

WELCOME

California Newcomer Project Agency Learning & Support Series

We will start shortly. Music is playing.

Hosted by Solvera Consulting, in partnership with California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB)



Real-Time Tools for Engaging with Distressed Clients

California Newcomer Project Agency Learning & Support Series

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CONSULTING

A BETTER WAY OF DOING GOOD



California Newcomers Project

*with California Department of Social Services'
Refugee Programs Bureau*



Ways to Engage

1

Complete Survey.
Join Listening
Sessions, interviews,
&/or Meet & Greet

2

Invite your staff to
attend webinar
sessions sessions led
by trusted guides

3

Suggest topics and
participate in
regional, in-person
trainings

4

Use the
GoogleMap, Info.
Exchange, and
provider directory



You are here

Series Overview & Learning Goals

Series Overview

June 26 Maximizing Impact

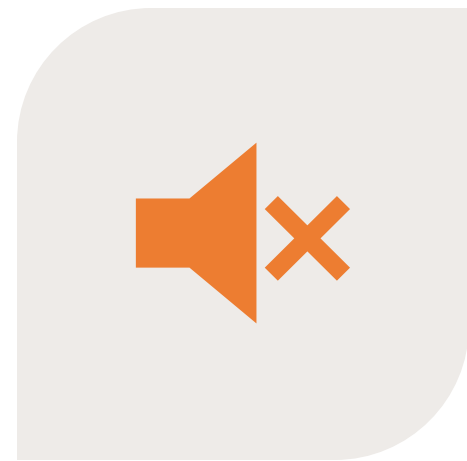
July 17 Real-Time Tools for Distressed Clients

August 21 Find the Right Resource! Support Guide Launch

Real-Time Tools for Engaging with Distressed Clients: De-Escalation, PFA, and More

- ✓ Gain an understanding of the core principles of Psychological First Aid (PFA) and how to apply them in immediate client interactions.
- ✓ Enhance confidence in responding effectively and compassionately to clients experiencing acute distress.

Session Reminders



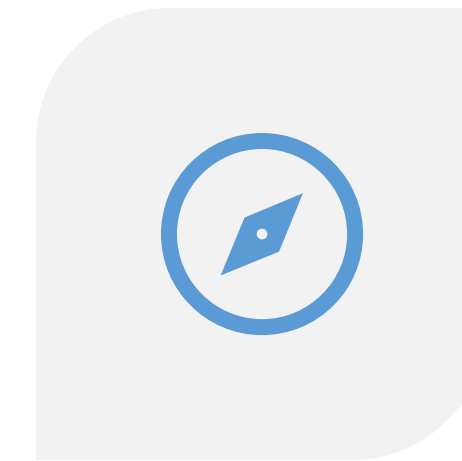
Mute



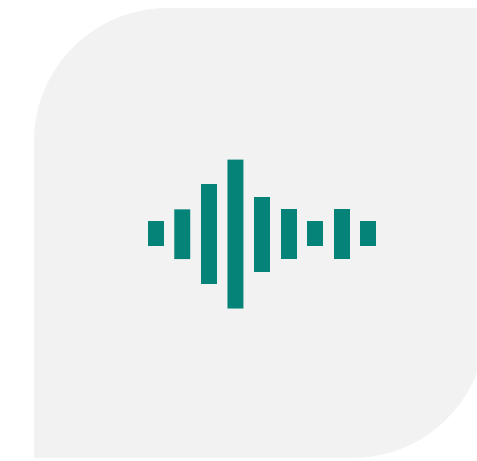
Upvote Questions



Anonymous
Zoom Polls



Survey



Recording

Welcome Poll



A few questions to help us better understand “who’s in the room”.

Facilitator Introduction

Megan Bailey
MSW, MA, PhD candidate



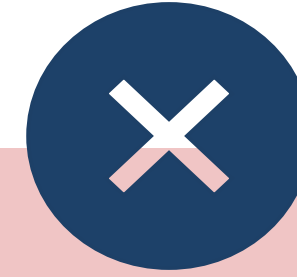
Megan Bailey, MSW, MA, is a doctoral candidate at the University of Buffalo School of Social Work. Her research focuses on the wellbeing of refugee and immigrant communities, particularly youth. She is focused on trauma-informed practices in the institutions and organizations that serve newcomer communities and in understanding the role of psychosocial supports in supporting wellbeing.

Expectation Setting



Topics

- ✓ Trauma responses
- ✓ De-escalation
- ✓ Psychological First Aid
- ✓ Examples



Not Covered

- x Mental health diagnoses
- x Other response tools
- x Specific disasters/crises
- x Violent situations



Learning together, we will:

- Embrace curiosity
- Offer mutual respect
- Share feedback
- Reflect on our why

Today's Overview

PART 1

Responding to Clients in Crisis

Check-in

Recognizing Reactions

De-Escalation

PART 2

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

What is PFA?

Core Principles

Look, Listen, Link

PART 3

Practicing PFA Together

Case Study 1

Case Study 2

Self-Care and Check-out

A photograph of two women sitting at a table in a bright, modern office. The woman on the left has long white hair, wears glasses, a blue and white striped blazer, and a name tag. She is smiling and looking down at a document. The woman on the right has short dark curly hair and is wearing a black and white striped long-sleeved shirt. She is also looking down at the document and has a pen in her hand. In the background, there is a bookshelf with books and a potted plant with white flowers. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

Responding to Clients in Crisis

Check-in



1. How **often do you interact** with a client in crisis?
2. How **confident do you** feel de-escalating a client in crisis?
3. What are some **examples of crises** that clients you serve have faced?

Recognizing Reactions



Trauma is not the event itself but **how** someone **experiences** and **internalizes** an event.

Recognizing Reactions



*“Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is **experienced by an individual** as physically or emotionally **harmful or life threatening** and that has **lasting adverse effects** on the individual’s **functioning and** mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual **well-being.**”*

-SAMHSA, 2024

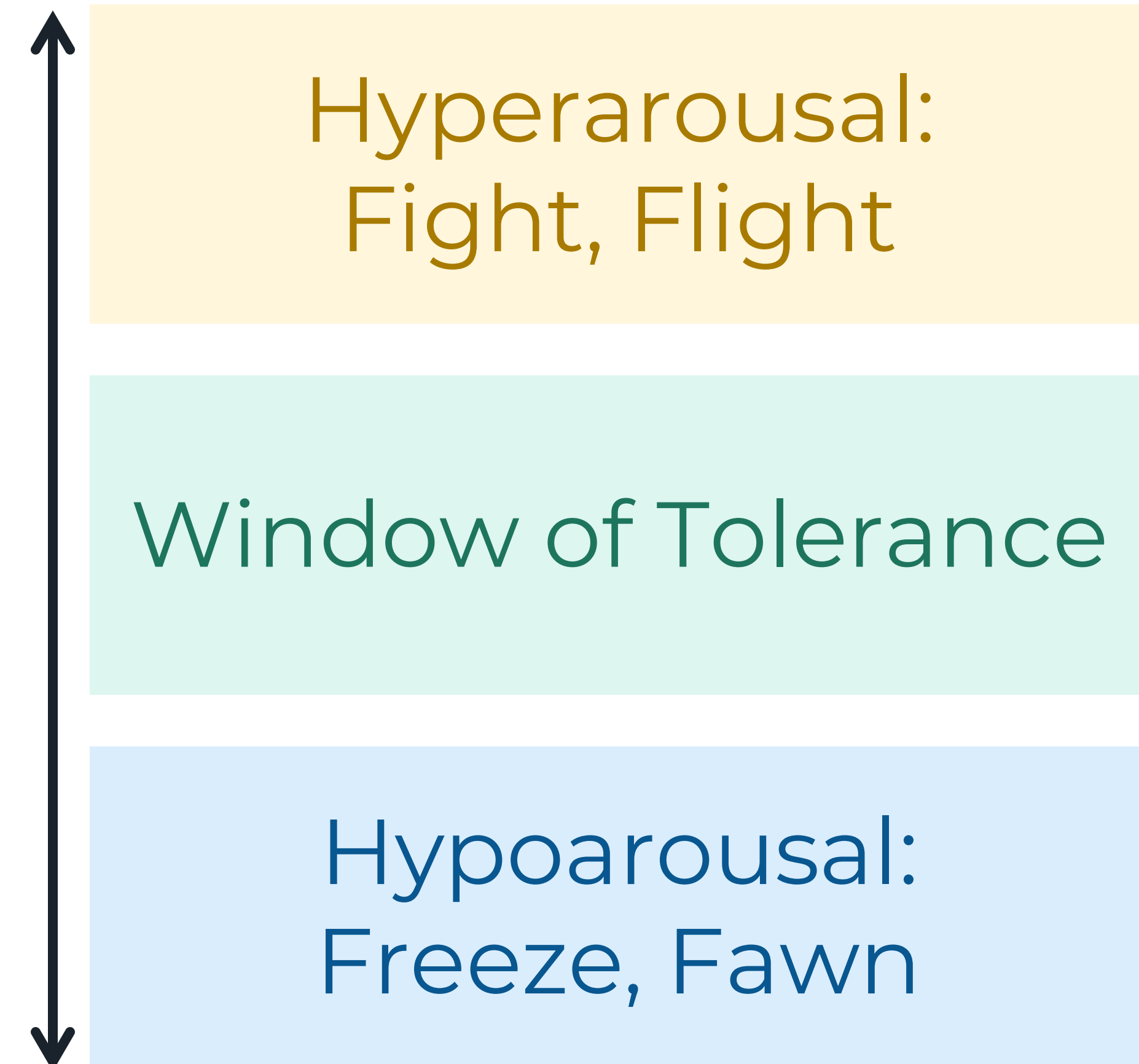
Recognizing Reactions

Not everyone responds in the same way.

- Factors: culture, belief systems, developmental stage

Common responses:

- **Fight** – angry, combative
- **Flight** – anxious, obsessive
- **Freeze** – numb, isolating
- **Fawn** – people-pleasing, codependent



Recognizing Reactions



Recognizing and managing our own reaction supports de-escalation.

- ✓ Know how you respond.
- ✓ Stay calm.
- ✓ Remember the client is operating out of a place of fear/survival.
- ✓ Suspend judgment.
- ✓ Put aside being “right”.
- ✓ Ask for help when you need it.

Recognizing Reactions



1. How do you **respond to stress**?
2. What are some **tools/practices** that you use to **stay calm** in the face of client crisis?

De-escalation



Types

- Verbal communication
- Non-verbal communication

Preparing for de-escalation

Consider:

- Types of crises
- Modes of interaction
- Your role and your agency

Every situation is different.

De-escalation



1. Does anyone have a **personal plan** for de-escalation and/or crisis response?
2. Does your **organization** have a de-escalation and/or crisis response plan?



Summary

Responding to Clients in Crisis

- Trauma is not the event itself but how an event is **experienced and internalized**.
- **Fight, flight, freeze**, and **fawn** are all **normal** responses.
- When a client is **operating from a place of fear**, it can make conversations and problem solving more difficult.
- If we can **remain calm**, it will help with de-escalation.
- Thinking through different **types of crises, modes of interaction**, and our **personal and organizational roles** can help us prepare to respond to clients in crisis.
- Every situation is different, so **be kind to yourself** as you interact with clients.

PART 1
**Responding to
Clients in Crisis**

Check-in

Recognizing Reactions

De-Escalation

PART 2
**Psychological First
Aid (PFA)**

What is PFA?

Core Principles

Look, Listen, Link


PART 3
**Practicing PFA
Together**

Case Study 1

Case Study 2

Self-Care and Check-out



A photograph of two women sitting at a table in a bright, indoor setting. The woman on the left has long white hair and wears glasses and a blue and white striped blazer. The woman on the right has short dark hair and wears a black and white striped long-sleeved shirt. They are both smiling and looking down at a book or document on the table. A potted plant with white flowers is visible in the background.

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

Defining and Understanding PFA

What is PFA?



1. How would you **rate** your knowledge of **PFA**?
2. Have you ever **used PFA**?

What is PFA?

An intervention (or tool) used to reduce stress and foster functioning and coping in response to a disaster or crisis

PFA is...

- ✓ focused on *immediate* needs
- ✓ flexible and *responsive* to individual needs/circumstances
- ✓ *a tool* that can be used by anyone, with anyone

PFA is not...

- x therapy or professional counseling
- x focused on long-term solutions
- x a strict checklist
- x a tool that can only be used by trained professionals, with specific people

Core Principles

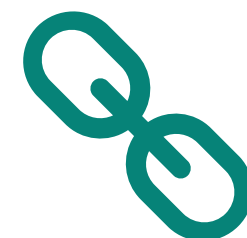
PFA is based on
five core principles
that promote
functioning and coping



Safety



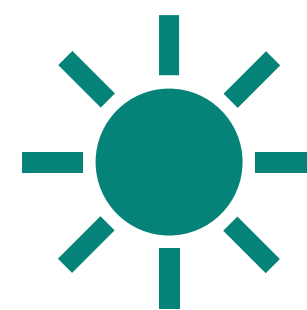
Calm



Connectedness



Self and Community Efficacy



Hope

3 Ls: Look, Listen, Link



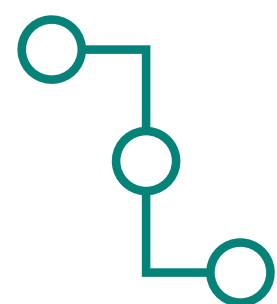
Look

Check for issues related to safety/security, urgent physical needs, and serious distress.



Listen

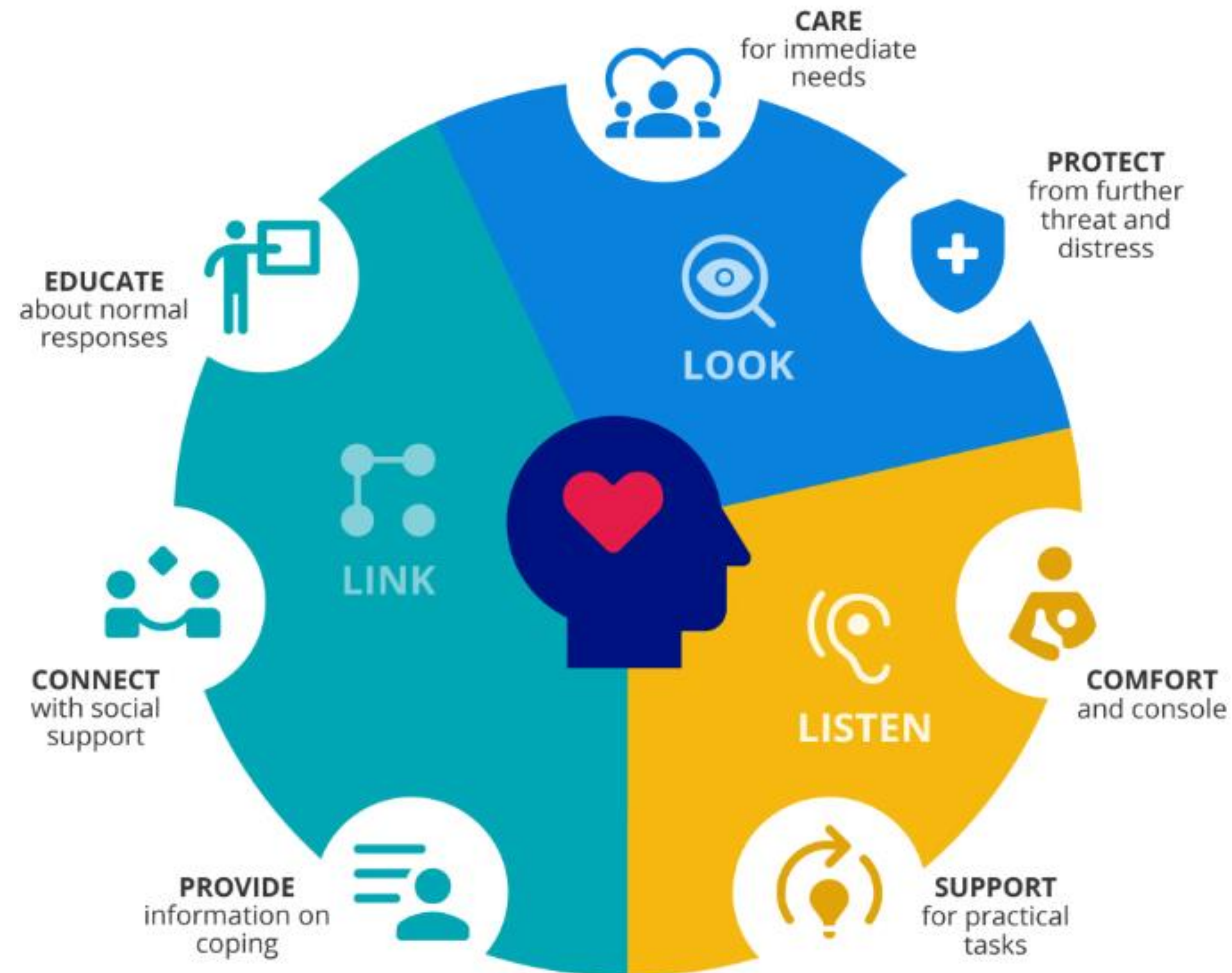
- Engage in active and empathetic listening.
- Do not rush to reassure a client that everything will be ok or make promises you can't keep.



Link

Connect client to information/resources to support them in response to the crisis.

3 Ls: Look, Listen, Link





Summary

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

- PFA is a tool used to **reduce stress and foster functioning and coping** in response to a disaster or crisis.
- It is a tool that can be used **by anyone, with anyone.**
- There are five core principles that are important for promoting functioning and coping: **safety, calm, connectedness, self and community efficacy, and hope.**
- **LOOK:** Look for obvious issues related to **safety and security, urgent physical needs, and serious distress.**
- **LISTEN:** Practice **active and empathetic listening.**
- **LINK: Connect clients to information and resources** to support them in their response to the crisis.

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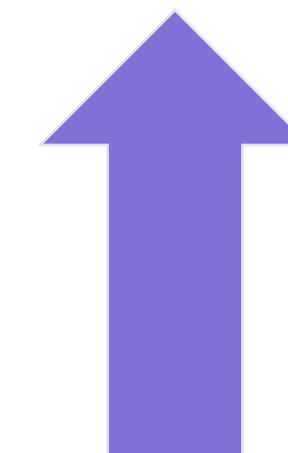
Look, Listen, Link

PART 3
**Practicing PFA
Together**

Case Study 1

Case Study 2

Self-Care and Check-out



A photograph of two women sitting at a desk in a bright, modern office. The woman on the left has long white hair and wears glasses and a blue and white striped blazer. She is smiling and pointing at a document on the desk. The woman on the right has short dark curly hair and wears a black and white striped long-sleeved shirt. She is holding a yellow pen and looking down at the document. In the background, there is a bookshelf with books and a potted plant with white flowers. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing the title and subtitle.

Practicing PFA Together

Combining What We've Learned

Case Study 1

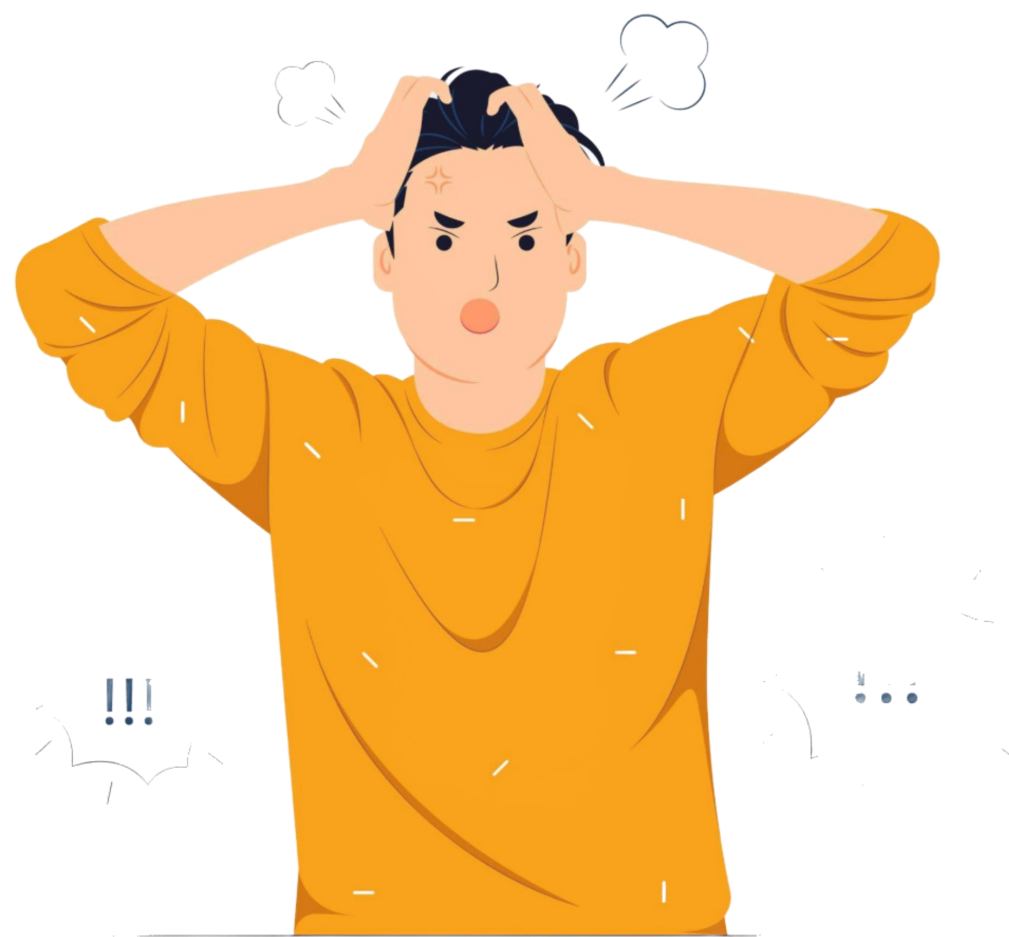


A client comes to the office unexpectedly...

- He is visibly upset.
- His voice is raised.
- He is pacing the lobby.

Case Study 1

A client comes to the office unexpectedly...



How might I respond?

- I take a deep breath to steady my own heart and mind (staying calm).

Look

- The lobby is busy, so I ask if he would like to move somewhere more private to talk. He agrees so we move to a sitting area just off the lobby. I know others are nearby if needed.
- I ask him if he would like some water.
- I remain calm and quiet.
- I **will not** tell him to calm down.

Case Study 1

His response...



*"This weekend there was a fire inside the factory where I work and now it's shut down. I don't know how long it will be closed or if I will have a job. **I don't know what my family is going to do.** I am the only one who was working."*

Case Study 1



How might I respond?

Listen

- I can validate his concern: *“That’s a normal response to a difficult situation.”*
- I can paraphrase what I’ve heard: *“It sounds like you are worried about how this is going to impact your job and your family.”*
- I **will not** tell him that it will be ok or that I’m sure the factory will reopen soon.
- I **will not** promise that I will find him another job.

Case Study 1

His response...



Yes, ***I'm worried*** because we have a lot of bills. Rent is very expensive and all 4 of my kids are on summer break so we are buying a lot more groceries. ***It's keeping me awake at night.***

Case Study 1



How might I respond?

Link

- I can let him know that it's common for experiences of stress to disrupt regular routines like sleep.
- I can ask how he has coped with stress in the past: *"What has helped you when you have felt worried in the past?"*
- I **will not** tell him that he should have been saving money for emergencies like this.

Case Study 2



You're visiting a client at home...

- The client's child answers the door.
- The client is crying at the kitchen table.
- She doesn't respond when you ask her if she is ok.
- Her youngest two are running around and shouting.

Case Study 2

**A distressed client
at home...**



How would you use PFA?

Remember: LOOK

Case Study 2



After she does some grounding,

- She shares that her husband was supposed to reunite with their family this month but because of a recent travel ban, he is no longer able to come: *"I am so tired, and I feel so alone."*

Case Study 2

**A distressed client
at home...**



**How would you use
PFA?**

Remember: LISTEN & LINK

Self-Care

Be aware of how an individual interaction or community crisis is **impacting you** and **take steps to care for yourself**.

- Take time to nourish your body.
- Go for a short walk.
- Step away from the crisis.
- Maintain a regular routine for sleep and physical activity.
- Ask for support from your coworkers and supervisors as needed.
- Utilize breathing and grounding exercises.



Summary

Practicing PFA Together

- PFA is a tool that can be used **by anyone, with anyone.**
- Utilize the **3 Ls** to help **reduce stress and foster functioning and coping.**
- Be aware of how an individual interaction or community crisis is **impacting you** and **take steps to care for yourself.**



Check-out



1. Has this training **increased** your understanding of the core principles of **Psychological First Aid** (PFA)?
2. Has this training **increased** your **confidence** in how to apply them in immediate client interactions?
3. How **confident** do you feel **de-escalating** a client in crisis?

Questions?



References and Resources



- [Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care](#) (ITTIC)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC) [PFA Training](#) (Free, 30 Minutes)
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) Online Training](#) (Free, 5 Hours)
- Project HOPE (2024) [PFA Graphic](#)
- SAMHSA (2024) [Trauma Definition](#)
- Switchboard TA [A Trauma-Informed Approach to De-escalation and Crisis Response Video](#)
- Switchboard TA [Preventing Crises and De-escalating Difficult Situations with Newcomer Clients PDF](#)

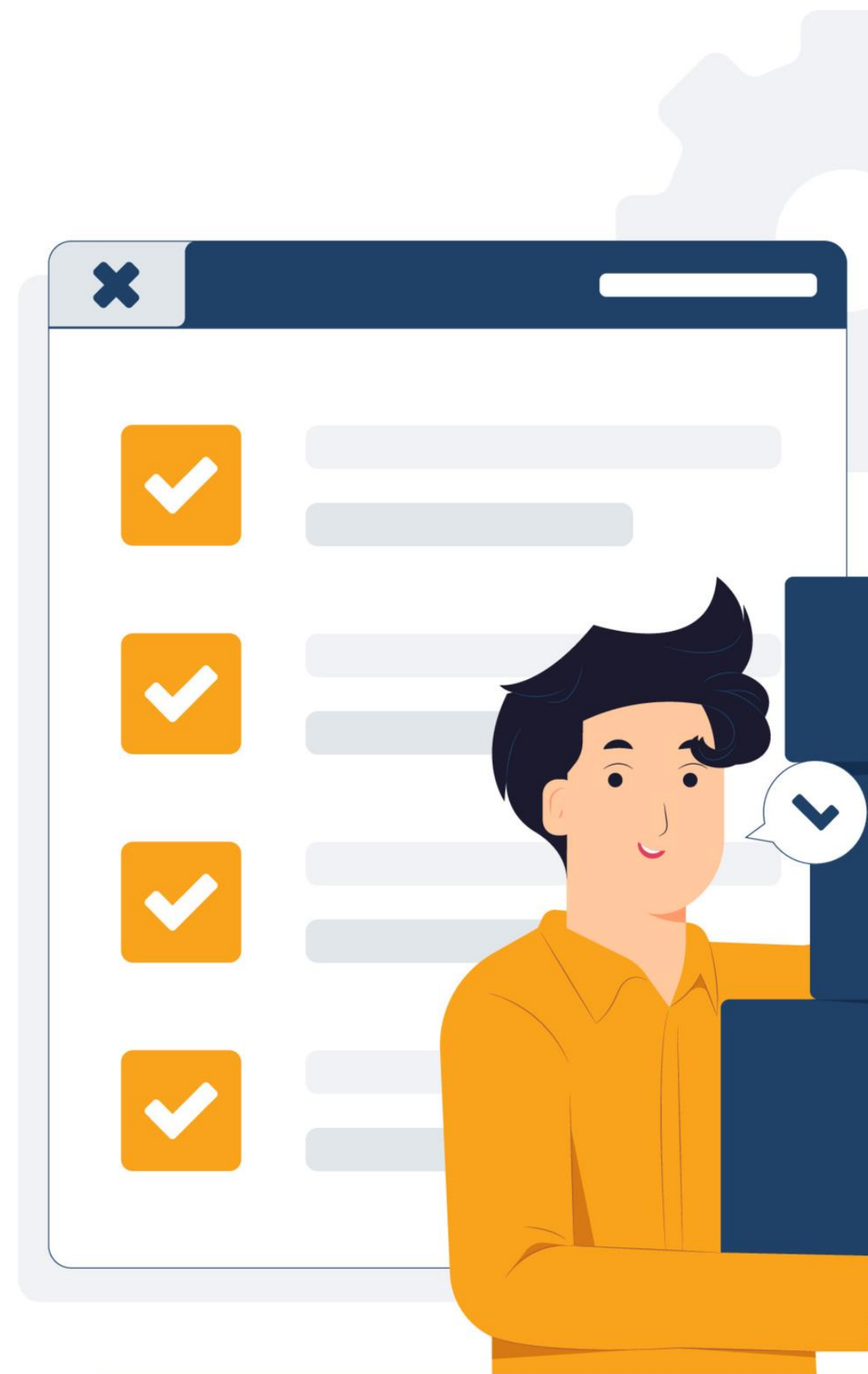
Complete a **Feedback SURVEY** about today's session & request future topics



Date	Topic	Designed For
June 26	(\$) Maximizing Impact	Direct Service Staff
July 17	(People) Tools for Distressed Clients	Direct Service Staff
Aug 21	(Magnifying Glass) Finding the Right Resource!	All

3rd Thursdays @ 10:00am

Next Steps



After this session you will receive:

- ✓ An email reminder of upcoming sessions
- ✓ Link to Support Guide for recording and slides
- ✓ Training Survey to provide feedback on today's session
 - Ask additional questions
 - Suggest future topics



FEEDBACK SURVEY
<https://bit.ly/CANPfeedback>

Thank you for attending

Agency Learning & Support Series

Email the hosts:

- CANEWCOMER@solveraconsult.com
- RPBTTAU@dss.ca.gov



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