

# COGNITIVE CHALLENGES

## COURSE OUTLINE

Supplement to Non-Escalation, De-Escalation, and Crisis Management



### PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

The *Positive Behavior Management for Cognitive Challenges* training program is a supplement to the *Non-escalation, De-escalation, Crisis Management Program*. The supplement is focused on interacting with someone who is:

- Having neurocognitive disorders, such as delirium, Alzheimer's disease, traumatic brain injury, Parkinson's disease, autism spectrum disorders, and intellectual delay
- Having mental health disorders, such as anxiety, mood, and psychotic disorders
- Who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Who are struggling to cope due to acute stress (e.g., stress, relationship difficulties, health concerns, work or financial problems) or a history of emotional or physical trauma
- Who is displaying any of these attributes:
  - Unresponsive or nonverbal
  - Having difficulty understanding their surroundings or situation
  - Struggling with memory
  - Behaving in an unusual or age-inappropriate manner
  - Not making eye-contact or using other unusual body language
  - Easily agitated or become fearful when approached
  - Experiencing emotional distress or crisis

### TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is meant for all contact professionals—individuals who spend the vast majority of their time directly interacting with the general public or their organization's clients—with responsibility for interacting with people having cognitive challenges. Such contact professionals include staff working in healthcare, education, behavioral health, social services, residential centers, public safety, transit, hospitality, and retail.

In addition, the principles in this training program are useful for anyone who wants to improve their *Trauma Responsiveness* when first interacting with anyone.



Addressing the Entire  
Spectrum of Human Conflict

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This training program focuses on addressing how to recognize, prevent, regulate, and reduce the communication and comprehension barriers, self-stimulating behavior (stimming), and atypical *Conflict Triggers* that can generate emotional distress and crisis in people with brain-based and functional Cognitive Challenges.

### BENEFITS

Participants will gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to

- understand people with expressive communication deficits
- communicate effectively with people who have receptive communication challenges
- perform risk and threat assessment that includes the recognition of conditions and behaviors that may cause emotional distress, crisis, or at-risk behaviors
- prepare conditions, and adapt and align all communication elements to prevent conflict, crisis, and combative behaviors (non-escalation)
- repair conditions, and adapt and align all communication elements to reduce conflict, crisis, and combative behaviors (de-escalation)
- classify the crisis states of behavior as baseline, stressed, acute, or recovery
- stay safe and promote recovery in crisis situations
- recognize when verbal methods have failed and it is necessary to take further action
- end interactions better than they started and with a positive foundation for future contact
- articulate the justification and necessity for taking appropriate action
- Other benefits of this program include:
  - maintenance of inclusive environments, preservation of civil rights, and improved outcomes
  - enhanced communication and conflict management skills when interacting with anyone (whether they have cognitive challenges or not)

### TOPICS COVERED

The *Positive Behavior Management for Cognitive Challenges* training program covers the following topics:

- Cognitive Challenges
  - Definitions
  - Positive Behavior Management = Trauma Responsiveness
  - Significance of the Problem
  - Crisis Management Methods Summary
  - Cognitive Challenges Primer
  - Non-Escalation versus De-Escalation
- Cognitive-Challenges-Specific Non-Escalation, De-Escalation, and Crisis Management
  1. Core Principle
  2. Be Alert & Decisive
  3. Respond, Don't React
  4. Showtime Mindset
  5. Proxemics
  6. Universal Greeting
  7. Beyond Active Listening
  8. Persuasion
  9. Redirection
  10. Crisis Management
  11. Appropriate Action
  12. Closure
- Social Contracts For People With Cognitive Challenges

