

# DSP Reality Check

A Behavioral Rehearsal (Role-Play) Guide for Real-World Readiness



They won't remember the rule—  
they'll remember the **rehearsal**.



**In high-stress situations, DSPs don't reach for written policies, nor do they have time to. They act on instinct. Instinct comes from lived experience. There's only one small problem with that - **they haven't lived this.****

**Behavioral rehearsal allows staff to feel the emotional weight of a scenario in a safe setting, so when the moment comes for real, they've already been there. **The body remembers what the brain forgets under pressure.****

**This is how we must train.**

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# What is Behavioral Rehearsal?

## Creating A Realistic, Low-Stakes Version of a High Stakes Moment

Behavioral Rehearsal is when a trainer and a new Direct Support Professional (DSP) act out real-life situations during training. The trainer chooses a realistic scenario that DSPs might face on the job—like a client refusing to take vital medications, becoming upset during a transition, or asking for something that crosses a boundary. **This guide contains 7 common situations that all DSPs should have rehearsal training on before they work with a client.** The guide keeps the situation focused on one specific challenge or skill, such as staying calm, setting limits, or using positive redirection.

From the outside, behavioral rehearsal may look like a simple role-play—but it's **much deeper than that**. It's a structured learning process where DSPs practice responding to realistic, emotionally charged scenarios they commonly face in the field. Participants act out scenes drawn from real life—like a client refusing care, becoming escalated, or testing professional boundaries—while a facilitator guides the process and offers supportive feedback.

What sets behavioral rehearsal apart is its **emotional authenticity**. It gives DSPs a chance to feel the discomfort, tension, or uncertainty of a situation in a safe setting, and to practice how to move through it with professionalism, empathy, and clarity. To an outside observer, the room may be filled with movement, raised voices, pauses, laughter, or even emotional moments. But what's really happening is deep, experiential learning. Staff aren't just memorizing procedures—they're rewiring their instincts, building confidence, and preparing their nervous systems to respond effectively in real life.

**This method recognizes that in moments of stress, people don't recall policies—they recall experiences. Behavioral rehearsal gives DSPs those experiences in advance, so when the real thing happens, they're already equipped—not just with knowledge, but with practiced, embodied skill.**

This guide will instruct you to assign roles: one person plays the DSP (usually this is your new staff - getting a feel for what it would be like to have to have these particular types of conversations), another plays the client (usually this is another experienced DSP who has real-life experience with these types of conversations, but often its the facilitator). The facilitator sets the scene by describing what's happening, then the DSP responds in real time while the facilitator stays in character. After the short scene plays out, the group pauses to reflect on what went well, what was challenging, and what could be done differently. This kind of practice helps DSPs **feel the emotional reality of the moment**, so when the real situation comes up later, they've already walked through it—and they'll know what to do.



# Why Behavioral Rehearsal Matters

(And How to Overcome the Awkwardness)



If you've ever seen one of your DSPs frozen in a stressful moment, second-guessed their instincts, or thought, "I wish they knew what to do," then you already understand why **Behavioral Rehearsal** (role-play) is one of the **most effective ways** to prepare them for the job of a Direct Support Professional (DSP).

**Here's the truth:** The work of a DSP isn't theoretical—it's real, unpredictable, and deeply human. DSPs will be placed in **high-pressure situations**, and the more **prepared they are before they happen**, the better they handle them.

Behavioral Rehearsal helps **bridge the gap between knowledge and action**. It rewires a DSP's reflexes, so instead of **panicking or hesitating**, their body and mind instinctively respond the right way. It's like muscle memory but **for crisis prevention, problem-solving, and professional boundaries**.

***"But role-playing feels awkward..."***

Yep. It does. But so does **not knowing what to do in a real emergency**. The goal isn't to be a great actor—it's to train a DSP's instincts so that when they're faced with a **seizure, a behavioral crisis, or an ethical dilemma**, they're not experiencing it for the first time when it actually matters.

So take a deep breath, help them lean into the discomfort (lean into the discomfort yourself), and **embrace the learning experience**. Because the people you support deserve staff who are truly ready. And **DSPs deserve to feel confident in their role**.



# The Power of Practice

## Why Supported Living Providers Should Use Behavioral Rehearsal with DSPs

In the fast-paced, emotionally complex world of supported living, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are the heart and soul of quality care. These professionals are often the first to respond to crises, navigate emotional and behavioral challenges, and provide comfort and connection for the people they support. Yet, many agencies rely solely on theoretical training—written modules, lectures, or compliance-based learning—expecting DSPs to immediately **translate knowledge into action**. This expectation overlooks a critical truth: **people learn best by doing**. That's why supported living providers must integrate behavioral rehearsal into their training programs. Behavioral rehearsal transforms passive learning into experiential growth, allowing DSPs to rehearse real-life challenges, strengthen emotional intelligence, and build the confidence needed to navigate their work with skill and grace.

### 1. Practice Makes Permanent, Not Just Perfect

Imagine a DSP encountering a client who becomes escalated and begins yelling. Without prior experience or practice, the DSP might freeze, say something that unintentionally triggers the person further, or handle the situation inconsistently with agency values. Now imagine that same DSP having engaged in behavioral rehearsal during training—**practicing calm responses, de-escalation techniques, and empathetic listening**. The result is dramatically different: not only are they prepared, but they respond with professionalism, emotional maturity, and confidence. Behavioral rehearsal solidifies best practices by embedding them into **muscle memory**. In high-stakes moments, **practiced behaviors are more likely to emerge than those merely read about**.

### 2. Building Emotional Intelligence in Real Time

DSPs need more than just technical knowledge—they need finely tuned emotional intelligence. Behavioral rehearsal provides a safe environment to practice emotionally charged interactions without real-world consequences. They can experiment with tone, body language, and word choices while receiving feedback that helps them self-correct and grow. Whether it's learning how to support someone through a panic attack or understanding when to give space vs. provide comfort, behavioral rehearsal allows DSPs to reflect, adjust, and deepen their emotional insight. **The emotional regulation and awareness practiced through rehearsal directly improves both staff performance and client outcomes**.

### 3. Confidence Through Repetition

The number one indicator of effective performance is confidence—not arrogance, but the quiet self-trust that arises from preparedness. When DSPs rehearse challenging conversations—like setting healthy boundaries, advocating for a client's needs, or addressing inappropriate behavior with respect—they're no longer "hoping" to do well—they **know how to do well**. That kind of confidence isn't built from reading a handbook—it's **earned through doing, failing, trying again, and succeeding in a safe and supportive space**. As a result, DSPs walk into their roles not with fear, but with assurance and purpose.

#### 4. Standardizing Quality and Culture

Behavioral rehearsal ensures consistency across teams. It's one thing to tell a DSP how to redirect a client or follow safety protocols—it's another to watch them do it and provide real-time coaching. This consistency helps to align DSP actions with agency values and mission. It also gives supervisors a clear view of who needs more support and where strengths lie, which informs better team-building and mentorship. Over time, this creates a unified culture where everyone knows what "doing it right" looks like—and how to get there.

#### 5. A Cost-Effective Investment in Retention and Growth

Many agencies struggle with high turnover rates. One major factor? DSPs feeling overwhelmed and underprepared. When agencies invest in hands-on behavioral rehearsal, they send a powerful message: We care about your success. **DSPs who feel equipped and supported are more likely to stay, grow, and thrive in their roles.** Behavioral rehearsal costs little and offers a powerful return: improved performance, reduced crisis interventions, better relationships, and higher retention. It's not just training—it's workforce development.

Supported living is not a job for the unprepared. It demands deep presence, emotional skill, and relational intelligence. Behavioral rehearsal gives DSPs the opportunity to rehearse their reactions, refine their approach, and discover their strengths before they are put to the test. **For supported living providers committed to excellence, behavioral rehearsal is not optional—it's essential.** If we want our DSPs to be emotionally strong, ethically grounded, and professionally equipped, we must **give them the gift of practice.**

**Let's stop hoping DSPs will rise to the occasion.  
Let's train them to own it.**



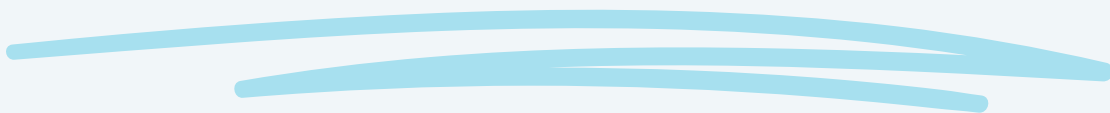
# Basic Structure of Behavioral Rehearsal

Practical "How-To" for Setting Up Behavioral Rehearsal Training Sessions

**You only need 2 people to start a behavioral rehearsal, (but we recommend doing this in larger groups):**

1. **DSP / Trainee** – The person practicing the skill (they play themselves in given situations).
2. **Client Actor** – A participant who plays the role of the client. Often this is the trainer, but other seasoned DSPs or supervisors can also play this role. This must be someone who understands the vision for the exercise and can either escalate or deescalate the client role at the appropriate times in order to provide the maximum range of skill practice.

If you have someone who can play the client role during the rehearsal then the **Facilitator / Coach** doesn't have to play double duty and play the client role as well. In fact, they can more easily guide the experience, pauses for teachable moments, and offer feedback.



## 1. Set the Scene (2–5 minutes)

The facilitator explains:

- The **objective** of the rehearsal (e.g., practicing de-escalation, giving feedback, responding to a boundary issue - explain the specific skill to be practiced).
- The **context** of the scenario (e.g., "You're at the group home during a transition from dinner to bedtime, and the client refuses to go to their room." This sets up a real-life, but simulated experience for the DSP)
- The **roles** that each participant will take. (Usually the trainer or facilitator will take the client role and the DSP will play themselves.

## 2. Act It Out (1–4 minutes)

- Participants enact the scenario as realistically as possible.
- The facilitator watches closely, noting strengths and areas for coaching.
- Participants are encouraged to stay in character and respond naturally.

## 3. Pause and Reflect (3–5 minutes)

- After the scenario, the facilitator stops the action.
- The group debriefs:
  - What went well?
  - What could have been done differently?
  - How did the DSP feel during the interaction?
  - How might the client have felt?

## 3. Pause and Reflect (3–5 minutes)

- Option 1: Run the same scenario again with adjusted responses.
- Option 2: Let a different participant try the same scenario, applying what they just observed.





# Trainer/Facilitator Preparation

What To Do Beforehand to Create Impactful Behavioral Rehearsal Trainings

To make the rehearsal impactful and smooth, the facilitator should:

## 1. Define the Learning Objective

- Choose one core skill or situation to focus on (e.g., “Responding calmly to verbal aggression,” or “Redirecting without power struggles”).

## 2. Write or Outline the Scenario

- It doesn't have to be scripted, but it should be realistic and detailed enough to guide behavior (**there are 7 written for you later in this guide**).
- Example:
  - Client refuses to come inside after an outing.
  - They are pacing, swearing under their breath, and avoiding eye contact.
  - Your goal: help them transition inside without power struggles or escalating the situation.

## 3. Decide on Coaching Points

- Identify what success looks like.
- Prepare a few key coaching questions to guide discussion afterward:
  - What did you notice about your body language?
  - What part of this felt most difficult for you?
  - If you could try again, what would you change?

## 4. Set Expectations for Psychological Safety

- Tell participants: **“This is a learning space. Mistakes are expected and welcomed—we grow through practice, not perfection.”**
- Remind everyone to give feedback kindly and constructively.



# Overcoming Embarrassment in Role-Playing

If a group is hesitant, there are ways to ease them into it. You can **start with group discussions of scenarios before role playing** or have them work in pairs before performing in front of a group.

Since many trainees feel awkward or skeptical about role-playing, **here's how to break down those barriers:**

## ✓ Normalize Role-Playing as a Learning Tool

- **Acknowledge the Awkwardness Upfront** – Say something like: *"I know this can feel a little silly at first, but trust me—it's better to feel awkward in training than to feel unprepared in a real-life situation."*
- **Emphasize that it's not about acting**—it's about practicing responses in a safe space.
- **Make it a team activity** – Instead of isolating one DSP, involve everyone in discussions and feedback.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR  
TEAMS JUST STARTING

## ✓ Create a Judgment-Free Environment

- **Start with a Trainer Demonstration** – Do this practice with two trainers so that a trainer plays the DSP role with the other trainer playing the client first - showing that it's okay to make mistakes.
- **Encourage Laughter—But Keep it Productive** – If people laugh from awkwardness, acknowledge it, then refocus: *"Yes, this feels weird, but let's push through because this could save someone's life."*
- **Praise Effort Over Perfection** – Reinforce participation instead of "right answers" to build confidence.

## ✓ Address Skepticism Head-On

If trainees don't see the value in role-playing, here's how to shift their mindset:

- **Skeptic's Thought:** "I'll never actually be in this situation."
- **Trainer's Response:** "We hear that a lot, but every experienced DSP has stories that started with 'I never thought this would happen to me'—until it did."
- **Skeptic's Thought:** "I already know what to do."
- **Trainer's Response:** "Knowing something in theory is different than reacting under pressure. This practice helps your body and brain work together instinctively when it really counts."
- **Skeptic's Thought:** "This is too embarrassing."
- **Trainer's Response:** "That's exactly why we do this here. If you freeze up, forget what to do, or say the wrong thing, no one gets hurt. That's not the case in real life."



# To The Person Playing the Client Role

You're Building Skills for DSPs That Make a REAL Difference

Role playing helps develop so many important skills for DSPs. Especially those who don't have experience in their role or even very much life experience at all. DSPs who are parents sometimes have a more intuitive feel for how to respond in challenging scenarios, but those who aren't parents have probably never been responsible to support another human being before. To them, these skills aren't "common sense" at all. Providing them with these role playing scenarios will **give them a taste of what it FEELS like to be in those scenarios** so that it doesn't feel as shocking the first time it happens in the field with a person they are supporting.



## When done well, the person playing the client helps DSPs:

1

### Develop Empathy

DSPs develop empathy by experiencing how DSP actions feel from the client perspective.

2

### Think Critically

DSPs think critically by being forced to adapt in real time instead of relying on scripted responses.

3

### Build Confidence

DSPs build confidence through practicing and failing safely - rather than freezing up in a real situation.

4

### Improve Communication Skills

Communication skills are improved through training that helps them learn to pick up on non-verbal cues, emotions and behaviors.

# The Client Role is the KEY to Effective Training

It Isn't About Acting - It's About Creating a Realistic Experience

## 1. Avoid Overacting

This isn't a stage play - it should feel as real as possible. If the person playing the client is too dramatic, it can distract from the learning process. Over-the-top acting can also make scenarios feel unrealistic, which causes the DSP to dismiss it as exaggerated or irrelevant. When overacting happens, DSPs may just react to the theatrics rather than actually learning how to assess and respond to behaviors appropriately.

**OVERACTING:** (flips chair, screams) "I HATE YOU! I'M GOING TO BREAK EVERYTHING!!!"

**REALISTIC:** (Crosses arms, raises voice slightly) "I don't want to do that right now. Leave me alone."

## 2. Gradually Escalate

Many crisis situations build gradually—they don't always start as full-blown emergencies. If DSPs learn to recognize early warning signs, they can intervene sooner to prevent escalation. If role-playing jumps straight to the extreme, DSPs miss the chance to practice de-escalation techniques.

**Example of Gradual Escalation in a Scenario:**

**Step 1:** (Mild resistance) Client shrugs and says, "Not right now."

**Step 2:** (Increased resistance) Client turns away and says, "I said I don't want to."

**Step 3:** (Higher resistance) Client raises voice slightly: "I told you to LEAVE ME ALONE!"

**Step 4:** (Full crisis, only if needed) Client throws an object or walks away forcefully.

**Goal:** If the DSP uses effective de-escalation skills early, the scenario should resolve before reaching Step 4.


## 3. Provide Post-Scenario Feedback

Experiencing a scenario isn't enough—DSPs need reflection and coaching to reinforce learning. Without feedback, DSPs won't know what they did well or what to improve. Feedback helps DSPs process emotions—role-playing can be intense and sometimes discouraging if they struggled.

**Example of Effective vs. Ineffective Feedback:**

**Ineffective:** "You need to do better next time."

**Effective:** "You started off great by using a calm voice, but when they resisted a second time, you repeated your request instead of offering choices. Next time, try saying, 'Would you rather do it now or after lunch?' instead."

 *Role playing helped me think ahead about things that could happen and come up with responses that I could actually use when I need to.*





# How to Use The Following Scenario Pages

The Scenario Pages Follow a Particular Pattern

The Behavioral Rehearsal pages ahead have scripts with helpful common scenarios for use in Behavioral Rehearsal practice. The following is the pattern used in those scripts: Scenario Briefing, Client Role Script & DSP Action Goals pattern.

## A Scenario Briefing

### Builds Context & Preparedness

**WHY?** DSPs need to understand **why** a situation is happening before they can respond correctly.

#### WHAT IT DOES:

- Sets the scene with **realistic details** so DSPs can **mentally prepare**.
- Helps DSPs **anticipate** what challenges might arise.
- Trains **situational awareness** - a critical skill for recognizing early warning signs before a situation escalates.

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## Client Role Script

### Provides Realistic Experience

**WHY?** Many DSPs **freeze up** in stressful situations because they've never **experienced** them before.

#### WHAT IT DOES:

- Forces DSPs to **engage with a real-time, dynamic scenario**.
- Ensures the person role-playing **gradually escalates the situation** (rather than going straight to crisis mode).
- Gives DSPs the opportunity to **make mistakes in a safe environment** and learn from them.

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## DSP Action Goals

### Reinforces Best Practices & Decision-Making

**WHY?** Many DSPs are given generic policies instead of practical step-by-step guidance on what to do.

#### WHAT IT DOES:

- Provides a **clear set of response strategies** that DSPs can **practice** and **apply in the field**.
- Emphasizes **why** each action is important.
- Reinforces **core principles** like **autonomy, dignity, and crisis prevention**.



# Scenario 1: Medical Emergency - Seizure

## Briefing:

You are working a shift at a residential home when one of the individuals you support suddenly falls to the ground and begins convulsing. You have never witnessed a seizure before and need to act quickly to ensure their safety. Your role in this scenario is to remain calm, follow the correct emergency procedures, and ensure the individual receives the care they need.



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### Client Role Script:

- *Sit at the table, then stiffen up and fall to the side (gently).*
- *Your arms and legs jerk rhythmically for about 30 seconds.*
- *After the seizure, you seem confused and tired—you don't respond for a moment.*
- *Slur your words and act dazed as you slowly regain awareness.*

### DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Stay calm and ensure the environment is safe.
- ✓ Turn the person on their side to prevent choking.
- ✓ Do NOT put anything in their mouth or restrain them.
- ✓ Time the seizure—if it lasts longer than 5 minutes, call 911.
- ✓ Provide reassurance after the seizure and document the event.

# Scenario 2: Aggressive Behavior & Crisis Management

## Briefing:

A person in your care has become frustrated after being told that their favorite activity has been canceled. They begin yelling and hitting objects around them. Your job in this scenario is to use de-escalation techniques, maintain a safe environment, and support the person in calming down while respecting their autonomy.



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### Client Role Script:

- *You are feeling frustrated and start pacing.*
- *When the DSP asks if you're okay, you snap, "Leave me alone!"*
- *If they keep pushing, you escalate—raise your voice, stomp your foot, or slap a nearby object (but not people).*
- *If they give you space and talk calmly, you slowly de-escalate and eventually sit down.*

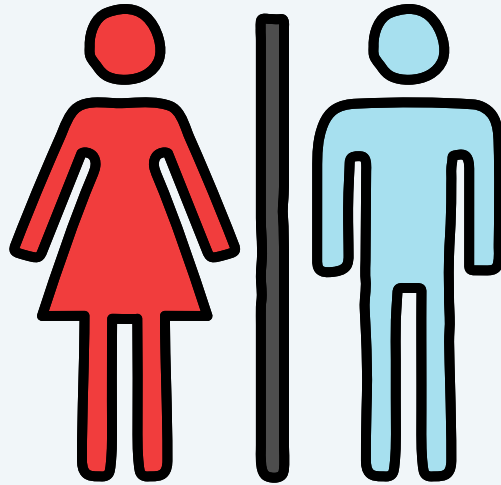
### DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Recognize early signs of escalation and avoid making it worse.
- ✓ Use calm, non-threatening body language (don't hover or raise your voice).
- ✓ Offer space and avoid power struggles.
- ✓ Redirect with choices (e.g., "Do you want to take a walk or sit down?").
- ✓ Call for help if safety becomes a concern.

# Scenario 3: Personal Care Assistance

## Briefing:

You are asked to assist a person with toileting and hygiene for the first time. They refuse, insisting they can do it alone. You don't want to force them, but you also know they need help.



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### Client Role Script:

- Say, "I don't need help! I can do it myself!"
- If the DSP pushes too hard, get upset: "You're not listening to me!"
- If they respectfully ask and offer choices, say, "Okay, but I feel nervous."

### DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Ask permission and provide choices (e.g., "Would you like my help now or in 5 minutes?").
- ✓ Maintain privacy and dignity (close doors, provide a towel for coverage, etc.).
- ✓ Use encouraging language rather than commands.
- ✓ Never force assistance—use positive reinforcement and patience.



# Scenario 4: Elopement (Running Away)

## Briefing:

You are supporting an individual in the community when they suddenly bolt in the opposite direction toward a busy street. Do you chase them?



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### Client Role Script:

(This scenario works best when the trainees actually get to role-play this outside. Even if you use the space just outside your office, let them walk through what it would feel like to be in this situation.)

- *Act restless, shifting your weight or fidgeting.*
- *Suddenly turn and speed-walk away.*
- *If the DSP chases you, run faster.*
- *If they call your name calmly and redirect you, slow down and stop.*

### Also practice group scenarios:

- *Stray far from the group and show no indication of returning.*

### DSP Action Goals:

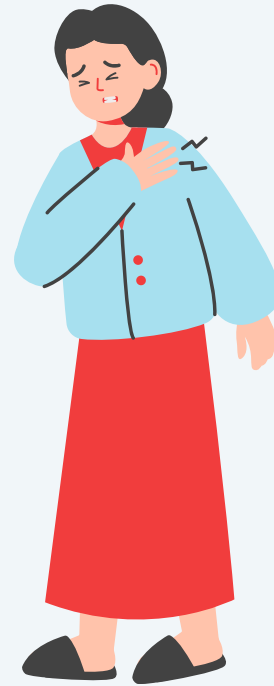
- ✓ Do NOT chase—use calm redirection instead.
- ✓ Use a clear, firm voice but don't yell or panic.
- ✓ Offer a reason to return (e.g., "Let's go get your favorite snack.").
- ✓ Stay between them and traffic while guiding them back.



# Scenario 5: Mental Health Crisis (Panic Attack)

## Briefing:

An individual suddenly clutches their chest, breathing fast, saying, "I can't breathe." You've never dealt with a panic attack before.



### Client Role Script:

- *Start breathing fast and shaking your hands.*
- *Say, "I can't breathe. Something is wrong."*
- *If the DSP ignores you or says "Just calm down," panic more.*
- *If they coach your breathing, slowly start to relax.*

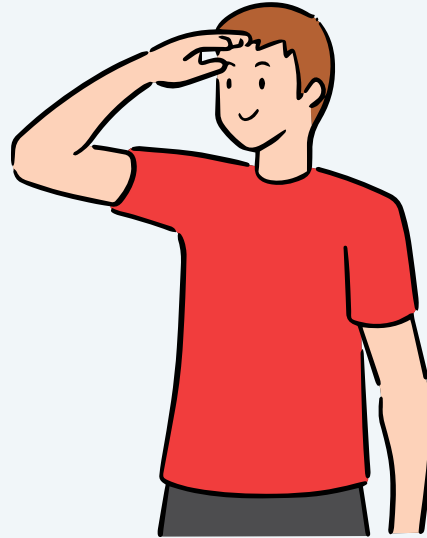
### DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Speak calmly and reassuringly ("You're safe. I'm here with you.").
- ✓ Guide them in breathing techniques (e.g., "Breathe in for four, out for four.").
- ✓ Use grounding techniques (e.g., "Can you name five things you see?").

# Scenario 6: Checking In Without Being Intrusive

## Briefing:

You are supporting an individual who has been in their room alone for a while. You have a feeling they may need support, but you don't want to invade their privacy. Do you check on them or assume they'll come to you if they need help?



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### Client Role Script:

- Stay in your room with the door partially open or closed.
- If the DSP never checks in, stay withdrawn and act increasingly upset when you do interact.
- If the DSP barges in without permission, act defensive and say, *"I need space!"*
- If the DSP knocks and asks gently, pause, then say something subtle like, *"I don't know... I just feel kind of off."*
- If they ask an open-ended question, like *"Want to talk or just want company?"* respond positively.

### DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Trust your instincts—if someone is isolated, check in.
- ✓ Knock first and ask for permission before entering.
- ✓ Use open-ended questions instead of assumptions (e.g., "Need anything?" vs. "Are you okay?").
- ✓ Respect privacy but also recognize isolation as a potential sign of distress.
- ✓ Offer companionship without pressure (e.g., "I'm making tea—want to join me?").

# Scenario 7: Respecting Choice While Encouraging Follow-Through

## Briefing:

You are supporting an individual who has a scheduled task to complete—a chore, daily living skill, or program goal. You prompt them, but they decline. You wait and try again later, but they decline again. Time passes, and they refuse a third time. How do you balance respecting choice with ensuring participation and responsibility?



## Client Role Script:

- When the DSP first prompts you to complete a task (e.g., taking out the trash, practicing budgeting, or working on a skill), respond with **mild resistance**:  
*"Not right now. I'll do it later."*
- The second time they ask, **delay again**:  
*"I'm too tired. Maybe tomorrow."*
- The third time, **be firmer** but not aggressive:  
*"No, I don't want to."*
- If the DSP **gives up**, do nothing.
- If the DSP gets **pushy**, act **frustrated or shut down**.
- If the DSP **gets creative with incentives, breaks the task into steps, or makes it more engaging, consider participating** but still **express hesitation first** to see how they respond.

## DSP Action Goals:

- ✓ Acknowledge the first refusal without forcing the issue ("Okay, let me know if you need help when you're ready.").
- ✓ Observe patterns—is this a sign of avoidance, disinterest, or something deeper?
- ✓ Change the approach if refusals persist:
  - Offer choices: "Would you rather do this now or after lunch?"
  - Reframe the task: "Let's set a 5-minute timer and just start—if you still don't want to, we'll stop."
  - Use motivation tools: "If we finish this, we'll have time for your favorite activity after!"
- ✓ Avoid power struggles—remain calm and solution-focused.
- ✓ If refusal persists, document it and communicate with the support team about possible barriers (fatigue, avoidance, lack of understanding, etc.).

# Role Play Trainer Cheat Sheet

Use this one page cheat sheet in trainings to remind you which role plays to get through. It's STRONGLY encouraged that you practice playing the role of the client with another professional colleague prior to using them with DSPs. DSPs will mirror the comfort level of the trainer when participating in these role-play scenarios. If you are good at playing the role of the client, this training will be a gift of confidence to DSPs and a powerful tool for retention for your agency.

Trainer/Client Role	A+ DSP Responses
Medical Emergency - Seizure <i>SIMULATE SEIZURE, ACT CONFUSED, SLUR WORDS</i>	stay calm, turn on side, time it, call 911
Aggressive Behavior & Crisis Management <i>PACING, SNAPPING, RAISING VOICE, HITTING THINGS</i>	stay calm, offer space, redirect, call for help if needed
Personal Care Assistance <i>REFUSE HELP, GET UPSET, SHOW NERVOUSNESS</i>	ask permission, maintain privacy, never force
Elopement (Running Away) <i>FISGETING, WALKING AWAY, RUN</i>	redirection, reason to return, safety
Mental Health Crisis (Panic Attack) <i>BREATHE FAST, PANIC</i>	calm, reassuring, breathing, grounding
Checking In Without Being Intrusive <i>ISOLATE, BE DEFENSIVE, ESCALATE/DE-ESCALATE DEPENDING ON RESPONSE</i>	trust instincts, knock, ask, offer
Encouraging Follow-Through <i>RESIST, DELAY, BE FIRMER, SHUT DOWN</i>	observe patterns, adjust approach, reframe tasks

**Role-playing isn't just practice—it's preparation for real-life situations that DSPs will face. The goal? By the time it happens for real, it won't feel like the first time. Now, let's train these like lives depend on it—because they do.**

# Certificate

## OF COMPLETION

This certifies that

\_\_\_\_\_ has successfully completed hands-on, scenario-based training in Direct Support Professional (DSP) role-playing exercises, demonstrating:

**Crisis Readiness** – The ability to recognize and respond to medical emergencies, behavioral challenges, and ethical dilemmas.

**De-escalation & Conflict Resolution** – Effective use of calming techniques, communication strategies, and problem-solving skills.

**Person-Centered Support** – Maintaining dignity, autonomy, and respect while assisting individuals with disabilities.

**Professional Decision-Making** – Handling high-pressure situations with confidence, ethical judgment, and adaptability.

By completing this training, \_\_\_\_\_ has shown dedication to excellence in direct support services and a commitment to providing safe, compassionate, and effective care.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**PROGRAM DIRECTOR**



\_\_\_\_\_  
**QIDP**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**COMPLETION DATE**