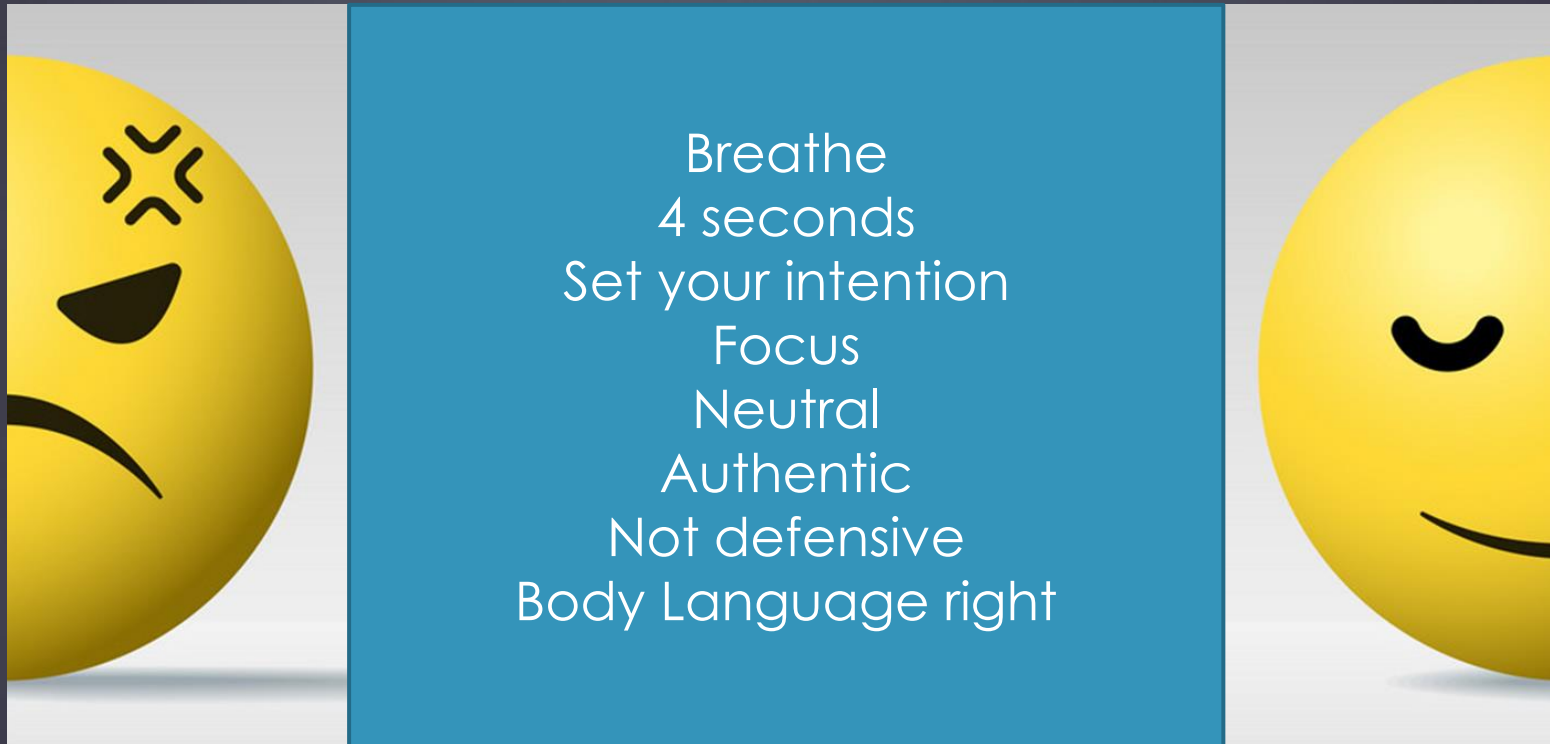


Job functions:

- Explaining/Telling
- Setting Boundaries
- Policies/Protocols
- Rules
- Problem Solving
- Consequences

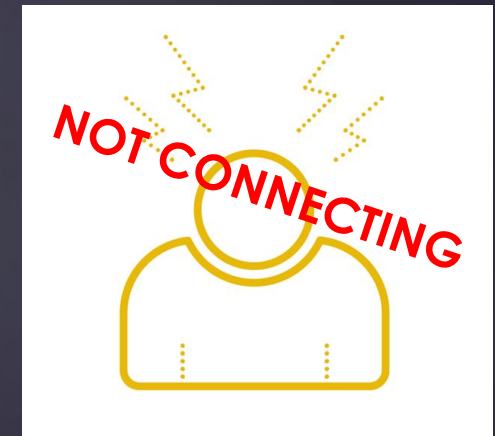
Pause

Stay in professional role



Eliminate Escalating replies / Traps

- ▶ Calm down!
- ▶ What's your problem?
- ▶ Why can't you...?
- ▶ Why did you...?
- ▶ You need to...
- ▶ If you don't, then...
- ▶ It's not a big deal
- ▶ You should/shouldn't...
...should've/shouldn't've
- ▶ Why are you getting so worked up?
- ▶ Being defensive
- ▶ Disagreeing
- ▶ Blaming
- ▶ Shaming
- ▶ Criticizing



Listen

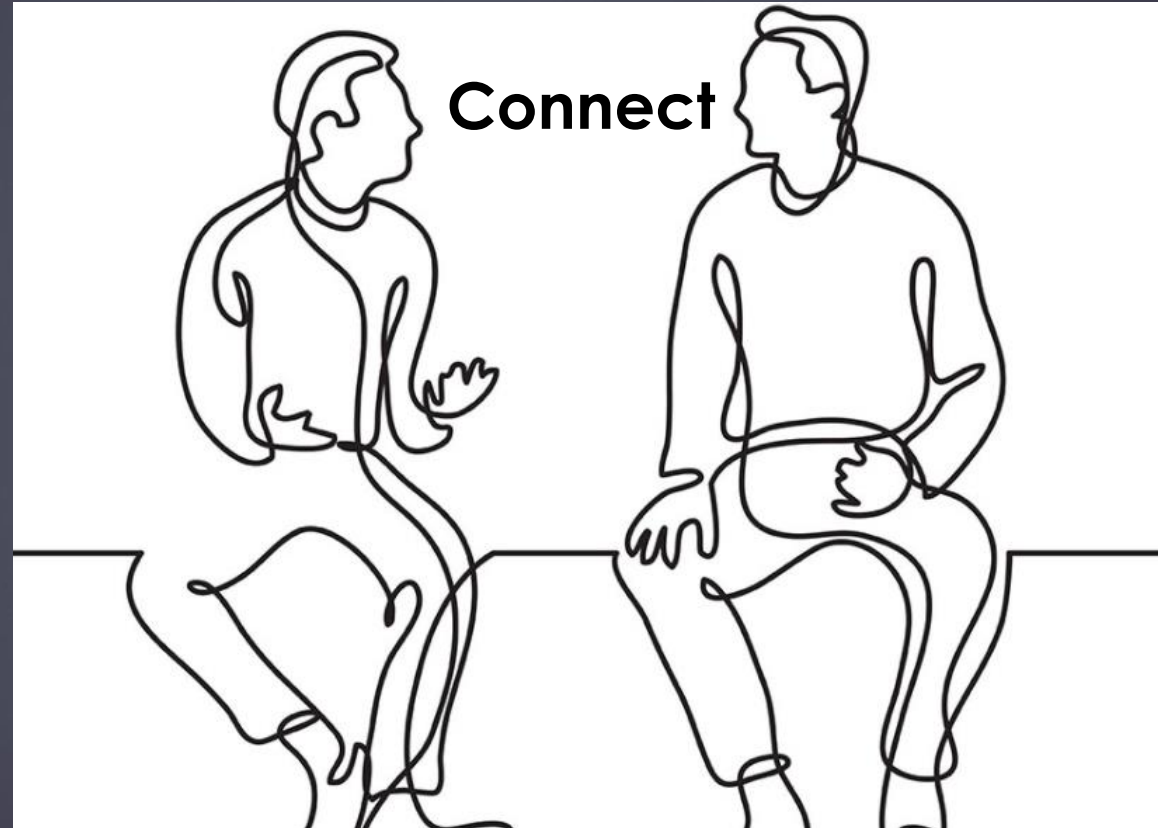
What's behind the upset?

What is the need? Common ones:

- ▶ *Control*
- ▶ *Respect*
- ▶ *Be heard*
- ▶ *Acknowledgement*
 - ▶ *Discrimination, bias*
 - ▶ *Unfairness*
 - ▶ *Fear*
- ▶ *Immediate help*
- ▶ *Privacy*

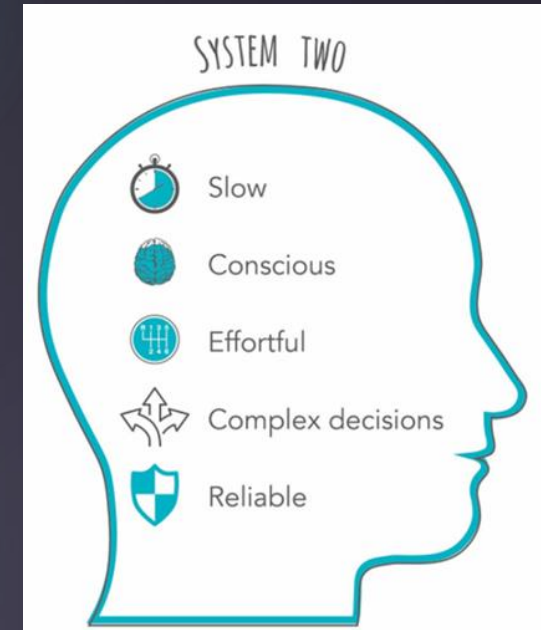
**This is going to help
you RESPOND**

Responding tools



Responding Tool 3

- ▶ Paraphrase what you think it's about



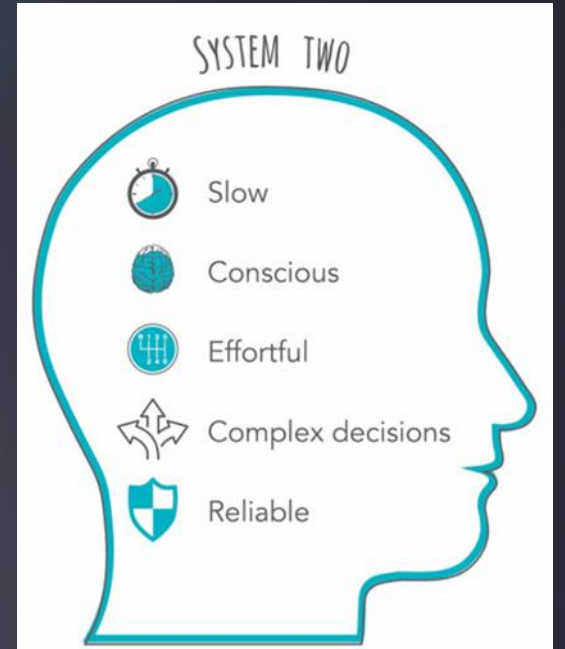
Paraphrase

“This is not fair, how come they get special favors?”

- ▶ *You're feeling like things aren't fair*
- ▶ *You feel like it should be the same for everyone*
- ▶ *Yeah, it's kinda unfair, to be honest*

Responding Tool 4

- ▶ State your support



State your support

✓ Ally not Adversary

- *“I want to try to help you out”*
- *“Ok, I’m here to help you”*
- *“I’m gonna stay with you, ok?”*
- *“You are in the right place”*

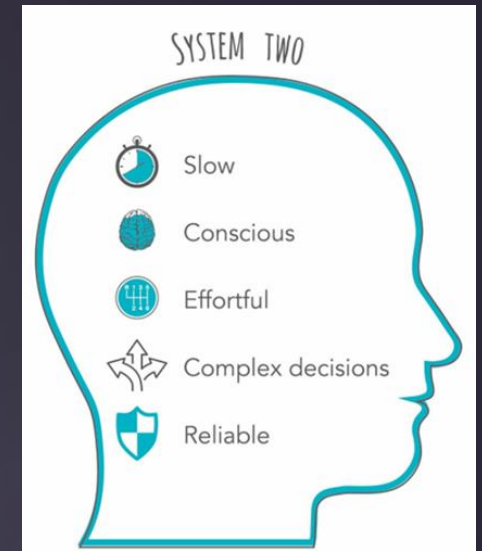
Responding Tool 5

- ▶ Find something to agree on

Find something in common

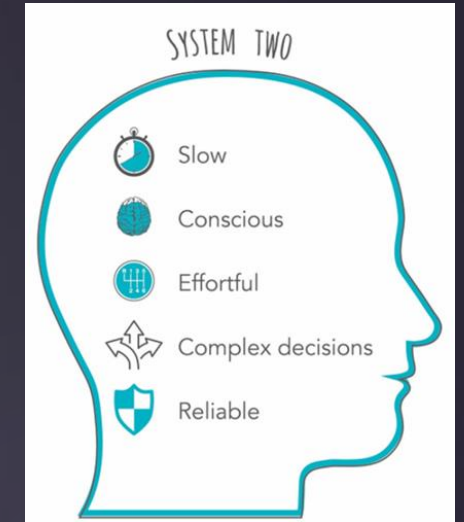
✓ Look for things to agree on

- *“We wanna run a good building”*
- *“We wanna keep everyone safe”*
- *“The whole thing is kinda frustrating, I know”*
-



Encourage partnership

- *“We’re in the same boat...”*
- *“Could you help us out by _____?”*
- *“Would you be willing to ___ with me?”*
- *...ask them to do something, offer them a role*



Responding Tool 6

▶ Validate emotions

Validation

I'm worried!

*“Yeah, I can see
there’s something on
your mind.”*

*What’s going on?”
(Your emotions are valid)*

Responding Tool 7

▶ Ask, don't tell



*Thanks for coming in!
Nice to see you.
We're happy you're here.
Welcome!*

CONNECT



*Could I ask you to...?
Would you be willing to...?
Could you...for me please?
We're asking folks to...*

REQUEST



*It's a guideline for everyone.
They're making us do this _____ thing
It's a safety thing due to...
It's only for while you...*

CONTEXT

Responding Tool 8

- ▶ Present Alternatives not threats

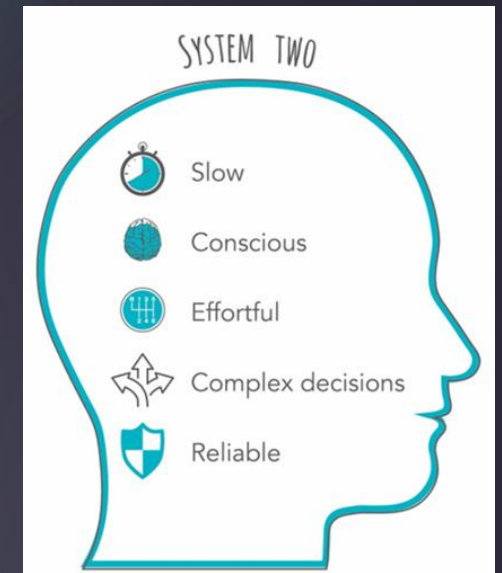
Alternatives not threats

“If you don’t eat your dinner, you can’t have dessert!”

- ▶ *I don’t want you to miss out on dessert, can you eat some of your dinner?*
 - ✓ *Generates empathy*
 - ✓ *Reduces expectations*
 - ✓ *More reasonable*
 - ✓ *Removes the “if you don’t” threat language*

Responding tool 9

Ask them “Is there anything I can do to earn your cooperation?”



Responding Tool 10

- ▶ Use positive reinforcement for any desired behavior or response from them

Thank you for... (what, why, or how)

...helping work this out

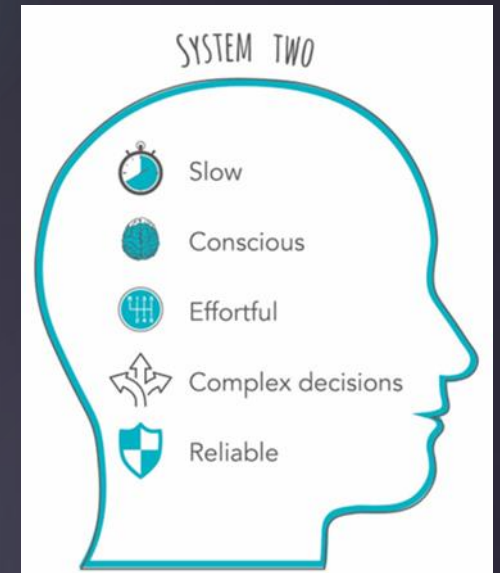
...being flexible with me

...being courageous

...getting through this with us

...your _____

...

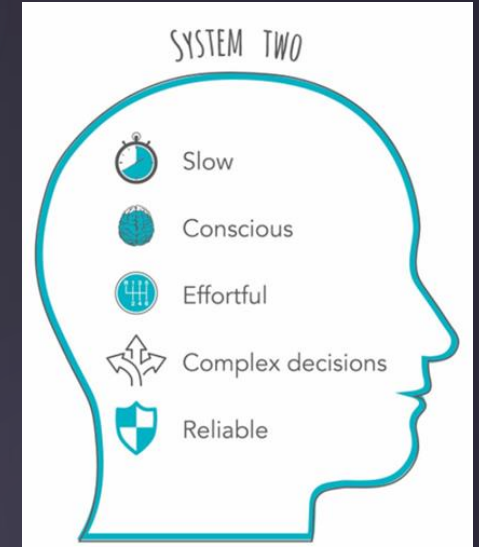


Responding Tool 11

- ▶ Use apologies
 - ▶ Must be genuine
 - ▶ If can't be genuine, don't use

Apologize

- ▶ *I'm sorry all this is happening...*
- ▶ *I appreciate your patience*
- ▶ *I apologize for all this _____
(inconvenience/paperwork/delay etc.)*
- ▶ *I'm really sorry about all this*
- ▶ *I'm sorry this is taking such a long time, I'm trying to hurry this along...*



Responding Tool 12



- ▶ Let them have the last word
- ▶ If you have gained compliance, it's over

Important
Please seek support if the incident has been upsetting, traumatic, abusive

Recommendation

- ▶ What are the expectations around de-escalation? (written/unwritten)
- ▶ What policies exist to support staff?
- ▶ What situations are staff **not** expected to de-escalate?
 - ▶ (racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic,...)
- ▶ Is the environment trauma-informed?



References

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Thank you for coming!

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