

The background of the slide is a photograph of three students in a school hallway. A young woman with curly brown hair is in the foreground, smiling broadly and holding a white piece of paper. Behind her, a young man with dark hair is looking down, and another young man with dark hair is looking towards the camera. The hallway has lockers in the background.

Handling Unpleasant Situations: Techniques to Turn the Bad into Good

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***“The ultimate measure of a man
is not where he stands in moments
of comfort and convenience,
but where he stands at times
of challenge and controversy.”***

- Martin Luther King, Jr

Agenda

1 Demonstrate how to control our responses

2 Discuss the use of strategic words

3 Illustrate reflective listening

4 Show how to deliver bad news

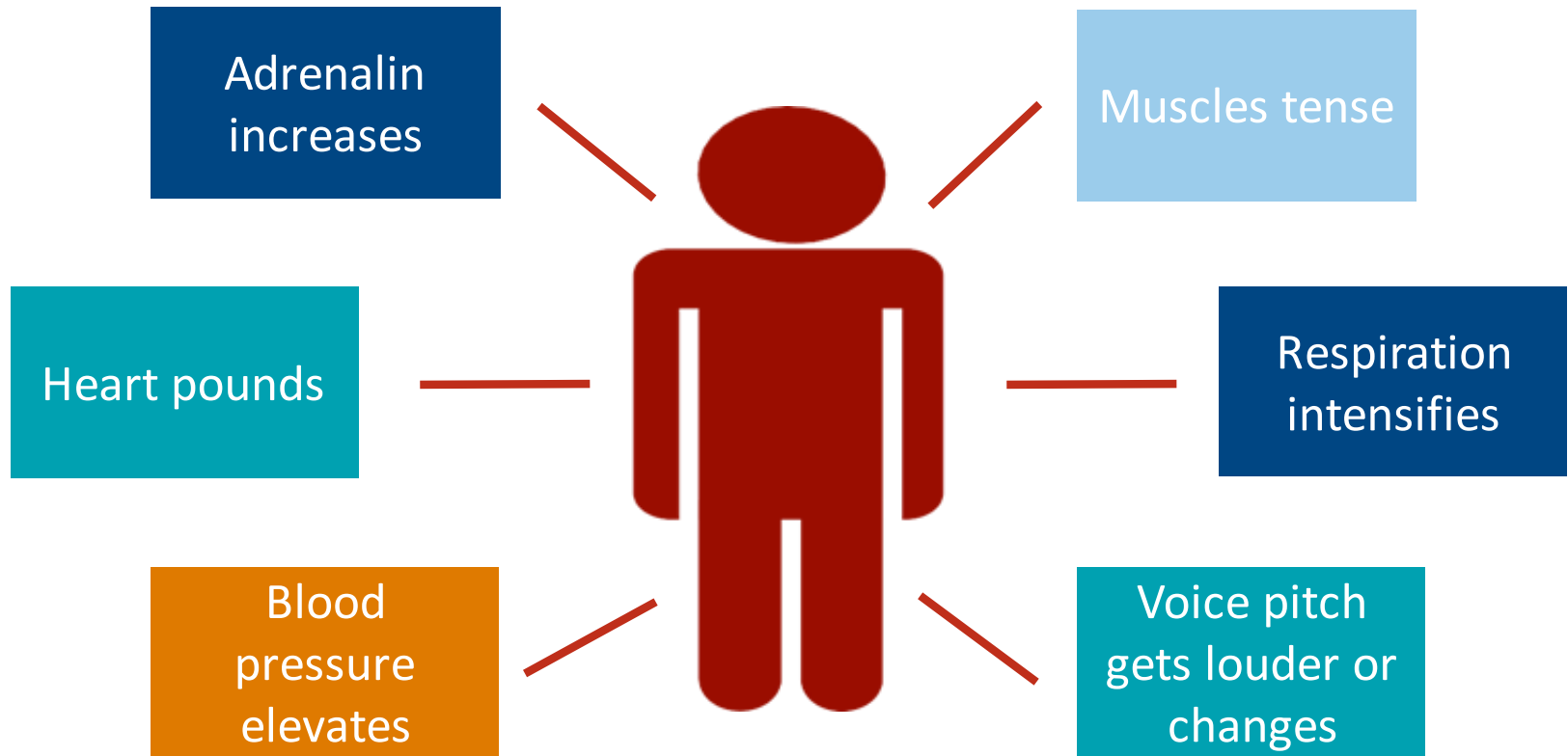
Controlling Responses



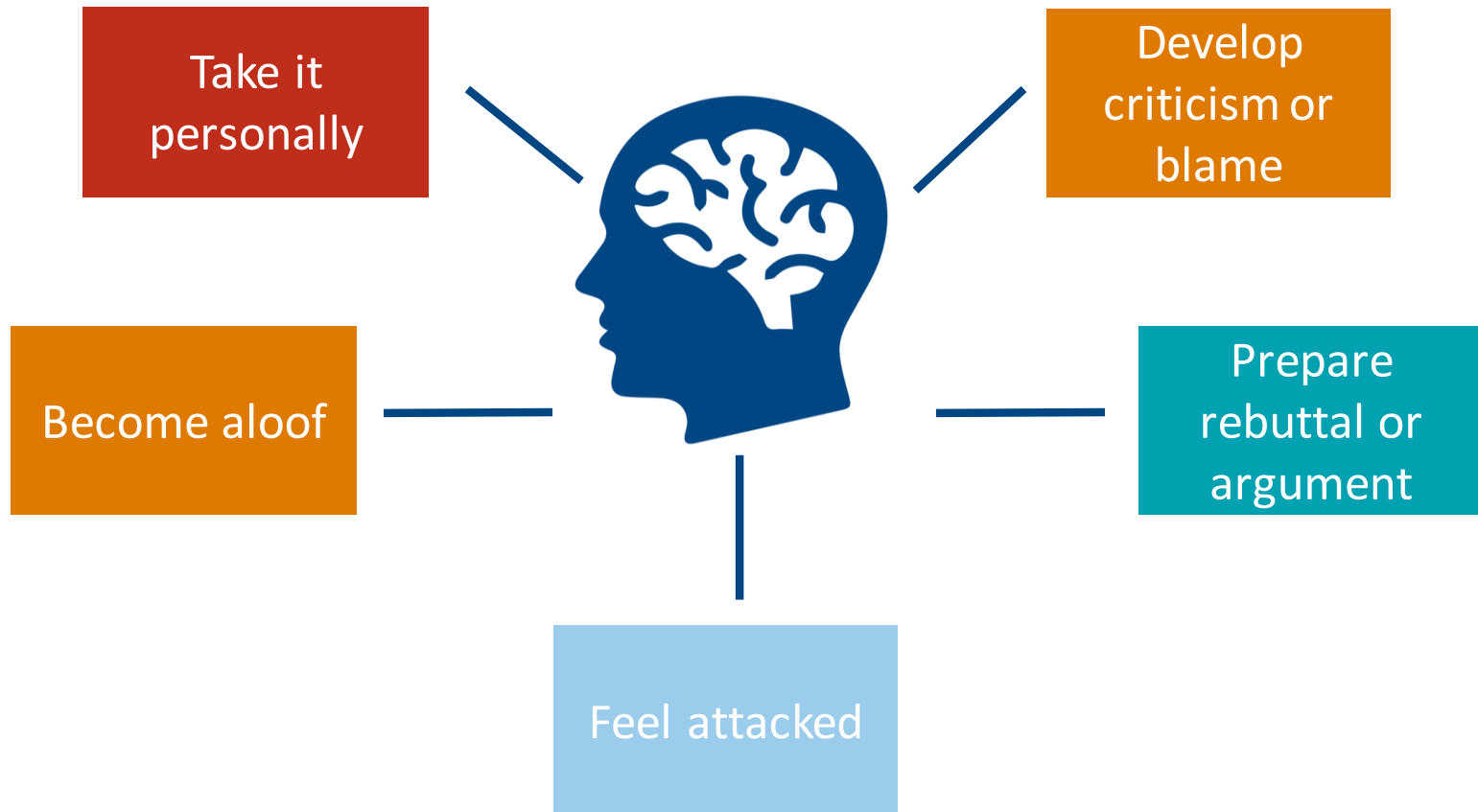
***“You may not control all the events
that happen to you, but you can decide
not to be reduced by them.”***

- Maya Angelou

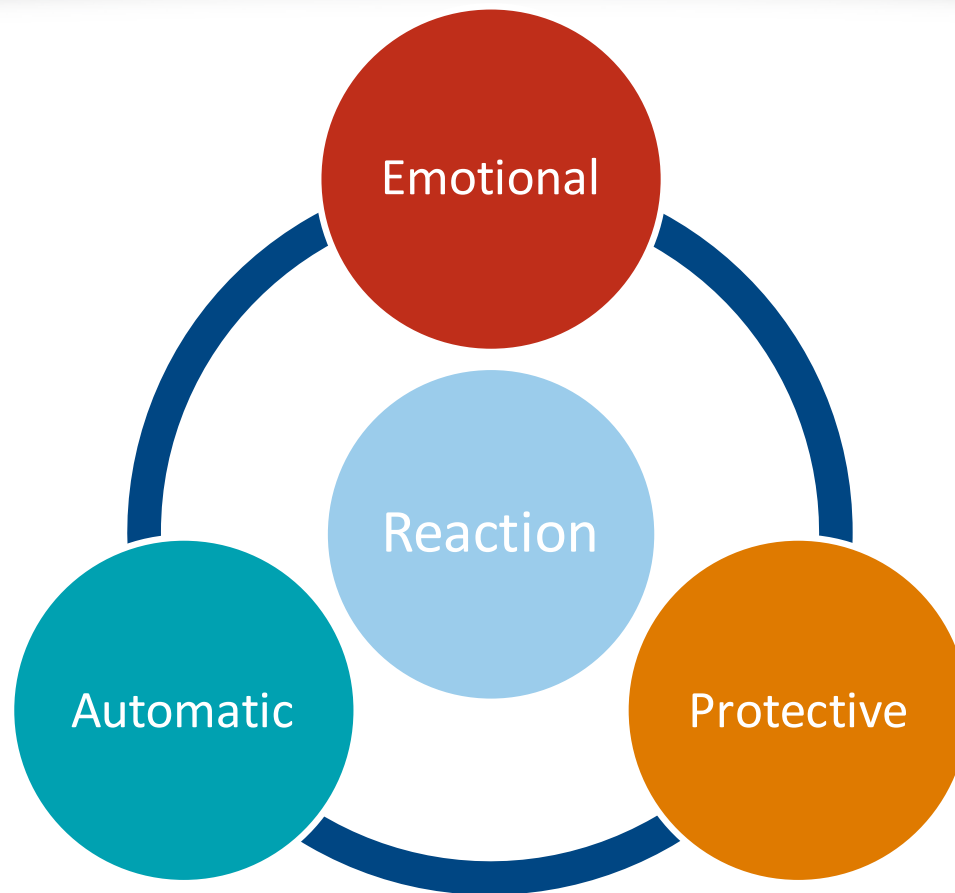
How Our Body Responds



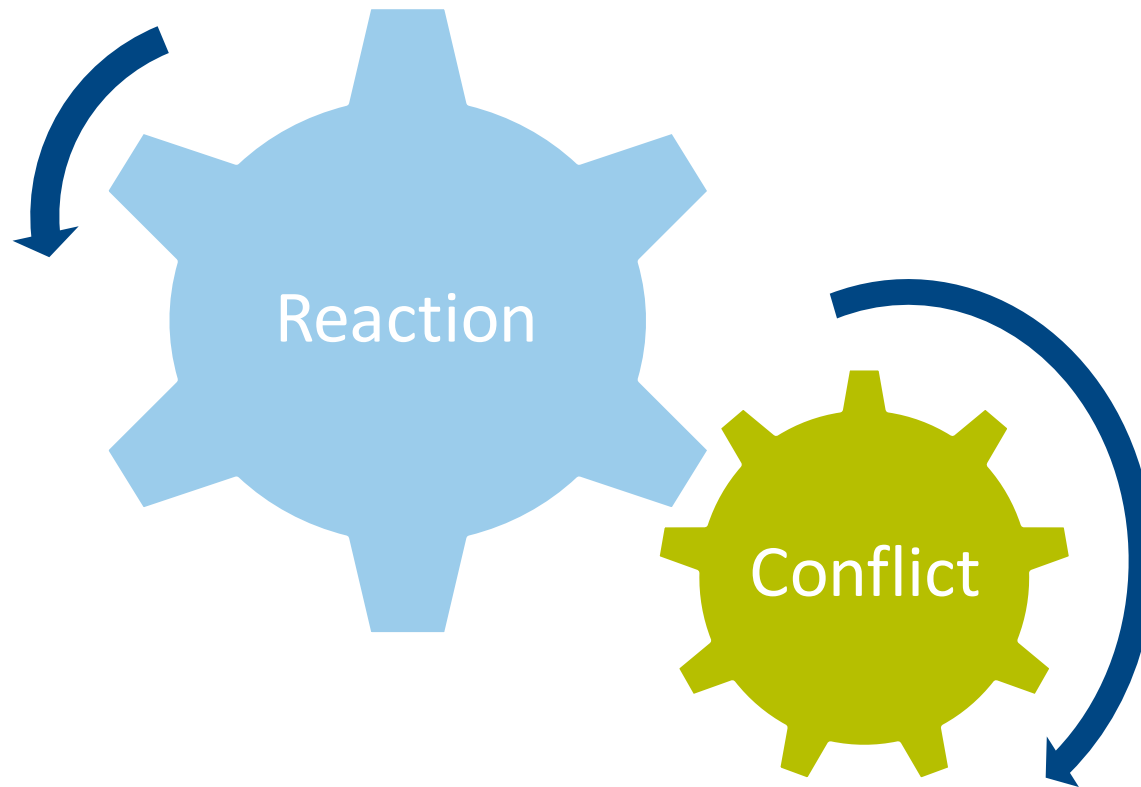
How Our Mind Responds



Traits of a Reaction



Results of a Reaction



Traits of a Response



Results of a Response



Shift from Reacting to Responding

Avoid reacting, instead

PAUSE



THINK



CHOOSE





Pause...

- Take a deep breath
- Resume a normal breathing rate
- Sip water
- Count to 10
- Step away from the situation
- If the situation is highly volatile, tell the person you will get back to them





Think...

- Give the person the benefit of the doubt
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Never assume anything
- Formulate responses
- Consider the information
- See the bigger picture





Choose...

- Make a conscious choice to respond with words and actions that are:
 - Thoughtful
 - Empathic
 - Intelligent
 - Calming
 - Action-oriented and less emotional



Strategic Use of Words



***“Words can inspire.
And words can destroy.
Choose yours wisely.”***

- Robin Sharma

The Power of Words

***The right words can defuse
almost any situation***

Word Swaps

Words that work	Words that work <u>better</u>
I can	I sure can
I can't	I wish I/we could
You'll have to	Can I get you to...? Would you mind...?
I don't know	Good question, let me find out
You owe	Our records show a balance of...

Word Swaps

A parent tells you currently that she has been waiting on hold for a long time



What should you say to her?

- A. I'm sorry.
- B. I understand.
- C. We have been extremely busy today because it's the first day of the semester.
- D. It sounds like you had a very long wait; let's see what we can do to help from here.

Words of Compassion

“Feel, Felt, Found” Strategy

“I know how you *feel* Ms. White...”

“Parents of incoming freshmen have said they *felt* this way....”

“Students have *found* that once they log in...”

Words of Reassurance

Provide reassurance that you're going to help,
even if the answer is “no”

“I’m going to do my best to help resolve this quickly”

“You can be assured that I will get back to you with
an answer by tomorrow”

“While we’re not able to award additional grant aid,
I can assure you that we will find...”

Words of Optimism

That is a
fantastic
alternative

Fantastic

I can *certainly*
help you

Certainly

You will *surely*
be able to
start classes
this fall

Surely

I will
definitely
make sure
that it gets
done

Definitely

I *absolutely*
agree

Absolutely

Words of Deterrence

“What you need to do...”

“What you should do...”

“What you must do...”

“Why can’t you?...”

“If I were you, I would...”



Words of Uncertainty

- During an unpleasant situation, communication should be clear with little room for ambiguity
- Try to avoid
 - *“As soon as possible”*
 - *“I’ll try....”*
 - *“The truth is...”*
 - *“To be honest....”*
 - *“Hopefully...”*



Words of Explanation

- Do not respond with...

“It’s against our policy”

—or—

“Our policies and procedures do not allow us to....”

- Cite reasons for policies and procedures



Give an example of how you would explain a policy and procedure to a student?

Using Reflective Listening



***“There is a difference between
truly listening and waiting for
your turn to talk.”***

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Listening Defuses Conflict

When done effectively, listening to try to understand another person

- Stops arguments and defuses strong emotions
- Helps the other person feel heard
- Helps the other person to listen to you
- Helps you persuade the other person
- Improves relationships



Barriers to Listening

Often when we think we're listening, there are obstacles in the way

- Being judgmental
- Confusing understanding with agreement
- Confusing listening with discussing
- Confusing listening with problem-solving
- Indulging the need to correct errors
- Blocking



What is Reflective Listening?



Reflective listening is hearing and understanding what the other person is communicating

Involves two steps:

**Seeking to
understand**

**Confirming what
was understood**

Process of Reflective Listening

- 1) Let the person speak; do not interrupt
- 2) Do not give advice...yet
- 3) Nod your head or use encouraging verbal phrases along the way
- 4) Restate the problem
- 5) Use a verifying statement
- 6) Ask for clarification when you do not understand
- 7) Respond appropriately

Delivering Bad News



“Challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”

- Joshua J. Marine

Staging to Deliver Bad News

By setting the stage to deliver bad news, it can help to manage the situation

- Introduce what you're going to say before you say it
- Explain the reason for what you're saying
- Empathize with the person/audience's feelings after you have said it

How Great Leaders Deliver Bad News

1

Speak up

3

Take
responsibility

5

Say what you'll
do next

2

Be accurate

4

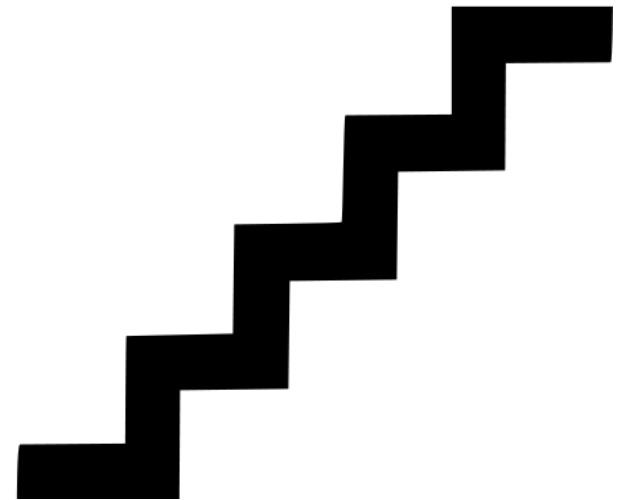
Listen

6

Do what you
say – and
repeat as
needed

When the Situation Escalates

- Set ground rules
- Trust your instincts
- Bring a third party into the conversation, if needed
- Separate from the person
- Notify higher authority

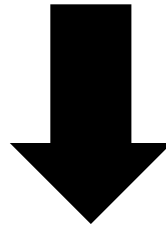


**Tell us about a time when
you had to deliver bad news
and how did you do it?**



Turning the Bad into Good

Unpleasant Situations



Be prepared

**Respond instead
of reacting**

**Listen to understand
what the other
person is truly saying
and how they feel**

**Choose words
carefully**

**Take the time
to train**

Thanks for Attending