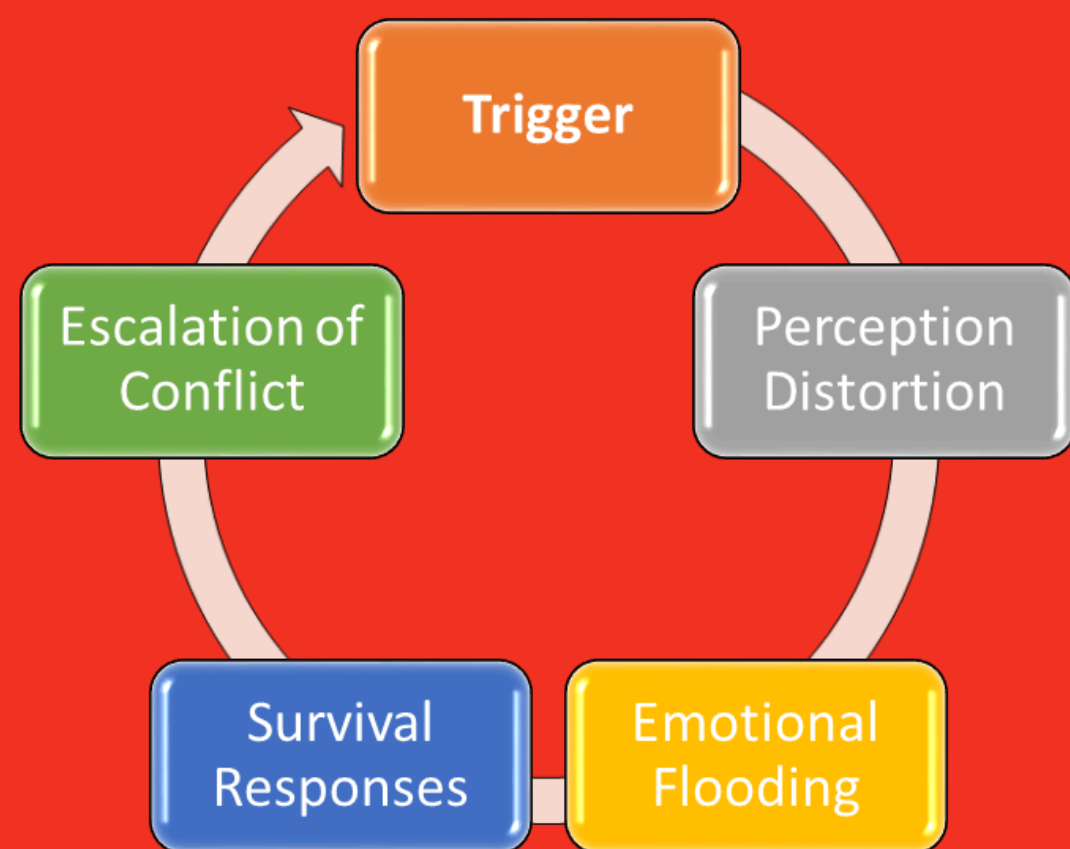


Managing the Escalation Process



A Quick Guide to Recognizing and Managing Escalation



RECOGNIZE THE TRIGGER

A trigger reminds the individual of a past traumatic experience, and they begin to react based on that past event rather than the present situation.

HOW TO MANAGE IT?

- **Stay calm and grounded:** Your calm demeanor can help keep the other person grounded.
- **Acknowledge the situation:** Recognize that something has triggered them without judging or dismissing their reaction.



RECOGNIZE PERCEPTION DISTORTION

Once triggered, the individual's perception of the situation becomes skewed, making them feel that they are under greater threat than they are.

HOW TO MANAGE IT?

- **Use clear and simple language:** Avoid jargon or overly complex explanations that might be misunderstood.
- **Clarify intentions:** Reassure the person that you intend to help, not harm.



RECOGNIZE EMOTIONAL FLOODING

Emotions become overwhelming, and the individual can no longer regulate them, leading to intense reactions such as anger, sadness, or fear.

HOW TO MANAGE IT?

- **Pause and give space:** Offer a break to let the person calm down before continuing the conversation.
- **Validate emotions:** Acknowledge the emotional intensity without invalidating their feelings.



RECOGNIZE SURVIVAL RESPONSES (FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE, FAWN)

The person shifts into a survival response — fight (aggression), flight (avoidance), freeze (shutting down), or fawn (people-pleasing) — making it difficult to engage productively.

HOW TO MANAGE IT?

- Adjust your approach based on the response:
 - **Fight:** Stay calm, avoid matching aggression, and maintain non-threatening body language.
 - **Flight:** Gently encourage staying in the conversation but offer the option to revisit later if necessary.
 - **Freeze:** Give them time and space to process without pressuring them for immediate responses.
 - **Fawn:** Acknowledge their feelings while encouraging honest communication and not just compliance.



RECOGNIZE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT

If survival responses are not managed, the conflict can escalate further, leading to more intense emotional reactions or even a breakdown in communication.

HOW TO MANAGE IT?

- **Slow down the conversation:** Encourage pausing, taking deep breaths, and reflecting before continuing.
- **De-escalate by offering options:** Provide choices to help the individual feel empowered to engage on their own terms.

