

## < De-escalation guide >

### DR LASSO

**D**anger > **R**elocate > **L**isten > **A**sk Questions > **S**ummarise > **S**et out Scope > **O**ffer Options

#### To build Rapport

- Match and pace; try to mirror body language and tone to build rapport
- Establish eye contact, ask open questions and actively listen
- Demonstrate that you understand and empathise with their situation
- Praise and encourage 'You are doing really well, this is really useful information'.
- Consider safe topics: weather, clothes, supports,

#### Useful responses for drug or alcohol affected clients

- Empathetic, supportive, reassuring, understanding, encouraging
- Repeated clarification and feedback
- Non-provocative; don't raise your voice, don't be defensive, and don't take it personally
- Listening and communication will be mostly non-verbal while clients are in high arousal, so it's not what you say, it's how you are that counts
- Suggest they take a break (cup of tea/smoke)

#### When your values are compromised

- 'We have very different views about (women) but agree that the most important thing right now is to prepare for your hearing, yes? '
- 'Your views are offensive to me, please don't tell me what you think about...'
- 'If you continue talking about (....) in this way I will have to leave'

#### When time challenged

- Set boundaries; agree an agenda that allocates the time you have and what can be achieved. Say 'We can do this today, we can't do that'.
- Empathise; 'I understand that this is a tough situation for you'.
- Set boundaries; 'That's frustrating however we need to focus on (.....) so we can get the information we need for court'.
- 'I can't promise you that, but let's focus on (....) to give it our best shot'.
- Provide choice; 'we can do a number of things, what's the most important to you?' Offer two to three options.
- Praise and reward; 'Well done, this is great'

#### Anxious or distressed clients

- Minimise the challenge; 'We don't need to do everything today, how about we just start here'.
- Being directive can help; Say 'here's what I need you to do now/today/next week. '
- Ask specific closed questions; 'Where were you when that happened?' 'Who were you with?' 'Who were you living with?' (avoid open questions; why, what, how).
- Praise and encourage; 'You are doing really well, this is really useful'
- Offer choices, but package them according to the client's emotional state
- Demonstrate you understand and emphasise with their situation

#### Assertive closure if you need to cease an interaction or conversation

- Calmly disrupt
- Explain boundaries
- Remain respectful
- Offer a follow-up
- Try a time out (water, cup of tea/smoke break)
- Allow them to 'save face' if possible
- Hang up/cease contact
- **Debrief!**