Managing Clients Who Present with Anger

Social workers are often in the role of managing clients' feelings. At times, clients may present as angry, hostile or even violent. It is important that social workers are prepared to handle these potentially uncomfortable or unsafe situations with the highest level of professionalism and safeguards.

Below are a few tips and questions to help guide your technique when managing clients who present with anger.

STAY CALM – Remaining calm is key to managing most situations, especially when a client is angry. Role modeling calm composure for a client can be helpful. By portraying a calm demeanor, an atmosphere of safety and comfort is provided to help the client relax.

In the moment, it is important to be mindful of your own body language and breathing. Both should remain in cohesion with being calm. Standing while not leaning forward, having minimal arm or hand movements, and breathing deeply can all reveal calmness. You can also relay to the client that you are better able to hear and help when they present in a calm manner. Giving specific suggestions to the client can help.

LISTEN — Listening to the client can also be very helpful. The client may simply need to vent feelings or have their information heard by someone. Listening to the client can provide detailed information that may not have been known previously. It can also help to create effective communication and aid in essential relationship building.

REMIND THE CLIENT YOU ARE THERE TO HELP – The client may

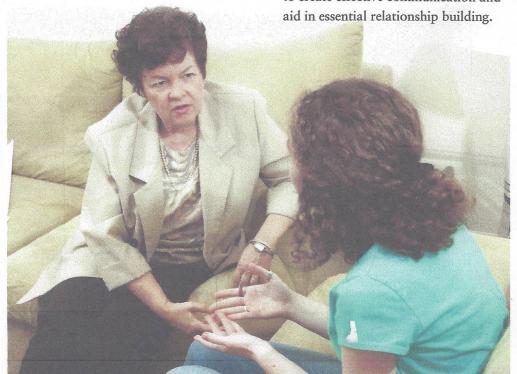
be presenting as angry as a result of things out of your control or may simply be angry at the current situation. As the social worker, you may be seen as part of the problem. It can be helpful to remind the client of your helping role. Whether it is to advocate for the best interest of the client or children involved, it is important to remind the client that you are working together.

EMPATHIZE — Often clients are in need of social work services due to a stressful situation in their lives. Simply extending empathy can help bridge any gaps and foster a sense of safety within the relationship. Showing compassion and care can go a long way.

ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN

profanity is used, it may be helpful to remind clients that you would like to hear all that they have to say, but that you need them to adhere to certain rules of communication, such as speaking in a calm voice and not using profanity. Reminding the client that, as a social worker, you will always use respectful communication and the same is expected of clients.

Creating an agreement and directly stating what kind of communication is





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plan ahead of time. policies with supervisor and create a be your first priority. Review agency unpredictability. Safety should always who are angry as anger can create take risks when working with clients prove helpful. It is important not to security or law enforcement can all and even requesting the presence of potentially angry client ahead of time, colleagues of meeting with a

may also be helpful. relationship at the initial meeting expected throughout the professional

ENSURE SAFETY - If you are TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO

present, alerting supervisors and in an open area with other people take necessary precautions. Meeting before the meeting, it is important to aware that a client may be angry

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- What is my temperament? Do I feel calm?
- Are my arms and hand moving? How is my breathing? What does my body language say to others? Am I leaning torward?
- Sbias si tadw ot noitnetta gniyaq bna tneils edt ot gninetsil I mA
- Fyps of eval year the client than I that I have to say?

- 0
- Does the client have accurate information about the situation?
- Syltzenod etazinummos ot gidznoitaler edt ni etaz leet tneils edt zeol
- What kind ot communication am I using in the moment?
- communication? If not, how can I effectively communicate boundaries
- Have I assessed risk tactors before meeting with any clients?
- Do I have an effective safety plan in place?

