

# INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE PRACTICES: HOW DO YOU DE-ESCALATE?

## SEL WITH BETTERLESSON AND JEWISH VALUES

### For Teachers, Coaches, and Leaders

Designed to equip educators with the skills to help students understand their emotional responses, navigate interpersonal relationships, and develop the decision-making skills and resilience needed to succeed in the classroom and beyond.



#### CREATING SAFE SPACES

**Outcome:** I cultivate emotional safety in my classroom.



#### DEVELOPING TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

**Outcome:** I recognize and respond to student needs.



#### DE-ESCALATION TACTICS AND MINDSETS

**Outcome:** I utilize de-escalation tactics and mindsets.



#### RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

**Outcome:** I use resilience and wellbeing strategies to build and maintain my own wellness in my classroom.



#### TRAUMA-INFORMED STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

**Outcome:** I create systems that enable teachers to use trauma-informed practices to support student learning.



#### POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SYSTEMS

**Outcome:** I create a classroom community that allows all students to experience success.

## LOOK

- Darting eyes
- Movement of hands/feet
- Stare into space
- Withdraw from group
- Passive non-compliance
- Paces
- Shakes
- Taps foot
- Becomes red in the face
- Refuses to follow directions
- Self-abuse
- Tantrums
- Hyperventilating
- Destroying property
- Physical assault

## SOUND

- Pencil-tapping
- Increased verbalization
- Speak in subdued tones
- Use few words
- Whining or crying may occur
- Loud noises
- Swears
- Engages in name calling
- Refuses to follow directions
- Screaming running

## TRIGGERS

- Provocation
- Conflict
- Aversive incidents
- Change in routine
- An interruption
- Academic demands
- Peer pressure
- Correction

## OTHER

- Time of day
- Place
- Activity type
- Unmet needs
- Delays
- Being ignored
- Being alone
- Style of adult interaction (personal space, body language, verbal tone and pace)

## FEEL

- A change from anxiety or fear-mediated behaviors to defensive withdrawal or aggressive, acting out behaviors
- More often students attempt to engage others by questioning, arguing and refusing
- Nervousness

# STAGES OF BEHAVIOR ESCALATION

(Colvin & Sugai, 1989)

	Calm	Trigger	Agitation	Acceleration
Description of Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Student is relatively calm and cooperative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Student experiences unresolved conflicts that trigger behavior to escalate</li> <li>* May displace anger on “safe target” (aide, teacher, parent)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Student is increasingly unfocused/upset</li> <li>* May exhibit avoidance</li> <li>* May challenge adult authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With conflict unresolved, this becomes student’s sole focus</li> <li>* May become noncompliant</li> <li>* May be beginning to lose rational thought</li> </ul>
Area(s) of Focus for Staff	<p>Focus on maintaining a clear, consistent environment and building rapport with the student</p>	<p>Focus on prevention and redirecting the student’s behavior</p>	<p>Focus on reducing student anxiety and increasing predictability in the student’s environment</p>	<p>Focus on maintaining a safe environment for yourself, the student in crisis and any observers</p>
Intervention Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Establish 3-5 behavioral expectations</li> <li>* Give student feedback using the 4 to 1 ratio (4 positives for every 1 corrective/negative)</li> <li>* Teach replacements for interfering behaviors</li> <li>* Precorrect problem situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Remove/adjust the trigger (if appropriate)</li> <li>* Use behavioral momentum to shape behavior and reinforce small efforts</li> <li>* Remind student of rewards (if used)</li> <li>* Remind student to use replacement skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Use non-confrontational non-verbal behavior</li> <li>* Break down directions into smaller steps</li> <li>* Use “start”, instead of “stop” directions</li> <li>* Provide reasonable options/choices</li> <li>* Use “Speak and Retreat” prompting</li> <li>* Set clear, reasonable, and enforceable limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Use short phrases and allow processing time</li> <li>* Maintain calmness and detachment</li> <li>* Use active listening, reflection and restatement to clarify student’s concerns and show you understand his/her feelings</li> </ul>

# STAGES OF BEHAVIOR ESCALATION

(Colvin & Sugai, 1989)

## Peak

## Deescalation

## Recovery

Description of Stage

\* Student is out of control and may have temporarily lost ability to think rationally  
\* Exhibits severe behavior (screaming, SIBs, aggression)

Having vented, the severity of student's behavior subsides  
\* Drop in energy level of student after a crisis

Students may feel shame, sorrow, fear, or regret  
\* May not be able to verbalize feelings/ details of outburst

Area(s) of Focus for Staff

\* Focus on crisis intervention procedures to maintain a safe environment for student in crisis, self and observers

\*Focus on removing excess attention, helping student regain composure and demonstrating cooperation with neutral requests

Focus on debriefing/ problem solving then transitioning student back to academics

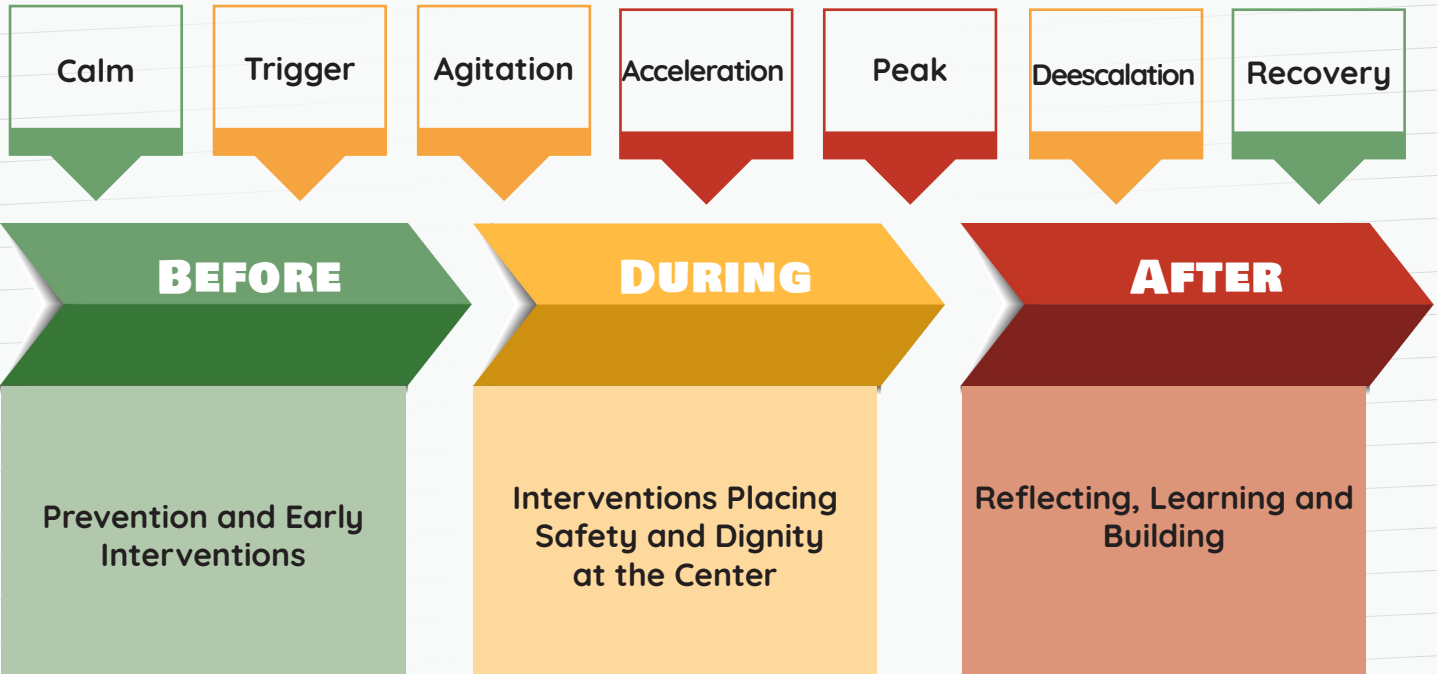
Intervention Tips

\* Isolate student by removing the audience  
\* Call for help/ staff witness if needed  
\* Don't threaten consequences now; discuss when the student is more rational

\*Allow Cool-Down time  
\* Make sure the student has regained control before proceeding; look for less tense appearance, normal breathing, and willingness to comply with small requests

\* Debrief before following through with consequences set earlier  
\* Problem solve and develop a plan with the student for better future behavior  
\* Remember to document the incident/event

# BREAKING BEHAVIOR DE-ESCALATION INTO 3 PHASES

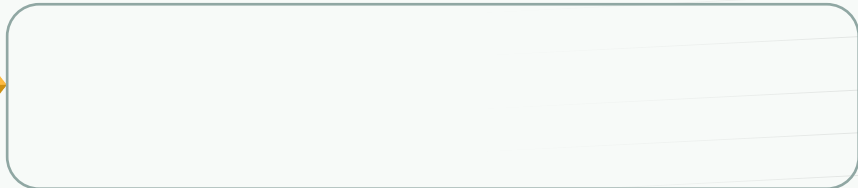


## MY DE-ESCALATION TACTICS:

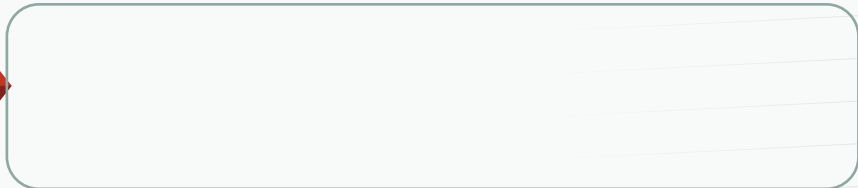
**BEFORE**



**DURING**



**AFTER**



# BREAKING BEHAVIOR DE-ESCALATION INTO PHASES USING JEWISH VALUES

Agitation



1 Kayin is agitated because his sacrifice is not as good as his brother's.



*וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו: בְּרֵאשִׁית דָּה: Genesis 4:5*

2 וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹהֵי קַיִן לָמָּה תָרַה לְךָ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָּנֶיךָ: הֲלוֹא אִם-תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת בְּרֵאשִׁית דָּו:

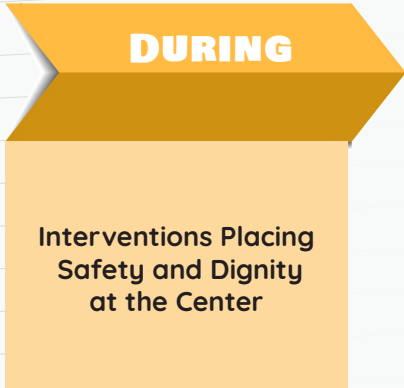
*And G-d says to Kayin: Why are you angry and downcast? If you improve, you will soar. Genesis 4:7*

3 G-d encourages Kayin and provides an opportunity to improve.



# BREAKING BEHAVIOR DE-ESCALATION INTO 3 PHASES USING JEWISH VALUES

Peak



1 וַיִּקַּם קַיִן אֶל-הָבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ: בְּרֵאשִׁית ה' ט  
*Kayin set upon his brother Abel and killed him.*  
*Genesis 4:9*

2 וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-קַיִן: אַי הָבֶל אָחִיךָ?  
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי אָנֹכִי:

*And G-d said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"*

3 נֵעַ וְנָדַד תִּהְיֶה בָּאָרֶץ: בְּרֵאשִׁית ד' יב  
*You shall become a ceaseless wanderer on earth.*  
*Genesis 4:12*

## SEL STRATEGIES:

- » G-d stays calm
- » Fosters responsibility
- » Frames the wrongdoing.

- » Provides consequences.





# BREAKING BEHAVIOR DE-ESCALATION INTO 3 PHASES USING JEWISH VALUES

Recovery



1 **וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל ה' גְּדוֹל עֲוֹנִי מִנְשָׂא:**  
*Kayin said to ה', "My sin is too great to bear!"*

2 **הִן גֵּרְשִׁיתָ אֹתִי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפְּנֵיהָ אֶסְתֵּר וְהִיְתִי נֹעַ וְנָדָד בָּאָרֶץ וְהָיָה כָּל־מוֹצְאֵי יְהַרְגֵנִי:**  
*But, You have banished me this day from the soil, and I will be estranged (distanced) from Your presence and become a restless wanderer on earth—anyone who meets me may kill me!"*

3 **וַיֹּאמֶר לֹה' לָכֵן כָּל־הַרְגֵּךְ קַיִן שִׁבְעָתַיִם יִקָּם וַיִּשֶׂם ה' לְקַיִן אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַכּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מוֹצְאוֹ:**  
*"I promise, if anyone kills Kayin, sevenfold vengeance shall be exacted." And ה' put a mark on Kayin, lest anyone who met him should kill him.*  
*Genesis 4: 13-15*

## SEL STRATEGIES:

- » G-d supports Kayin in processing his actions; does not accuse
- » Provide opportunity for reflection.
- » Provides a safe space for growth.
- » Reduces consequences.



**BEFORE**

## Prevention and Early Interventions

- » What are the shared expectations?
- » How are you responsible for your own decisions?
- » 2\*10: What positive language and context are there in the class?

**DURING**

## Interventions Placing Safety and Dignity at the Center

- » Find a calm & quiet place to talk.
- » Don't take it personally
- » Discover: What is happening? Can you identify what is wrong
- » What are next steps?

**AFTER**

## Reflecting, Learning and Building

- » State the facts: What happened?
- » What are the consequences of my behavior/actions?
- » How can I improve?

**BL STRATEGIES:**

I Wish My Teacher Knew...



Developing Norms



Sharing Classroom Ownership



Student Contracts



Creating Classroom Values



Difficult Conversations



De-Escalation



Empathy - Brene Brown



Tone of Voice Check



Use an Emotional Thermometer



Body Scan Meditation

"Tell me more so that I can better understand why you're upset."



Emoji Mood Meter

The next time you're feeling this way ...what can you tell yourself to take charge of your thinking, and behavior?



Self Awareness Moments



Group Work &amp; Self Reflection



Charting Positive Strengths



**BEFORE****Prevention and Early Interventions**

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- » How are you responsible for your own decisions?
- » 2\*10: What positive language and context are there in the class?

**DURING****Interventions Placing Safety and Dignity at the Center**

- » Find a calm & quiet place to talk.
- » Don't take it personally
- » Discover: What is happening? Can you identify what is wrong
- » What are next steps for responsible decision making?

**AFTER****Reflecting, Learning and Building**

- » State the facts: What happened?
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**BL STRATEGIES:**

- I Wish My Teacher Knew...
- Sharing classroom ownership
- Creating Classroom Values
- Developing Norms
- Student Contracts
- Difficult Conversations

- De-escalation
- Tone of Voice Check
- Body Scan Meditation
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- Use An Emotional Thermometer

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- Group Work & Self Reflection
- Charting Positive Strengths

"Tell me more so that I can better understand why you're upset."

The next time you're feeling this way ...what can you tell yourself to take charge of your thinking, and behavior?



# WHERE CAN WE FIND AN SEL DE-ESCALATION STRATEGY IN THE TORAH?

Let's look at an example in the story of קַיִן/Kayin.

Respond to 2 questions with a chavruta.



- . What phase does G-d express through de-escalation in dealing with Kayin's anger?
- . Of what does this remind you? in your educational environment?
- . See the Midrash on the previous card. Compare Kayin's growth process with Adam's. Who took responsibility? Who demonstrated personal growth? How?
- . In what other stories in Tanach do you find this process? Share your reflections and insights.



## SUGGESTIONS:

Use the Toolkit's materials to:

- » act out the scenes
- » check for understanding
- » share feelings (red = anger, green = de-escalation)

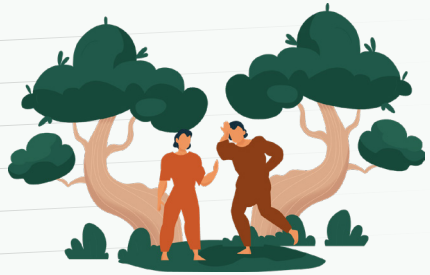
# INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE PRACTICES: SEL WITH BETTERLESSON AND JEWISH VALUES

## SEL IN MIDRASH

*Adam greeted Kayin as he was leaving his confrontation with G-d, and [asked];  
“What was the outcome of your judgment?”*

*Kayin replied:  
“I repented and G-d reduced my punishment.”*

*Adam hit his head and sighed:  
“Repentance is that powerful, and I didn’t know it?!”*



1  
מצאו אדם הראשון ואמר לו:  
”מה נעשה בדינך?”

2  
אמר לו קין:  
”עשיתי תשובה והשי”ת הקל מעלי ענשי”

3  
אז טפה אדם הראשון טפוחות בעצמו  
ואמר: ”וכל כך גדול כוחה של תשובה  
ואני לא ידעתי”

(ילקוט מעם לועז בראשית ד:טז)  
Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez; Genesis 4:16