

Book Club Discussion Guide for De-escalate Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime: Unplug the Power Struggle with Principle-Based De-escalation

The goal of this guide is to help you facilitate an excellent discussion on the topics outlined in “De-escalate Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime.” Below is a list of discussion questions that we think will help, but you don’t need to rigidly adhere to these. You are welcome to let the conversation “flow” if the group is enthusiastic about the topic.

Before the meeting it might be a good idea, to have each member write a discussion question for the meeting. This will help get everyone thinking about the topic and ensure group participation. The group questions might be enough to facilitate a lively discussion, or you may find it helpful to toss some of the questions below into the mix.

Discussion Questions:

What did you learn that you didn’t know before?

How has reading this book changed the way you think about the individuals you are supporting?

Why are the 3 Guiding Principals the right response for every situation?

What did you find surprising about the “five surprises” introduced in the book?

What does “in order to be effective in a crisis situation, you have to first manage yourself before you can manage other people” mean to you?

In what ways can you better manage your stress in a crisis situation?

How does the relationship with the individuals you support guide your response?

Have you ever escalated a person more when you tried to de-escalated him or her?

What are the individuals you support communicating with their behavior? What is the purpose of the concerning behavior?

What could be taught to help the person get their needs met?

What is the risk of eliminating a behavior of concern without teaching something in its place?

What could be taught to help the person get his or her needs met in a way that is safer, easier, and more effective?

How could you utilize the concept of “Postvention?”

How did you handle yourself the last time you were in a stressful situation?

Do you have any Cognitive Distortions (irrational thoughts that lead to unhealthy and inappropriate boundaries with others)? Explain.

How can you keep your “buttons” from being pushed?

What does the phrase “pick your battles” mean to you? How do you know when an escalation requires an intervention?

You have probably heard de-escalation referred to as “verbal de-escalation.” What is the problem with this? Is there ever a time when being silent might be the right response?