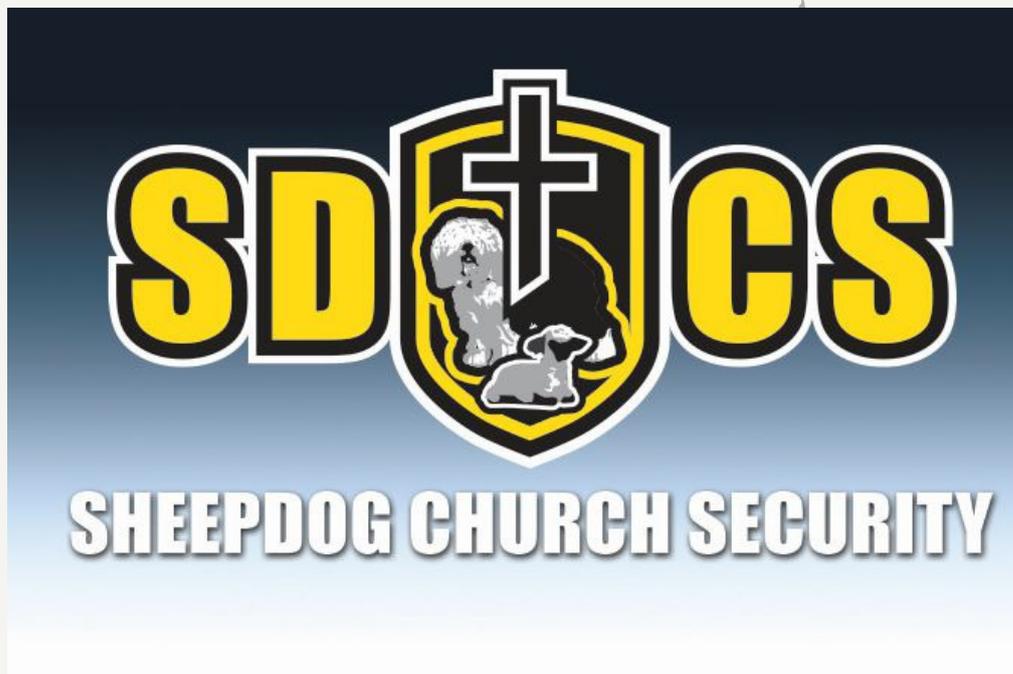


CHURCH GUARDIAN



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MAN BURGLARIZES CHURCH DURING SERVICE

TOP NEWS STORY

A man burglarized a church while Sunday services were in progress. The man was caught on the church's surveillance cameras. He entered the building through a back door. He stole a weed wacker and garden tools from a storage room while the congregation was inside and loaded everything into his car.

Police records show that four other local



church have also reported burglaries within the past few weeks. "I don't think people have much respect for the church like they used to," the pastor of the church said. "Years ago you could leave a door unlocked, but not anymore. [Click the link to read more]

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this news story does not necessarily reflect the views of Sheepdog Church Security

Source: [Click here](#)

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

Active Shooter Situations

The number of Active Shooters and Deadly Force Incidents in churches has doubled of the past 10 years. And yet, few churches are prepared with even a basic Lockdown Procedure.

SDCS developed the Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course to teach your team how to Deter, Detect, Deny, Delay and Defend against a violent attack. That's everything from simple lockdowns to neutralization.

Hundreds of churches have used the Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course to prepare their teams.

We offer the training in two ways.

First, the instructor Training Bundle contains everything you need to teach the course. It includes streaming video, an unlocked PowerPoint presentation which can be modified to fit your church's unique size, setting and procedures and it includes an Instructor Guide with slide by slide instructions.

Second, the video-based online Individual Training course which you can earn a certificate from your own computer.

The Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course can be found with all our training resources at our online store. [CLICK PICTURE](#)



DEFUSING DISRUPTION THROUGH VERBAL DE-ESCALATION

*Based on the Sheepdog Church Security Training Course
“Dealing with Disruptive Persons using Verbal Deescalation”*



*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God”
(Matthew 5:9, NIV).*

April’s Articles

The Sheepdog Church Security articles for April have been based on the training course “Dealing with Disruptive Persons using Verbal Deescalation.” The five articles are Roots of Disruption - Knowing and Recognizing Factors Leading to Violent Disruption; Seeing Dark Clouds - Awareness of a Need for Verbal De-escalation; With a Word - Calming a Crisis Conversationally; In Control- Keeping Things Calm; and Following Through - It’s Not Over When It’s Over.

Dealing with Conflict

Conflict is a fact of life. It comes from differences in perspective, opinions, purpose, needs, desires, etc. One sign of maturity is being able to resolve differences peacefully, even “agreeing to disagree agreeably.” However, it is not unusual for disagreements to become arguments, escalating to heated emotions, shouting, disrespect, and even some level of violence. Therefore, de-escalating conflict is a function of public safety, hence church safety. Defusing violent disruption protects the flock.

Peacemaking

Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Paul wrote, “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:18). Two chapters later he told two groups of believers to respect each other’s differences. Near the end of his letter to the Philippians, he urges an elder to help two members to reconcile with each other (Phil. 4:2-3). There are several references to calming conflict in Proverbs, the best-known being, “A gentle answer turns away anger” (Prov.15:1).

The last article in the series ties into the first, dealing with the factors which caused a disruption we have defused through verbal de-escalation. Defusing a conflict is peacekeeping. Addressing underlying issues is peacemaking.

Action Points

When reading the articles in this series (they are here in this newsletter), also listen to the podcasts. Kris has important perspectives to share based on his experience.

If you haven’t already, take the training course on verbal de-escalation. If it has been over a year since you took the course, take it again as a refresher.

In groups of three, practice de-escalating conflict following several scenarios. Take turns being the ones in conflict, a solo disrupter, and the de-escalator. If you can, have an experienced fourth person as a coach. He or she can be an educator, manager, healthcare professional, or anyone else who is trained in verbal de-escalation and uses it in their job.

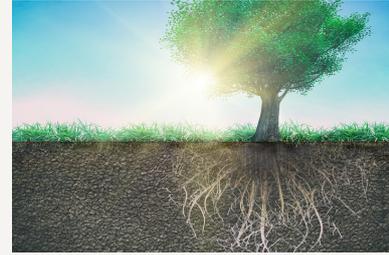
Make verbal de-escalation a life skill. Practice what you’ve learned in daily life.

DIRECTOR'S FORUM

RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY WESLEY VAUGHN

Roots of Disruption: Knowing and Recognizing Factors Leading to Violent Disruption

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
"DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PERSONS USING VERBAL DEESCALATION"



In the Bible

The Bible has several indications of factors which lead people to violent disruption. Here are a few:

Despair or Depression – Reproaches have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. (Psalm 69:20)

Substance Abuse – Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine. (Proverbs 23:29-31)

Uncontrolled Anger – A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention. (Proverbs 15:18)

Desperate Financial Stress – Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God. (Proverbs 30:8-9)

Jealousy – For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge. (Proverbs 6:34)

In the News

Aurora, Illinois, February 15, 2019 - An employee pulled out a gun in a meeting with plant management and opened fire, killing five, and was later killed in a shootout with responding police officers. He was being fired. [2]

October 1, 2017 Las Vegas, Nevada - A well-armed multi-millionaire in a high-rise hotel opened fire on a music festival, killing 58. To this day, police are still not sure about the motive. [3]

What Brought This About?

What leads people to become disruptive? What factors put them at risk?

For many years, now, public officials, law enforcement officers, psychologists, journalists, and the general public have been asking those questions after violent incidents, especially mass killings or inexplicable murders of family members, classmates, and co-workers. Many times the motive becomes clear, such as with the Feb 15, 2019 shooting in Aurora, IL, but often, as with the 2017 Las Vegas massacre, it remains a mystery. In cases when the person killed is an unarmed or lightly armed disrupter, we ask, "Why did this person have to die?"

Knowledge Is Power

To protect the flock, a Church Safety Ministry needs to know what the threats are and how to recognize them, then how to deal with them.

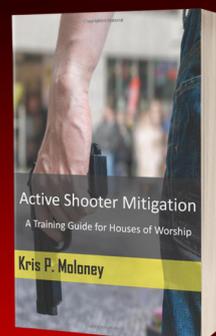
Risk Factors

When it comes to details, it's easy to say that there are many contributing factors for disruptive behavior. In reality, these boil down to a handful of underlying causes. Risk factors can be summarized in three categories: Internal Factors, Environmental Factors, and Situational Factors. From a number of sources, here are a few of the Internal and Environmental Factors (Situational Factors are covered in another article):

Internal factors:

Medical issues and medications

Mental illness [4]



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Roots of Disruption Continued...

Oppositional Defiant Disorder [5][6][7]

Cognitive impairment

Intoxicating substance use [8][9]

Spiritual factors

Environmental factors:

Abuse

Relational conflict

Occupational conflict

Financial stress

Grief/Loss

Legal stress

In the first news story, the shooter in Aurora had a history of not following the rules, threatening others, and defiance, which indicates Oppositional Defiant Disorder. The Las Vegas shooter was a gambling addict who may have been facing future financial stress.

Factors indicated in the Bible passages above can be seen in this list:

Despair or depression may be due to mental illness or any of the environmental factors.

Alcohol is an abused substance.

Uncontrolled anger may be part of an Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Desperate financial stress is one of the environmental factors.

Jealousy is one potential factor in relational and occupational conflict.

Seldom recognized by secular writers are spiritual factors, such as rebellion against God, spiritual pride, hopelessness rooted in a guilty conscience, lack of faith, idolatry, etc.

Threat Assessment

For the church, recognizing underlying causes leads to opportunities for ministering to persons at risk. It also helps in protecting the church from violent disruption. This is the role of Threat Assessment.

Threat assessment is a confidential process.

Periodically, key members of church leadership and the Safety Committee meet to share what they know about potential risks for disruptive behavior in the church, especially that which may lead to violence and/or vandalism. Besides in assembled meetings, members of the Threat Assessment Team can share their information and concerns with each other at any time.

The reason this process is confidential is two-fold.

First, this is not gossip, but serious business. It may lead to persons at risk getting the help they need.

Second, in a confidential setting the members are free to be open about what they know.

Threat Assessment Team members may be aware that a certain person has the following warning signs (among others) listed by the Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety (2014):

history of violence

threatening behavior

intimidating behavior

increase in personal stress

negative personality traits

changes in mood or behavior [10]

Discussion of persons and situations of risk then involves what to do. Depending on who the persons involved in the situations are, Safety Team members may be advised to be aware of certain persons. For instance, the ex-husband of a mother in the church may try to take the child, or he may accost her at church. Or perhaps a church member has been receiving threats from a fired co-worker.

Recognizing Persons at Risk

Obviously, it is next to impossible to know every risk of disruption coming through our doors. Safety Team members should be able to see signs that a person may become disruptive. For instance, one person may be argumentative or loud. Another person seems to be under the influence of alcohol or a drug. Or someone comes in the door looking or acting depressed.

There Is More

Other articles in this series cover situational awareness, calming words, being in control, and following through.

Check website for references: [Click HERE](#)

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Seeing Dark Clouds: Awareness of a Need for Verbal De-escalation



BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
"DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PERSONS USING VERBAL DEESCALATION"

In the Bible

[Jesus] answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. (Matthew 16:2-3)

But Jesus, aware of their malice... (Matthew 22:18)

... but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? (Genesis 4:5-6)

Weather Watching

Either Charles Dudley Warner or Mark Twain said, "Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."-[2] We cannot do anything to change the weather, but (as was covered in the March articles) we can watch it, calculate its likely development, and prepare to deal with it. Jesus referred to people's ability to forecast the day's weather from what they saw (Matt. 22:18). In some areas and seasons, dark clouds indicate a possible thunderstorm and/or tornado.

Seeing Dark Clouds

Weather watching has supplied several metaphorical idioms, such as "sunny days" and "gray days" and "storms of life." One such idiom appearing in several publications is "seeing dark clouds," which means sensing a less favorable near future, whether in economics, politics, international affairs, health, or other areas of concern.

This applies to Church Safety Ministry, seeing dark clouds as a developing situation moves toward disruption, perhaps even toward violence. We can watch the relational weather in the church, both long-term and immediate, to perceive its development and respond accordingly. Unlike the weather, there is something we can do to influence the outcome, to forestall - perhaps even dissipate - the dark clouds of disruption.

Long-Range Forecasting

This is the age of long-range weather forecasting.

For example, during this past Winter, the National Weather Service and mass media meteorologists accurately predicted storm systems which would hit the West Coast or move south from Western Canada and sweep across the continent. This included the paths of the storms, the areas affected, and the impact. They did this by using satellite imagery and measurements, reports of ground and ocean surface conditions from around the globe, and analysis of the data.

In a congregation, threat assessment can forecast the potential for disruptive behavior, even violence, by persons in the congregation, persons associated with church members, and known persons in the community. We can't analyze it to the same degree as the meteorologists, but we can identify those who need to be watched. This can be an opportunity for ministry. For some, intervention in the form of personal counseling may be possible and successful. At the least, we can pray for them and for wisdom in dealing with them. We can't change the weather, but there is hope for a person at risk.

Prevention of Disruption

Solomon said, "Know well the condition of your flocks" (Prov. 27:23). Knowledge leads to the power to prevent or mitigate disruption and violence. Under Prevention, the Sheepdog Church Security training course lists six warning signs of a person at risk that the Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety says should be discussed by a Threat Assessment Team[1][3]:

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Seeing Dark Clouds Continued...

Traits of Persons at Risk of Disruptive Behavior

- history of violence
- threatening behavior
- intimidating behavior
- increase in personal stress
- negative personality traits
- changes in mood or behavior

Each of these points has several questions to consider.

An Opportunity Missed

As a case in point, the Sutherland Springs church shooter had the first, second, third and fifth traits on the list. His behavior and demeanor half a week before the shooting made some members, including elders, uneasy. Yet no measures were taken, such as asking for police protection. To use a metaphor, dark clouds were seen, but no one grabbed an umbrella or headed for shelter.

Situational Factors

Several times situations push a person toward disruptive behavior. If we are aware of these, we can be more understanding when trying to de-escalate a developing disruption.

Situational Factors

Current dispute

Continuing dispute

Relational hostility

Becoming offended

Perceiving a threat

Situational Awareness

A skill taught to law enforcement officers, military personnel, security services, correctional officers, health care workers (especially in mental health), and educational administrators is Situational Awareness. More than a skill, it is to become a pattern of life, an ingrained habit. It is continually noticing one's surroundings and taking note of large and small details. A former member of a U.S. military commando service revealed one part of his training. He had to step into a room, glance around the room, exit, then describe to the instructors as much detail about the room as he could remember.

To be able use verbal de-escalation to defuse a disruptive situation, a Security Team member needs to sense early enough that it is developing. This is where situational awareness comes in. Many websites promoting or teaching situational awareness apply it to self defense (also used in Church Safety

Ministry) or resolving workplace issues (such as conflict resolution). But the basics are the same, such as these:

Notice everything in the area.

Identify what you see.

Analyze what you see and understand the situation.

Predict where it leads.

Keep analyzing.

Remain aware of others.

What to Look for

While observing people in the church (or at a church event), you should notice their appearance, their demeanor, and their actions.

Changes in Behavior

In persons you know, watch for changes in behavior which may indicate personal trouble or personality changes. Here are a few:

Do they tend to cry, sulk, or get angry easily?

Do they seem confused?

Do they refuse to accept fault and take responsibility?

Is their language more emotional?

Are they always complaining, talking repeatedly about the same problems?

Do they insist that they are always right?

Are they holding grudges?

Physical Warning Signs

Sometimes a person's physical appearance indicates that they are vulnerable and may have an outburst. Also, does anything hint at intoxication by alcohol or drugs? Here are a few signs:

Flush, pale, or sweating

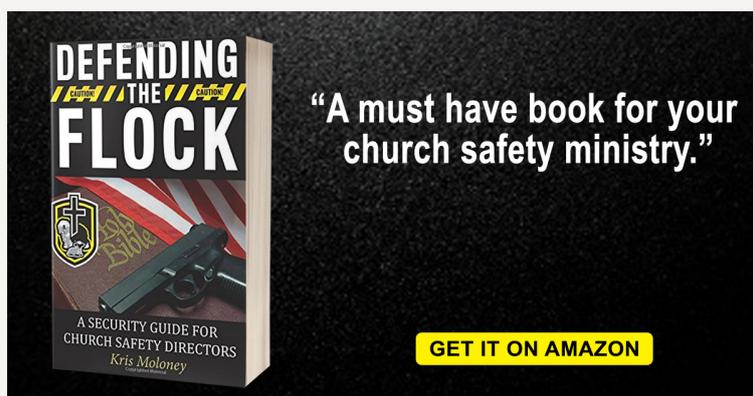
Appearing fatigued

Restless, pacing, agitated

Trembling

Wild gestures

Talking more loudly than usual for them



Seeing Dark Clouds Continued...

Angry or disgusting facial expressions (see Gen. 4:5-6 above)

Violation of others' personal space (moving in too close)

Situational Warning Signs

We should also pay attention to what is happening and how it progresses.

Is a conversation heating up, becoming an argument?

Does someone end a conversation looking upset or angry?

Does a person make angry gestures at another or assume an angry posture?

Does a person storm out the door then re-enter?

Does someone appear to "march right up" to another?

Time to Act

Ideally, situational awareness should lead to remedial action, including verbal de-escalation to defuse a hostile situation before it becomes disruptive or violent. This intervention usually begins by approaching the person in a non-threatening manner and engaging them in conversation.

There Is More

Other articles in this series on verbal de-escalation cover underlying causes of disruption, calming words, being in control, and following through.

Check website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/seeing-dark-clouds/>

With a Word Calming a Crisis Conversationally

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
"DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PERSONS USING VERBAL DEESCALATION"



In the Bible

The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary (Isaiah 50:4a).

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver (Proverbs 25:11).

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing (Proverbs 12:18).

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1).

In the News

Thailand, June 30, 2017 - A distraught man who hadn't been paid for work he'd done entered a police station holding a knife to his throat and threatening to kill himself. The senior police sergeant talked to him, calming him down. The man handed his knife to the officer, who ended up giving him a hug. [2]

Durham, Maine, August 30, 2018 - People in a neighborhood reported hearing gunfire. Police rushed to the neighborhood and surrounded the house where shots were fired. After negotiations with officers, the shooter, who had threatened to harm himself, gave up peacefully. [3]

Baltimore County, Maryland, November 10, 2018 - The family of a "person in crisis" called police to check on him. Twelve hours later they spotted him driving, got him to pull over, and peacefully took him into protective custody. [4]

Maywood, Illinois, February 6, 2019 - A 33-year-old autistic man had a reaction to medications, which sent him into a rampage instead of calming him. A hospital security officer at Loyola University Medical Center whose son has autism had training in how to deal with autistic patients. He and fellow officers were able to calm the man down when they found out his interest in Mary Poppins. [5]

Virginia Beach, Virginia, February 24, 2019 - When an adult man at home alone threatened self harm, police were called. They barricaded neighborhood streets and began talking with the man. About three hours later, the situation came to a peaceful end.

This was the second "person-in-crisis" incident that

day in Virginia Beach. [6]

Time to Step in

You are in the foyer Sunday morning. In a few minutes the second service will begin. A couple in the church has recently separated - she came in a bit ago and took their toddler to the childcare area.

Another family is dealing with a mentally ill daughter. You were also briefed that threats were made last week against another church in town. Your awareness level is Yellow.

A man comes in who looks upset and nervous. It's the husband whose wife came in not long ago. He looks around, then heads for the childcare area. You begin to follow, just to keep an eye on things.

The wife's voice comes from the hallway, "What are you doing here?"

"I'm here to get Joey."

"The paper's say you're to leave us alone!"

You call on the radio, "Code Orange, hallway to childcare," then head into the corridor. It's time to step in.

Aiming to Defuse

When stepping into a situation, we are aiming to defuse escalating tensions before they become disruptive. The proven means for doing this is verbal de-escalation. The situation may be a continuance of domestic conflict, or mental illness, or an ongoing personal dispute. It could be a disagreement in a conversation becoming an argument. Real-life experiences show that words can be used to cool down heated exchanges. A paraphrase of what

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With a Word Continued...

Solomon said is, "A calm answer cools anger." Essentially, we initiate verbal de-escalation by engaging in conversation. In the conversation, get the subject to talk. Use the conversation to bring calmness. Remember the goal of not letting the situation become a disruption. Let's put a little more detail into this.

Ten Points

"Verbal De-Escalation Checklist: 10 Essential Do's and Don'ts for Managing Potentially Tense Situations," a Sheepdog Church Security resource, has advice for stepping in.

The first point is, "Don't sneak up on the subject." When a person is tense, it is not wise to startle them. If you can, approach them where they can see you. If they can't see you make sounds or speak so they know you are there.

In our scenario, the husband's back is to you. Since this is a hallway, there's no visible angle of approach. Say something neutral, such as, "Good morning." The first level on the Use of Force Continuum is presence. Now he knows you are there. Where it goes from here depends on his response. He may turn around and pretend that everything is all right, then leave. Or he may indicate they were discussing something private and try to talk you into leaving them alone. He could say to her, "I'll see you later," then turn and march out. On the other hand, he may be defensive, potentially hostile.

The second point is, "Avoid invading the subject's personal space." When a subject is tense, their concept of personal space expands. In our scenario, stay close to one wall so the husband can go by on the other side if he chooses to leave.

The third point is, "Keep your body language open and non-threatening." This is verbal de-escalation. However, not all we say is in words. Body language says a lot, and for someone in the heat of emotions, it is louder than spoken words.

Adopt an interview stance. Stay a little off to one side, not face-to-face. Keep your feet at an angle. This is not an aggressive stance, but enables you to defend yourself if needed.

Point four is, "Avoid 'ganging up on the subject.'" In a potentially dangerous situation, it is important to have a backup. However, the second team member should stay back, letting the first one talk with the subject. It is not always mentioned in news stories, but the

practice of police response teams when negotiating with a suspect is to let one officer talk.

Fifth, be honest. "Don't lie to or deceive the subject to get compliance." First, as Christians it is imperative that we be above board. The Apostles wrote that we should be honorable to all (Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21; 1 Pet. 2:12).

Not only is deceit dishonorable, it is counter-productive. A disturbed person may sense deceit and become even more uncooperative.

Number six is "Avoid telling the subject to 'Calm down.'" Face it. They are already losing control, so they are unable at the time to calm themselves down. Rather, set the example - be calm yourself. The seventh point is, "Give the subject an opportunity to explain." This takes the energy from the emotional heat and redirects it toward reason. Even explanations which sound unreasonable to us are more reasonable than a violent outburst. The time it takes to explain also gives them time to cool down.

Letting the subject explain may also give you clues to their mindset and understanding of what their life is like. Then when you do speak, you may know how to more effectively appeal to them. In 1Timothy 5:1-2 (NASB), Paul says, "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity."

The last three points are covered in another article. There Is More

In this series on verbal de-escalation, the other articles cover underlying causes of disruption, seeing the need for verbal de-escalation, being in control, and following through.

Check website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/with-a-word/>

In Control

Keeping Things Calm

KEEP CALM AND
BREATHE!



BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
"DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PERSONS USING VERBAL DEESCALATION"

In the Bible

A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls (Proverbs 25:28).

Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city (Proverbs 16:32).

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (James 1:19).

In the News

Washington, DC, January 18, 2019 - A group of high school students and a group of Native Americans were verbally assaulted by a radical group. One of the native men mistakenly thought the students were provoking the radicals and approached them while beating on a drum and singing. The student the native approached stood still and calm, smiling at times. The situation ended peacefully. [2]

Cedar Hill, Texas, May 9, 2018 - Teacher remains calm when shoved: A teacher took a student's cell phone away during class, telling the student he would get it back after class. The student became angry, followed the teacher to the front, and shoved him. The teacher let the student take the phone. The student left class, then came back, admitted he was at fault and apologized. [3]

Three More Points

Another article in this series, "With a Word," drew on the first seven of ten points in the Sheepdog Church Security resource "Verbal De-Escalation Checklist." Here are the last three points, which all relate to the issue of control:

Point eight is, "Don't try to come across as the 'tough guy.'" What works on a TV show or in a movie doesn't always work in real life. We are trying to calm tensions, and real calmness is not forced. Coming across as tough often makes matters worse.

Number nine is, "Stay in control of your emotions."

You must first be in control of yourself before you can gain control of a situation. This is discussed in more detail below.

The tenth point is, "Respect the subject's dignity." In the first place, there is no point in degrading or

humiliating someone who is already down. It is likely to stir up more anger. In the second place, as a ministry, we have an interest in helping disturbed persons after incidents have cooled down, but denial of dignity may close the door to helping them.

Keeping Things under Control

Sometimes, when there is a tense situation threatening to become a major disruption, we hear an official say, "We're trying to keep things under control." The concern is that the situation could get out of control with unfortunate consequences.

When we are trying to defuse developing disruption through verbal de-escalation, we intend first to keep it under control, then to stay in control until it comes to a peaceful end. But to do this we need Zone Control, Self Control, and Conversation Control.

Zone Control

In many ways, this is the simplest kind of control. The intent of zone control is to keep the conversation between us and the disturbed person(s) without interruptions, interference, or distraction by making a safe zone. If we can, move the parties to a quiet corner or get the subject to turn away from other people in the area. If the site is next to the entry door, have other safety team members steer people coming in and out around the scene.

Self Control

This is the hardest and the most critical kind of control. It is the kind taught in the Bible, as in the verses above. This means controlling our actions, controlling our emotions, and controlling our words and body language. Proverbs 25:28 equates self-control with self-defense. Prov. 16:32 says there is real strength in controlling anger. Most of us know persons who have taken or are taking anger management classes. James 1:19 gives us a clue in how to control our anger: be quick to listen and slow to speak, then slow to anger.

Let's see an example from the workplace. A counselor at Duke University who helps disabled students deals with the tension of emotions and discouragement in her clients. She has advice based

In Control Continued...

on her own experience:

Be Aware of Body Language

Be an Active Listener

Know When to Be Quiet [4]

It took time to develop this level of self control, and she's working to improve it.

There is more to self-control than careful words and anger management. It goes to the heart - literally. This is one area where the Bible and professionals agree. The Bible says a great deal about our attitudes, and professionals say our attitudes influence our actions.

The Bible is also concerned about how we see people, and psychologists say that how we see others shapes our attitudes. Jesus said that someone who calls his brother [or sister] "Raca" (i.e. considers him or her worthless) is in danger of hell (Matt. 5:22). God prescribed the death penalty for murder because "Godmade man in his own image" (Gen. 9:6). In other words, we are to see the image of God in our fellow human beings, even when this image is tarnished.

The training course names several ways in which self-control is to be exercised in verbal de-escalation. These include body language, facial expressions, and voice [1]. We are not on a stage or movie set where we follow a script, but in real life where tense situations challenge our acting ability and there's no written script or a director's guidance. Our self-control must come from inside, from who we are.

To a certain degree, we as humans can learn some level of self-control, but there is more. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22-23 that "the fruit of the Spirit is ... self-control." As Christians, we are to have the Holy Spirit working in our lives, and the fruit of this includes self-control. Even then, we still have to consciously work on it. Paul admitted he had to learn self-control in some things, such as being content (Phil. 4:11).

Conversation Control

By conversation control, I don't mean dominating the discussion and doing almost all the talking. Getting back to James, he wrote, "Be quick to hear, slow to speak." Then when we speak, what we say and how we say it can set or influence the tone of the conversation. What conversation control means is

getting the tone of the conversation to cool down. With ourselves under control, we can set the example while using de-escalation techniques. The training course covers body language, then goes on with facial expressions and voice, which are good conversation habits even when we are not engaged in verbal de-escalation. Your face should be relaxed. Wear a relaxed smile, not a grimace. Maintain eye contact without staring. Voice control includes the volume (soft, not loud), rate of speech (slow and even), and tone (friendly and helpful). We should note how we respond to these same factors, putting ourselves in the other person's place.

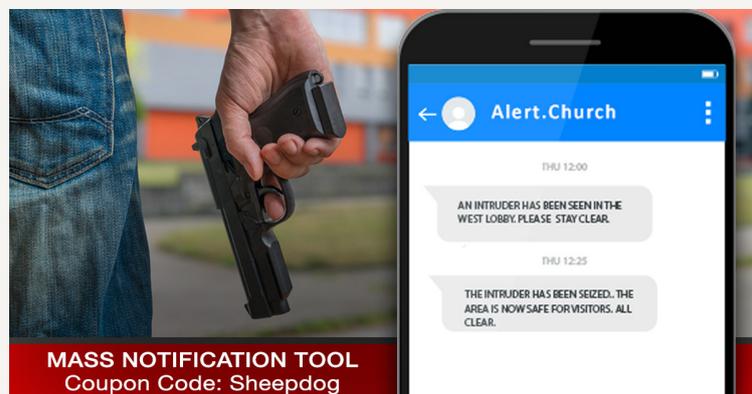
Verbal de-escalation is more active listening than talking. Active listening is letting the other person know you are listening. Saying, "I see," or repeating what they say - such as, "So you feel that ____" - lets the subject know that you are listening and understanding what they are saying.

There Is More

Other articles in this series concern what causes disruption, how to see the need for verbal de-escalation, approaching the subject(s) and initiating de-escalation, and following through with more help for a subject.

Check the website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/shake-drench-and-burn/>



Following Through It's Not Over When It's Over



FOLLOW UP

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
"DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PERSONS USING VERBAL DEESCALATION"

In the Bible

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1-2)

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham." (Luke 19:8-9)

So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. (Romans 14:19)

For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. (2 Corinthians 2:6-7)

A Real Dilemma

(Based on reported situations)

Chuck Brown, who has been diagnosed as bipolar, began attending Eastside Community Chapel. As the old song says, "When you're up you're up, and when you're down you're down," he was up, down, and all around. He would either begin talking out loud at inappropriate times and doing things on his own, or be mum and glum. One Sunday morning when he was glum, he reacted badly to Joe Smith asking him how he was. "Why do you want to know?" he retorted, and began to chew Joe out.

"Hey, Chuck! Chill out!" Joe said.

Well, that got Chuck really going. Tom Bowers of the Safety Team came over and calmed Chuck using verbal de-escalation.

While discussing the incident with Brad Barton, the Church Safety Director, Tom said, "Chuck told me he'd been asked to leave five or six other churches already. I'd hate to see that happen again. He really needs help. What can we do?"

It's Not Over When It's Over

We've stepped in and defused a potentially explosive situation using verbal de-escalation. It could be just a one-time thing for the person or persons involved, but most times another incident is possible because of any number of underlying issues. As a Church Safety Ministry, we are interested in preventing another incident or making it less likely. We also want to be prepared in case it happens again. There are a number of options, depending on the incident and the issues.

Incident Report and Evaluation

The first item of business after defusing a disruptive situation, the Incident Report, is a function of the Safety Team and the responsibility of the team member(s) involved. The Church Safety/Security Volunteer Academy says, "Any time that the security team is involved in any non-routine action, an incident report should be thoroughly completed" [2]. Incident Report forms should be available, ready to be filled out. The Safety Director should also have a master for copying and/or a file for printing. Later action is recorded in a Follow-Up Report.

The Incident Report form has several fields. These include the date, time and place of the incident, the type of incident, persons involved, who was notified, and the Safety Team member involved.

A situation requiring verbal de-escalation should be evaluated by the Safety Director, and - if needed - the Safety Committee, the Threat Assessment Team, and the pastoral staff. The reason is that disruptive incidents may be repeat experiences if the underlying factors are continuing situations. The purpose of an evaluation is to answer these questions:

"How well did we handle this?"

"How could we have a better response?"

"Can we keep this from happening again?"

"How can we be ready for another incident?"

"How can we help the person(s) involved?"

Evaluation of a potentially disruptive incident should be a confidential process, since this is a discussion of someone's personal life and issues.

Following Through Continued...

What we do as a result of the evaluation falls into two overlapping categories: Prevention and Intervention.

Prevention

If we can, we would like to make a disruptive incident a one-time event. At the least, we want to keep tensions from becoming disruptions. At best, we want underlying issues addressed.

The easiest way out may seem to be to ask the disruptive party to not come back. If this was a violent incident requiring police response and resulting in an arrest, "Do not return" would be prudent for the safety of all. If deadly threats were made and deadly force was a concern, this may call for a protective order from a court. In that case, the Safety Team should be alert for that person after he or she is freed.

If the subject is not a dangerous threat, perhaps they will submit to some restrictions and monitoring. This may be a valid option for those who have problems controlling their behavior, exhibiting symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder, Tourette's Syndrome, Bipolar Disorder, etc. For some people, coaching and accountability may help condition them to expressing themselves appropriately. This is normally a function of counseling staff and the pastoral team, although church members with a personal interest may become involved. Besides helping the person, this helps to prevent another incident, or at least to make it less likely.

There may be other opportunities for ministering to that person. Questions like this demand discernment and discretion.

Intervention

Intervention is actively trying to help disturbed or distressed persons. Educational and healthcare professionals have developed means of intervention to help students and patients who've been disruptive.

In Gal. 6:1-2, Paul urged us to "restore" those who have sinned and to "Carry each other's burdens."

If the disruptive person is stressed by circumstances, such as loss of a job, the death of a loved one, family issues, health, etc., the church may be able to help or find help for the individual. It may be a mental health issue or substance abuse. Many people, even including Christians, have a problem managing anger - Paul said, "In your anger do not sin" (Eph. 4:26a (NIV)). The subject may be referred to an anger management program.

The needed help may include temporary financial

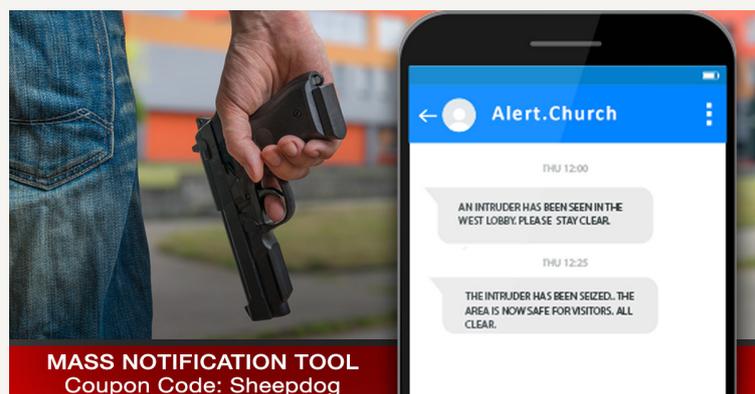
assistance, help in finding a job or housing, grief counseling, overcoming addiction, help in finding medical assistance or mental health care. Through all this is care for the soul - spiritual help, leading them to salvation, to a deeper relationship with God, to trusting Him to walk with them through the hard places in life. Some disrupters can be led through Bible study to grow in Christ and overcome daily challenges as well as sinful attitudes and habits. Counseling, mediation, and other forms of intervention are largely out of the hands of the Church Safety Ministry, but the ministry be involved in some way. The Safety Director can keep in touch with the pastoral team, following the progress of the intervention. The Safety Ministry does have a legitimate interest in this, since it affects their job of protecting the flock. They can encourage the pastoral staff as they minister to these persons. One way Safety Team members can be personally involved in helping distressed persons is to be kind when meeting them. Show concern for their well-being. Let them know you care. This will help them develop their confidence in you, which should make it easier if you need to step in again to defuse a developing situation. On a higher level, it develops our love for those we minister to.

There is more

This series has other articles concerning what causes disruption, how to see the need for verbal de-escalation, approaching the subject(s) and initiating de-escalation, and being in control.

Check the website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/following-through/>





CHURCH SECURITY ROLL PODCAST

Weekly Tips and Encouragement for Church Security Teams based on the research and experience of Kris Moloney and the Sheepdog Church Security Team. Hosted by Ron Neeley and Kris Moloney



Roots of Disruption:

Knowing and Recognizing Factors Leading to Violent Disruption

What leads people to become disruptive? What factors put them at risk? For many years, now, people have been asking those questions after violent incidents. To protect the flock, a Church Safety Ministry needs to know what the threats are and how to recognize them, then how to deal with them.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)



Seeing Dark Clouds: Awareness of a Need for Verbal De-escalation

In a congregation, threat assessment can forecast the potential for disruptive behavior, even violence, by persons in the congregation, persons associated with church members, and known persons in the community. This can be an opportunity for ministry. For some, intervention in the form of personal counseling may be possible and successful. We can't change the weather, but there is hope for a person at risk.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)



With a Word: Calming a Crisis Conversationally

When stepping into a situation, we are aiming to defuse escalating tensions before they become disruptive. The proven means for doing this is verbal de-escalation. Real-life experiences show that words can be used to cool down heated exchanges. A paraphrase of what Solomon said is, "A calm answer cools anger."

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)



In Control: Keeping Things Calm

Sometimes, when there is a tense situation threatening to become a major disruption, we hear an official say, "We're trying to keep things under control." When we are trying to defuse developing disruption through verbal de-escalation, we intend first to keep it under control, then to stay in control until it comes to a peaceful end.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)



Following Through: It's Not Over When It's Over

We've stepped in and defused a potentially explosive situation using verbal de-escalation. As a Church Safety Ministry, we are interested in preventing another incident or making it less likely. We also want to be prepared in case it happens again.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

MAIL CALL

Messages from
Sheepdogs across the
country

RANGER RICK

Hi Kris,

Thank you for your email. It was a bit of an effort to get the Emergency Response Team up and running, but we got past the nay Sayers.

I just retired from law enforcement in February this year. In 2010 I left the military with 39 yrs. serving our Country . I was a SF Medic. I started with Red Cross in 1965 in high school, and have been in the game one way or another for about 54 years. Never in my life would I think we would be where we are today, but we are.

Anyway, a number of our church security team attended your training here in North Idaho and loved it. I attend years ago and have down loaded most of your training programs, bought most of the books and share them with as many groups as will listen to me. Evil is alive and well in our world today.

Thank you for all you do,

Ranger Rick

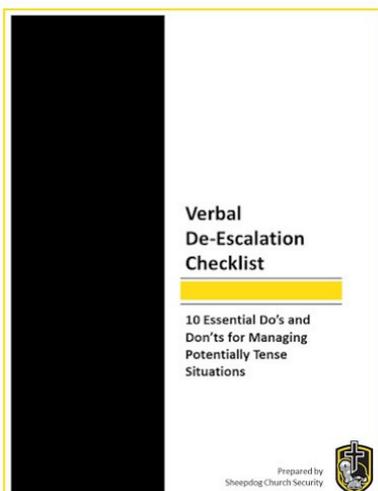
MIKE P.

Thanks for your ministry. We are just getting started with our Church Safety Team. Lots of things to learn and implement. I find your resources very very helpful. Thanks for helping us sheepdogs to guard the sheep.

Mike P

FREE MONTHLY DOWNLOAD

Verbal De-Escalation Checklist: 10 Essential Do's and Don'ts for Managing Potentially Tense Situations



Your Safety Team may be called upon from time to time to handle domestic disputes that spill over into church, work with mentally ill family members, or even respond to disruptive intruders. Safety Team members will need to know how to defuse the situation and get parties to calm down and cooperate. Here's a checklist of 10 things to watch for.

Protect God's People with Our Church Safety Resource
[Free Download]

To Get this Resource, Click the Picture (Link) and enter your Email Address. You will receive an email with a Download Button. Click the Button in the Email to Download the Safety Ministry Resource. (The Download is in PDF format.)

Kris

THE CHRISTIAN SHEEPDOG

THAT'LL TEACH YA!

“TRUST IN THE LORD...DO NOT DEPEND ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING.” (PROVERBS 3:5 NLT)

Have you ever been told that? Or maybe you've said that to someone. We probably all have at some point! We might think that with every experience or mistake there should be learning from it. However.....did you ever consider that some things that happens to you might not actually be designed to “teach” you anything?

Sometimes, God uses your experiences to “measure and strengthen” your resolve and character! We often think that everything that happens to us in our Christian life is a “teachable moment.” On the other hand, maybe it's not meant to teach us anything...it's meant to make us something.

Some military special operations training programs have required the candidate to do only one thing – be dropped off in the mountains for 30 days by yourself, no matter the weather. Your supplies...only a compass, map, heavy pack, a weapon, and a little food. They are told to go from one random spot to another with no particular destination, no known time limit, and no right method, only wrong ones. Every day, when you reach that random point, there's only an instructor telling you where your next point is and to get there as fast as you can. What possible purpose could this serve? These troops were already in the peak of physical condition, many were combat veterans...what could this physical abuse be teaching?

If you pass, you realize this torture wasn't meant to teach you anything. Given the nature of special operations, it's designed for one thing only... to test your resolve and your character. Same for the spiritual; to repeat, God might use an experience in your life for those same reasons.

We learn to trust God by getting to know His character, and we do that in three steps; studying His Word, reviewing His work in our own lives, and learning to follow His voice. Since our Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever, His character never changes. If He uses an experience not to teach but to strengthen your character, you can trust Him!



A retired Army Sergeant, ordained pastor in both a non-denominational church and a professional chaplain's association. Security industry experience as an operations manager, mall and city court security, as well as church safety and security teams. ~Ron Neeley

CERTIFIED ONSITE INSTRUCTORS

We are excited to announce that we have launched our Certified Sheepdog Instructor program! I can't tell you how many times, I have been asked about onsite instructors from both churches looking for training and from instructors wanting to use our materials. Right now, we have two fully qualified instructors that can train your volunteers to serve on a Safety Team. AND, get them to the point of certification.



MAINE

MICHAEL MERCER

Michael Mercer is a retired police officer with over thirty years of crime-prevention experience. He is a nationally certified chemical agent specialist, an expert witness, and a national practitioner in crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED.) He is also a US Navy Veteran and the Past President of the Maine Association of Police, Retired. He is the Founder of Michael Mercer Consulting L.L.C. and specializes in House of Worship safety, security, and emergency operations.

Website: <https://michaelmercerconsulting.com>



MINNESOTA

BRIAN STOLT

My name is Brian Stolt. I am a certified NRA Basic Pistol Instructor, NRA Range Safety Officer and a MN DNR Hunter Safety Instructor. Prior to being a Firearms Instructor, I was a Police Officer for 18 years, with 14 of those years as a K-9 Officer. After I retired from policing, I began work as a firearms instructor where my experience and skills are used to help train others in the real world use of firearms and personal defense. I am currently working as an Account Manager for a private security company.

Website: <https://stolttacticaldefense.com/>



NEW JERSEY

MICHAEL & DESERÉE KENNEY

My name is Michael A. Kenney, the founder of The Kenney Protective Agency LLC, providing private security services in NJ. I have over 35 years experience in professional law enforcement and private security management. My wife Deserée is our Security Manager and Training Coordinator who has over 10 years experience supervising adult offenders and parolees in a community corrections setting. I am a NJ State Police Certified Security Officer Instructor, and we are both Certified Instructors for the SABRE Civilian Safety Awareness & College Safety Training Programs. We also specialize in Private Security and Safety Team Training for Houses of Worship.

<https://www.kenneyprotectiveagency.com/>

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

CHURCH SAFETY AND SECURITY EVENTS

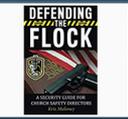


SHEEPDOG SEMINARS

UKIAH, CALIFORNIA - MAY 20

IDABEL, OKLAHOMA - JUNE 1

TULSA, OKLAHOMA - JUNE 6-7

		RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR SAFETY MINISTRIES
		
		

VISIT THE SDCS ONLINE STORE 

SHEEPDOG CORNER

Hi Sheepdog,

Nothing beats face to face conversations! As many of you know, we all face the same challenges when changing safety and security procedures. People resist change especially when it means they will be inconvenienced or they will have to put in more effort.

If you been following us for some time, you know that my church has an On-Off threat and right now it is on. Our potentially violent intruder is out of jail and as far as we know, he has not repented, and he is still a very real threat to the safety of the congregation.

Over the past two weeks we have been implementing new safety protocols and the resistance has been tough. I was quickly reminded that explaining the procedures by email only stirs up grumbling and complaining. This is not to say a detailed email is not a great way to roll out a new procedure, it just means that as the Safety Director we have to plan on spending some time on the phone and talking with people face to face until everyone is informed and onboard.

The key is to work with people as much as you possibly can. Let them know that you are there to help and to make the changes go as smoothly as possible. Change will always be hard so poor communication will only make things worse.

Your loyal companion in Christ,

Kris P. Moloney



A Police Officer with over 15 years of experience and a retired Army Captain and Company Commander. He has certifications in Crime Prevention, Security Assessments, and the Crime Free Program. He also has a Bachelor's degree in Ministry and a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership.

Kris P. Moloney



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