

# **Crisis Communication & Active Listening**



## **Responding to Children and Young People in Crisis**

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)  
Residential Child Care Project  
Cornell University, 2009

# Logistics



- ❖ Please **display your name** (or parent of: child's name) for attendance purposes, or send via chat to presenters.
- ❖ Please send **questions via chat** to presenters.
- ❖ Please **mute yourself** to limit background noise when not participating in breakout groups or activities.
- ❖ We will be **recording** this presentation.
- ❖ Please send us a private chat or email *if you do not consent* to this being recorded.
- ❖ Breakout groups will not be recorded.

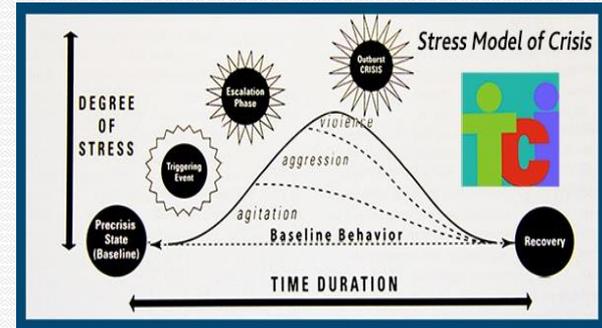
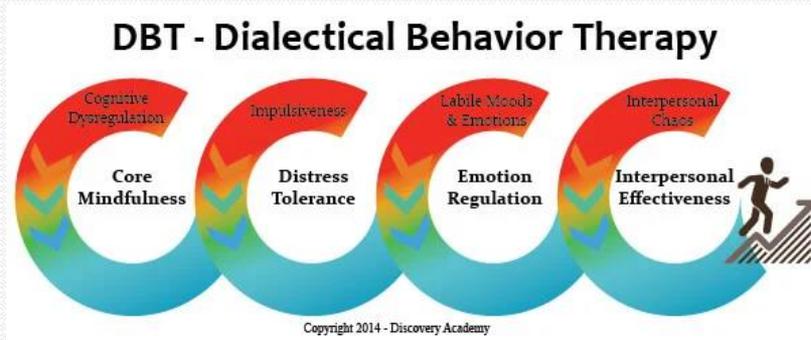
# Green Chimneys Parent Training Curriculum

September: Introduction to Balanced Parenting (Dialectics)

October (1): Mindfulness for Parents

October (2): Self-Awareness and Emotion Regulation

**November: Crisis Communication: Validation & Active Listening**

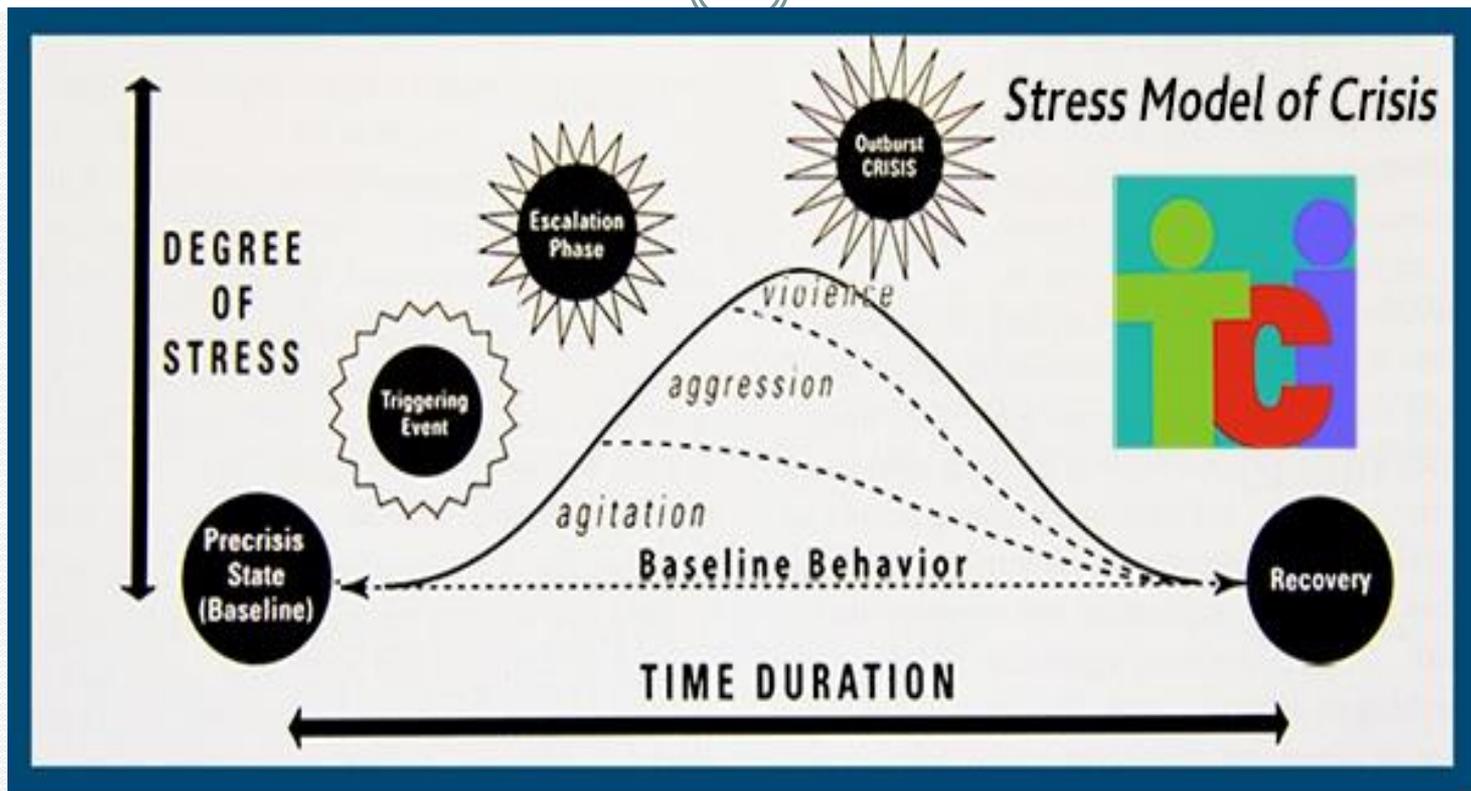


**TCI - Therapeutic Crisis Intervention**

# SKILLS BUILDING FOR CO-REGULATION STRATEGIES IN TCI



# Stress Model of Crisis



# The Four Questions



1. What am I feeling? ✓
2. What does the child feel, need, or want?
3. How is the environment affecting the child?
4. How do I best respond?

# What does the Child Feel, Need, or Want?



Behavior is a form of communication:

- What feeling, need, or desire is your child communicating through this behavior?
- Examples:
  - Feelings: Frustration, anger, shame, sadness
  - Needs: To feel safe, physical needs (food, sleep, movement, pain relief).
  - Wants: Acceptance, recognition, control, to be treated fairly, escape from challenging/uncomfortable situations, access to people, things.

Asking yourself this question can help you avoid judgments (“He is spoiled,” or “She is being manipulative”) and focus on what is driving the behavior in this moment.

# Forms of Communication



## MEANING IN SPOKEN COMMUNICATION DURING TIMES OF CRISIS



**Meaning = Facial Expression + Tone of Voice + Words**

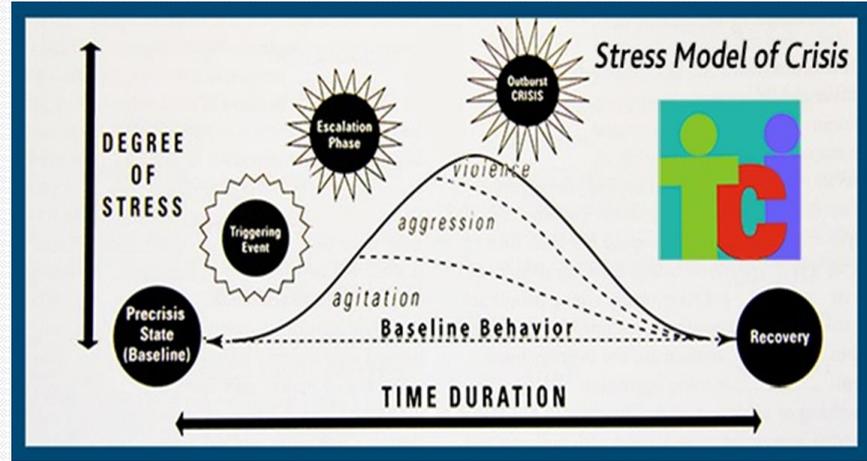
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# Non-Verbal Techniques



Convey meaning and understanding through:

- Silence
- Facial Expressions
- Nods
- Physical proximity
- Eye Contact

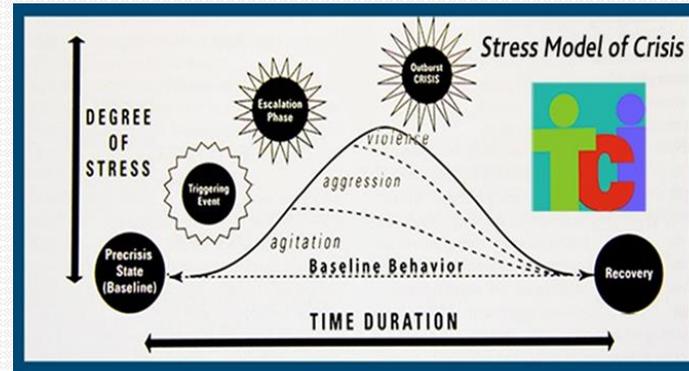


# Verbal Techniques



## Encouraging and Eliciting Techniques

1. Tone of Voice
2. Minimal Encouragements
3. Door Openers
4. Closed Questions
5. Open Questions
6. Why Questions (Avoid)



These techniques can help the child verbally express their feelings and concerns. This can be helpful in understanding what they are experiencing.

# Verbal Techniques



## Understanding Responses

1. Reflective Responses
2. Summarization

	Intensity	Emotion
"You feel	a little bit	sad/angry?"
"You feel	quite	helpless/depressed?"
"You feel	very	stressed?"
"You feel	extremely	embarrassed?"

These responses communicate that we are listening and that we understand what the child is expressing. Understanding responses can also help children sort out what is happening to them. They can help diffuse strong emotions.

# Active Listening



Active listening is a combination of these non-verbal and verbal techniques. Through active listening, you can:

1. Identify what a young person is feeling
2. Communicate that understanding back to them

When we help children express their feelings and then reflect and validate those feelings, they begin to calm down. As adults, we model effective communication skills.

This is called co-regulation.

# De-Escalating the Crisis Through Active Listening



Active listening communicates:

- Care and concern
- Understanding
- Validation of feelings
- Respect for the child's perspective
- Empathy: A sincere desire to understand what they are experiencing in that moment.

# Active Listening: Why do it?



1. It improves children's understanding of their own emotions.
2. It encourages children to verbally express their feelings, needs, and wants (talk it out rather than act it out).
3. Attends to feelings rather than to problematic behaviors.
4. It builds trust and improves the parent/adult – child relationship.
5. Can help defuse strong emotions and prevent acting out.
6. Models empathy, concern for others, the desire to help, and respect for another person's perspective.

# Roadblocks to Communication



Some roadblocks to communicating effectively include:

- Interrupting
- Blaming
- Shaming
- Labeling
- Criticizing
- Minimizing the problem or the child's feelings
- Trying to solve the problem for the child
- Trying to “cheer them up”

# Effective Communication



It is important to build a strong foundation for how you and your child communicate. This will not only strengthen your relationship, it will also increase your effectiveness for intervening in times of crisis.



# What does the Child Feel, Need, or Want?



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# Scenario



# Breakout Groups



What roadblocks to communication do you find yourself coming up against with your child (minimizing, interrupting, doing two things at once, etc.)?

What is one active listening technique are most likely to use in the future? Which is most challenging?

# Thank you!

Please keep an eye out for a [survey link](#) from Marina Ineson!

**Parent support group is November 16th (6:30-7:30)**

The next parent training is **November 23rd on The Stress Model of Crisis**

Powerpoint can be found on our website (Parent Training and Support group)

<https://www.greenchimneys.org/therapeutic-special-education/parents-families/tools-resources/clinical-resources/parent-training-support-groups/>