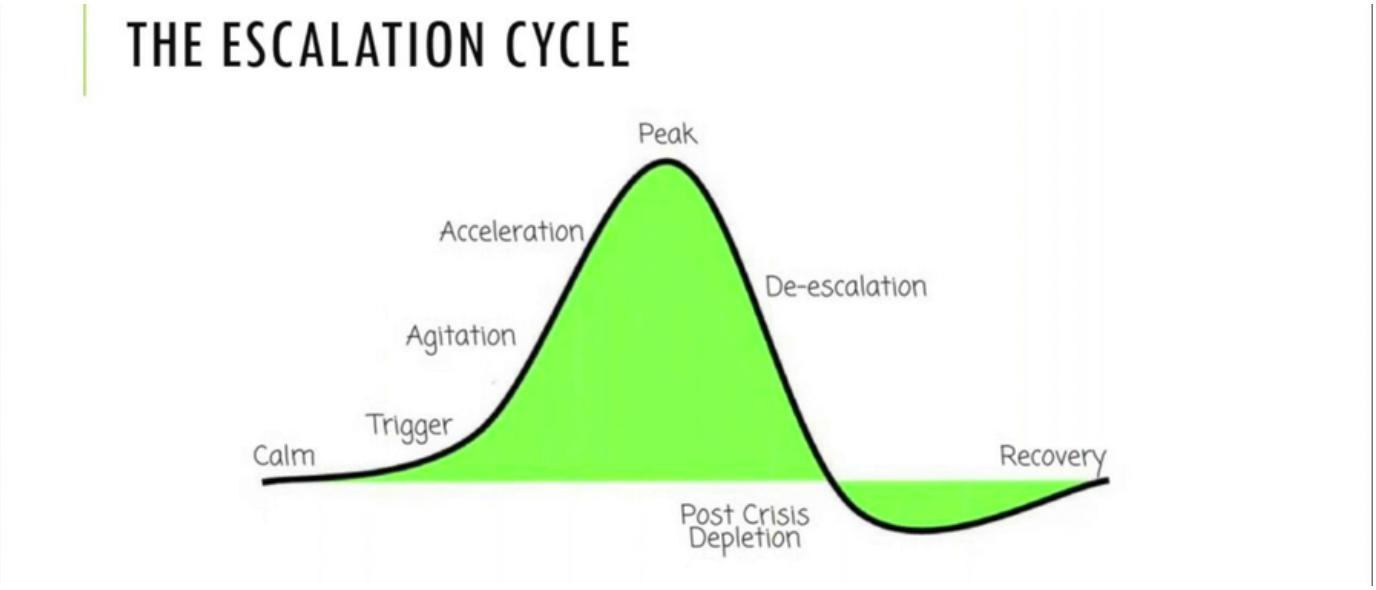
DE-ESCALATION TOOLS

With the concern about increasing violence in the community, which has the potential to flow into AED/CDU, I am sending out a quick guide for interacting with someone who is presenting in the agitation/acceleration/peak stage.
Also a reminder that ***MAPA*** *training provides the essentials for de-escalation and emergency management of aggressive behaviour so this does NOT replace that very beneficial learning.*



NThis won't be new to you.. How can you intervene in this cycle of escalation.

Signs of escalating hostility or aggression

- Increased content and volume of speech
- Restlessess, agitation, can't stand or sit still.
- Pacing, clenched fists, drumming fingers, banging on walls or bed
- Tense, frustrated or angry face
- Extended eye contact that is challening or overt glaring.
- Rapidly shifting mood
- Rapid breathing, muscle twitching
- Disclosure of great fear, anger or loss of control
- Vague or clear verbal threats or gestures
- Blocking escape routes

DO NOT APPROACH IF:

- The person is threatening harm to others of bystanders
- The person is already too hostile, unstable, fearful or intoxicated to respond.
- The person is enclosed in a small space with no exit
- The person has a weapon
- You don't feel confident or capable of managing the situation.
- Call for immediate assistance with security or 777, push duress button, use your voice, clear the room and wait for assistance.

Mental Health

Communication Strategies

- Use an even, calm voice
- Speak to the person by name and use your name
- Acknowledge the grievance and communicate your willingness to help "*Tell me whats happened today*"
- Show concern and attentiveness through non verbal (nodding head) and verbal responses *"Tell me about....."*
- Allow the person time to think and respond.
- Negotiate realistic options to resolve the situation and be clear about what you are trying to achieve *"I want to help, and we need to be able to talk this through, but I can't understand you when you're shouting"*
- Use a low stimulus room
- Always appear confident even if you don't feel it.
- Do not use no language, instead try *"what I CAN do to help is..."*
- *Do not argue with the person*
- *Do not threaten the person*
- *Do not allow the person to block your exit from the room (stand near the exit if possible) and do not block the persons exit either*
- *Avoid making promises you cannot, or do not intend to keep*

De-escalation techniques: Initial approach

- Quickly scan the immediate vicinity and observe the location of duress alarms, exits, bystanders and potential dangerous objects to judge immediate risks and decide on most suitable approach.
- One person ONLY should take control and undertake all communication.
- The communicator should make sure other people are on standby
- Manage the environment - stop people walking through and create some physical space.
- Consider removing potential personal hazards such as necklaces, glasses, pens and keys.
- Adopt an open body posture (arms by sides, palms fowards, move slowly)
- Always approach the person from the front or the side so that you can be seen
- Be aware of your eye contact - not too much (appears threatening) or too little (implies indifference). Use a triangle - shoulder to shoulder to forehead - to avoid prolonged eye contact.
- Ensure that a safe distance is maintained as the person will need a larger area of personal space than usual.
- Sit if the person sits, stand if the person stands, and walk if the person walks.