**De-escalation Techniques**

1. Actively Listen
   1. Let patient speak
   2. Do not argue or defend yourself
   3. Use non-threatening body language
      1. the more a person is upset, the less they listen to your words
      2. keep facial expressions, gestures, movements and tone of voice calm
   4. Paraphrase
2. Be Empathetic & Non-judgmental
   1. Try to understand the patient’s feelings. How the patient is feeling is sometimes more important than the facts.
   2. Whatever problem the patient is dealing with is important to them.
3. Validate & Acknowledge feelings
   1. Use empathetic and supportive comments: “I can see how this may be frustrating….”, “I am sorry you are having a bad experience…”, “I can appreciate why you feel this way”.
4. Don’t take it personally
   1. Ignore challenging questions
   2. Avoid a power struggle
   3. Don’t react emotionally
5. Allow for time and silence
   1. Give the patient an opportunity to reflect on what their choices are and how they need to proceed
6. Be Professional and rational
   1. Remain calm. You cannot control the patient’s behavior, but you can control your own.
   2. If you are calm, professional, empathetic and are taking their problems seriously, their need for escalation will be reduced.
7. Set limits
   1. If a patient’s behavior continues to be belligerent, defensive or disruptive, give them clear, simple & enforceable limits.
   2. Offer concise and respectful choices & consequences
   3. Remember, there are no absolutes – our goal is to maintain a welcoming atmosphere for all our patients.