

Steps and Skills Useful in Managing Client Anger

Preliminary Phase (Before the Anger Event)

- Tuning in to Self: flight, fight, freeze
- Tuning in to Others: Client's life stressors; anger response history; likely impact of the interview
- Tuning in to the Environment: Anticipate potential dangers, weapons
- Clarity about the Purpose and Outcomes: Cannot compromise child safety
- Supports: Increases mission success; increases worker confidence
- Rehearsal of Anger Management/De-escalation Skills: Assists in ensuring proper execution of skills when needed

Steps and Skills Useful in Managing Client Anger (cont'd)

Beginning/Engagement/Re-Engagement Phase: (During the Anger Event)

- Tuning in to Self: Awareness and control of own feeling responses
- Tuning in to Others: Openness to the clients situation and feelings
- Tuning in to the Environment: Actual or potential safety threats present
- Safety Check: Continue or terminate the interview now
- Focused-Listening: Paying attention to client words, actions, feelings

Steps and Skills Useful in Managing Client Anger (cont'd)

Beginning/Engagement/Re-engagement Phase: (cont'd)

- Displaying Understanding of the Client's Feelings and Reasons for Those Feelings:
 - Do not say, "I understand." Instead, say, "I can see why you might feel that way."
 - Avoid repeated reflection with volatile clients.
- Summarizing: Briefly summarize your understanding of the client's issues and feelings followed by "Reaching for Feedback."
- Interrupting the Escalation
 - Assertively summarize
 - Call for mutual respect
 - Use forced choice questions – "What's more important to you Mr. Smith, staying angry or seeing you son?"
- Slow Down the Pace: A good technique for doing so is writing

Steps and Skills Useful in Managing Client Anger (cont'd)

Beginning/Engagement/Re-engagement Phase: (cont'd)

- Redirection: Ask about client's calming strategies
- Increase Structure: Call a timeout
- Terminate if Unsafe: Terminate the interview or arrange for police or security to be present
- Client Outcomes: Ask the client what outcomes he/she wants
- Listen: Listen carefully without making judgments about the client's desired outcome.
- Client Input: Input on how client plans to achieve outcome
- Client Commitment: Check client commitment to work