

# Managing ourselves in behavioral emergencies in the remote setting

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**PG-13**



# The HOW of the evacuation.

Phase Change:

Stabilize  
and transport  
to definitive care





# Evacuation Protocols

**Evacuation is indicated when the presentation presents a threat to safety, exceeds the responders ability to manage, or interferes with the mission of the expedition.**

Evacuate urgently any presentation of suicidal thoughts with plan, self-harm, refusal to eat, bizarre thoughts or behaviors, acute confusion

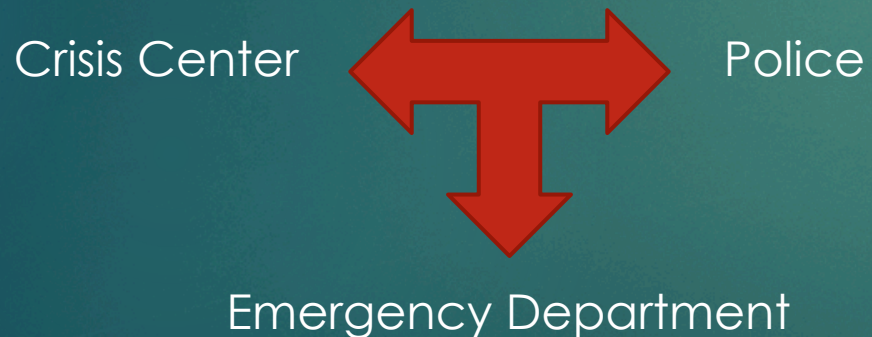
Evacuate when the majority of the energy and direction of the expedition is focused on the management of an individuals presentation.



# Wilderness vs Urban

## Urban Context

Acute presentation



## Wilderness Context

Acute Wilderness Presentation





# What are common behavioral emergencies in the remote setting?



Acute or paralyzing anxiety

Hyperarousal, Dissociations, Panic, Re-experiencing associated with PTSD

Self Harm/Suicidal Ideation

Aggression/Agitation

Drama Making



# What makes the wilderness a great place to have a crisis?

## All Play:

New environments can be anxiety producing

Medication changes

Continuous contact with peers

Lack of distraction

Technology withdrawal

Silence as the unfamiliar foe

Lack of coping skills

Stress Induced mental health crisis

Prior trauma



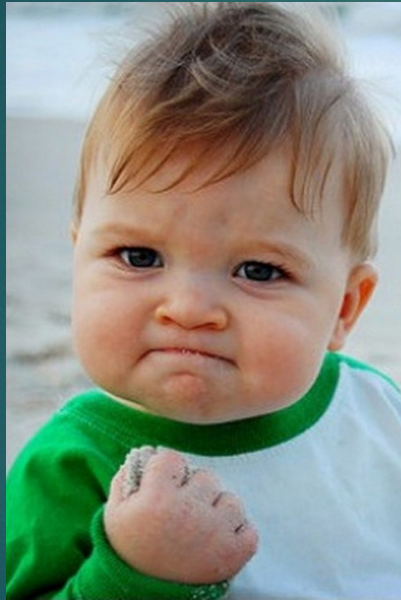


# First things first - Scene Safety

## Assess: How serious are the behaviors?



Behaviors



Disruptive



Destructive





# Disruptive Behaviors:

- Disordered eating
- Foul language
- Anxiety attacks
- Threats of self Harm
- All manner of drama



# Destructive Behaviors

## Threats to Safety

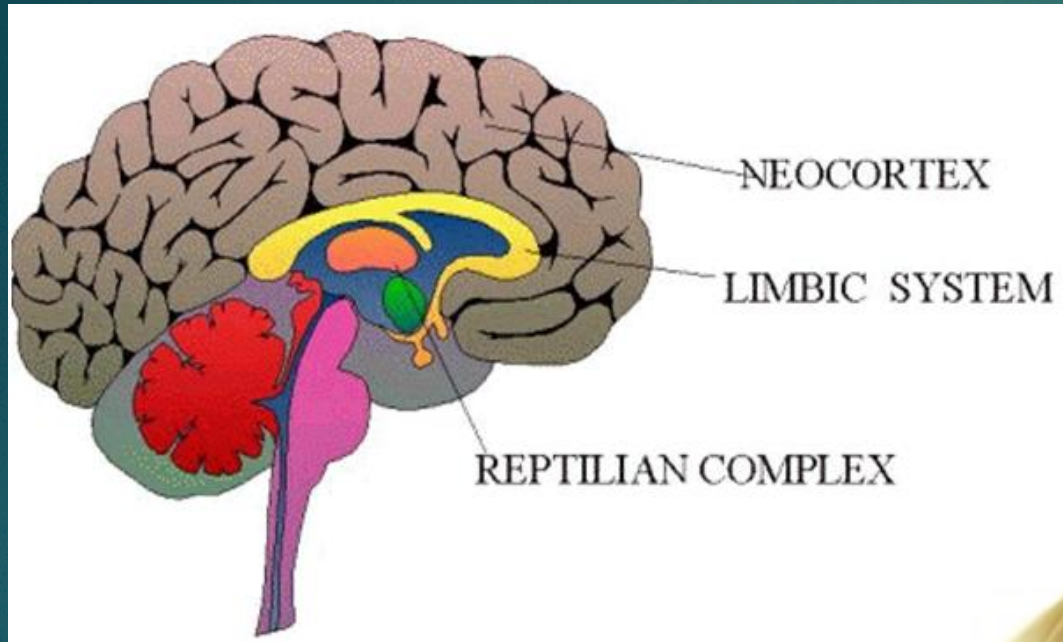
Physical and Verbal Aggression- threats of harming others

Verbalizing Suicidal Intent with Lethal, Available Plan

Self –Harming Behaviors

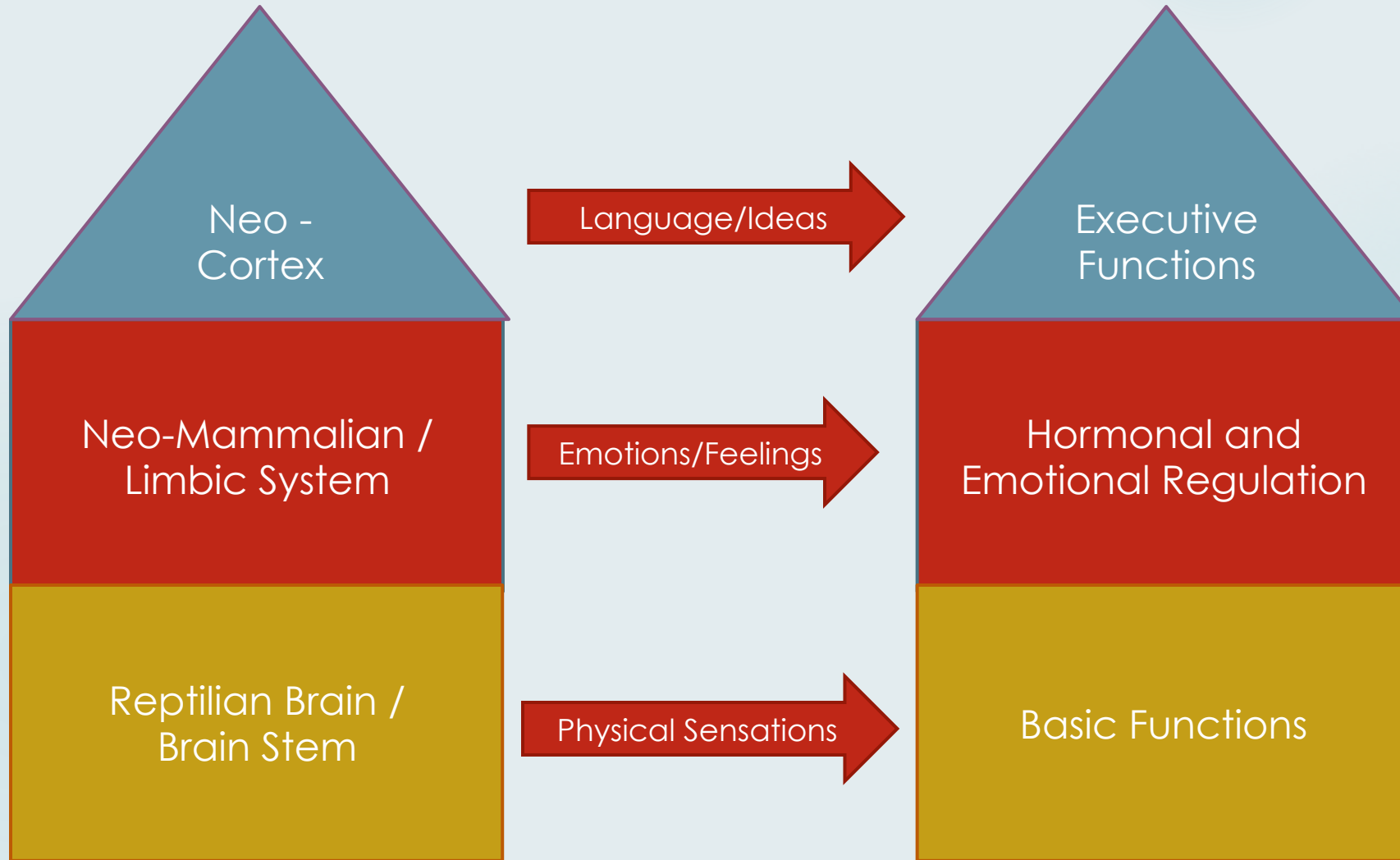
Bizarre and erratic behaviors





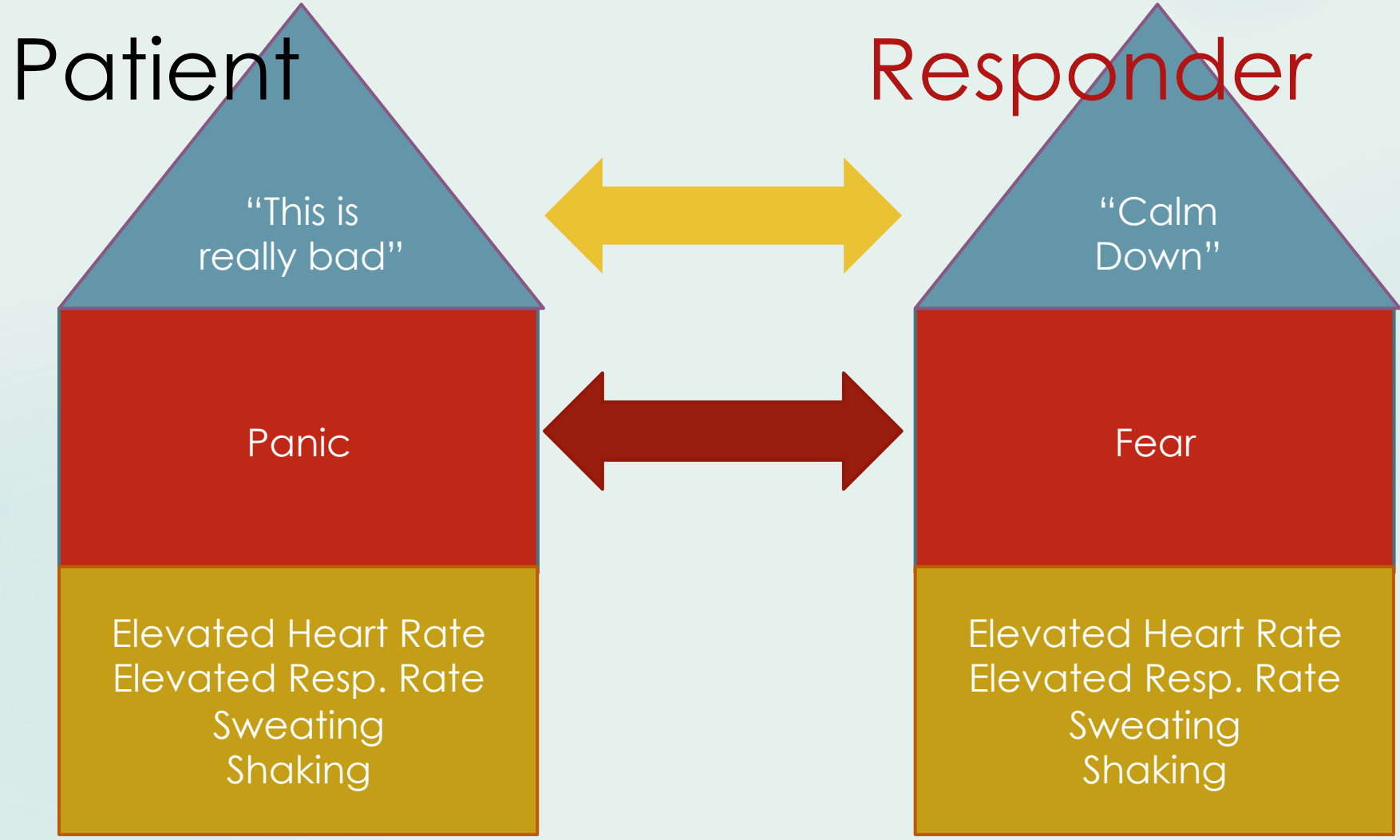


# Building the House





# Co-regulation





# De-escalation

“To understand what another person is saying, you must assume that it is true and try to imagine what it could be true of). “

Miller's Law



A technique used during a potential crisis situation to attempt to prevent a person from causing harm to himself/herself or others

- Three Main Factors
  - Self control: track your own responses
  - Physical presence: use supportive body language
  - Safety: personal space and exits

Risk is not a threat

Do you have to do this right now?



# De-escalation

## Expert consensus.

Respect Personal Space

Do not be provocative

Establish Verbal Contact

Be Concise

Identify wants and feelings

Listen closely to what the patient is saying

Agree to what you are able

Set clear limits (enforceable statements)

Offer choices and optimism

Debrief the patient and staff



# Addressing Suicide and Self-harm

- Appropriate concern, appropriate actions
- Mandate to pass to higher level of care
- Can be connected and straightforward
- Continuous presence
- Removing lethal means, when possible
- Participation, empathy, distraction





# Responding to Destructive Behaviors

Calming yourself is the best means of calming the other.

Stabilize and rapidly Evacuate

Remove others from exposure to harm

Eliminate lethal means, when safely possible

It's ok to hide or run as a last resort.



# Communication Templates

Create YOUR program's Template

Establish the language you will use

Practice often

Review

This is \_\_\_\_\_, calling from \_\_\_\_\_  
To request \_\_\_\_\_ (Support/Evac) for  
destructive behaviors:

**Describe objective actions of the participant.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**I'm requesting**

- Guidance
- Tactical Support
- Evacuation support
- Other

**Plan:**

**Contingency Plan:**



# Program Support

## Directive vs. Supportive Response

Directive

Supportive





# Program Support

Planning/ Training/Rehearsal

Screening

Rehearsal

After Action (Hot Wash) FEELING

Communication Terminology (Safe or Unsafe) Destructive or Disruptive





QUESTIONS?





# Contact:

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# Resources and References

- Hobfoll SE<sup>1</sup>, Watson P, Bell CC, Bryant RA, Brymer MJ, Friedman MJ, Friedman M, Gersons BP, de Jong JT, Layne CM, Maguen S, Neria Y, Norwood AE, Pynoos RS, Reissman D, Ruzek JI, Shalev AY, Solomon Z, Steinberg AM, Ursano RJ. Five essential elements of immediate and mid-term mass trauma intervention: empirical evidence. *Psychiatry*. 2007 Winter;70(4):283-315;
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- Managing Intense Emotions," Psychological First Aid at <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/NMH05-0210/NMH05-0210.pdf>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Psychological First Aid <http://www.nctsn.org/content/psychological-first-aid>



# Psychological First Aid





# The way out of the woods with drama

Regulation

Avoid power Struggles

Use enforceable statements

State Expectations

Avoid participate- acting bored really can be the right thing to do.



- Random act of kindness
- Talk about something you love
- Journal
- Draw
- Exercise
- Extremes of sensation- stream crossing
- Survive something (a little adversity goes a long way)
- Breathing techniques-  
(Deep breath in- count to 4- deep breath out)

Let everything  
Happen to you,  
Beauty and terror,  
Just keep going.  
No feeling is final.

Rilke

## Coping Skills Bingo

get help	music	pop bubble wrap	exercise	write a story or poem
sing	stress ball	yoga	10 deep breaths	read
play outside	draw	FREE SPACE	paint	talk to someone
watch a movie	talk to a friend	eat healthy	do something different	friends
walk away	do something kind	Go for a walk	sleep	play a game

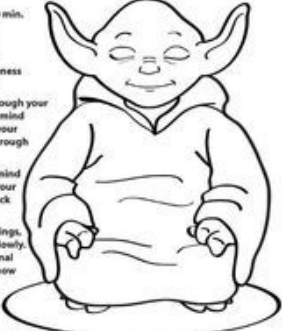
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# Coping Skills

## Wilderness Style

**GOOD FOR YOU, MEDITATION IS.**

Set a timer for 10 min.  
Sit comfortably.  
Close your eyes.  
Bring your awareness to your breath.  
Slowly inhale through your nose. Focus your mind on the sound of your breath. Exhale through your nose.  
Every time your mind wanders, bring your concentration back to your breath.  
When the timer rings, open your eyes slowly. Keep a daily journal and write down how meditation makes you feel.



It might be challenging at first. But don't give up! With steady practice, you'll soon be able to meditate just like Yoda!

**COLOR YODA!**



# Who sets the tone?

