

Module 1: Navigating Agitation and Challenging Behaviors

For more information about taking a trauma-informed approach to care, please view the [trauma-informed care modules](#) offered as part of this online learning series.

[Tips and strategies for improving challenging situations](#)

[Courses for direct service workers](#)

[Mental Health Wellness for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(MHW-IDD\) Courses](#)

Summary of De-escalation Techniques

1. Notice the behavior:
 - I see you are hitting the wall (describe behavior).
2. Pay attention to feeling and notice something is wrong:
 - Are you upset (guess emotion)?
 - If you guess incorrectly, ask “What are you feeling?”
3. Demonstrate Interest and show concern:
 - I can see that you’re upset (insert emotion).
4. Ask for more information using a nonjudgmental approach:
 - Can you help me understand what you are feeling upset (insert emotion) about?
 - How come?
5. Put it all together and show empathy:
 - I can understand how you would feel (insert emotion).
6. Encourage problem solving:
 - Is there another way you can take out your frustrations (insert emotion) ?

Evaluating Challenging Behaviors Checklist

Question	Yes	No
Change		
Has there been a change in the person's routine?		
Has there been a medication added or taken away?		
Has the environment changed?		
Discomfort/Illness		
Are their physical needs being met (hunger, thirst, pain, toileting, body temperature, sleep)?		
Are their psychological needs met (loneliness, attention)		
Avoidance		
Are they being asked to participate in an activity that is painful or difficult for them?		
Is their environment over-stimulating (too loud, too bright)?		