DE-ESCALATING VIOLENCE: 8 BASIC RESPONSES

1. Don’t act frightened
   ▶ Don’t behave like a victim; demonstrate respect for yourself.
   ▶ Be gentle, but firm. Pleading induces more cruelty.

2. Don’t act frightening
   ▶ Speak to assailant as person of dignity.
   ▶ Become a person to the assailant. Humanize self and them (say "I"). Ask questions.
   ▶ If the victim is violent in return, the attacker feels justified.

3. Remain calm
   ▶ Breathe deeply. Keep your voice low.
   ▶ Silence disarms.

4. Watch body language - yours and assailant's
   ▶ Avoid sudden moves. Use slow and gentle hand movements
   ▶ Use non-threatening eye contact

5. Use the unexpected to create wonder
   ▶ Use humor, distraction, introduce yourself to the person, shake hands
   ▶ Interrupt the process somehow - i.e. by trying to sit down, offering coffee, etc.

6. Empathize
   ▶ Remember that the assailant has all the fear that you have

7. Know that the assailant is loved by God
   ▶ Violence is frustrated love; pay attention to the need for love.
   ▶ Trust that the person wants to act positively.

8. Allow a way out
   ▶ both physically, as in a door, and "saving face".

“Calming a potentially violent person is:
   56% facial expression & body language
   37% tone of voice
   07% what we say.”
   - J. Reuwer, MD

From CPT's first Peacemaker Corps Training