



Preventing and Defusing us Acting-Out Behavior in the Classroom

Presented by

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Example

Acting-Out Behavior

- During independent work in math, students are expected to complete problems that were assigned in the previous class. One student, Michael, is sitting slouched in his seat, feet stretched out, head down staring at the floor and looking very serious. The successive interactions are presented along with a brief description of the teacher and student's behavior.

Teacher

“Michael, it is time to get started with your math.”

“The math you didn’t finish this morning.”

“Well let me see your work please.”

“Good you have done four problems but you need to do ten.”

I announced that at the beginning of class yesterday.”

“Michael, look at the board. See under assignment, one through ten.”

Michael

“What math?”

“I did finish it!”

Michael leans back.

“When did we have to do ten?”

“I don’t remember that!”

“Well that’s the first time I’ve seen it.”

Example Continued

Teacher

“Look Michael. This has gone far enough. You need to finish the rest of your assignment. So please get on with it.”

“OK. Here is your choice. Do the math now or you will have to do it in detention.”

“That’s verbal abuse. I will now do an office referral.”

“Alright. It’s to the Office.” Nudges student on the elbow.

Teacher follows emergency procedures and calls for help resulting in student being escorted to the Office.

Michael

“No way. I’m done!”

“F... you.”

Throws book across the room.

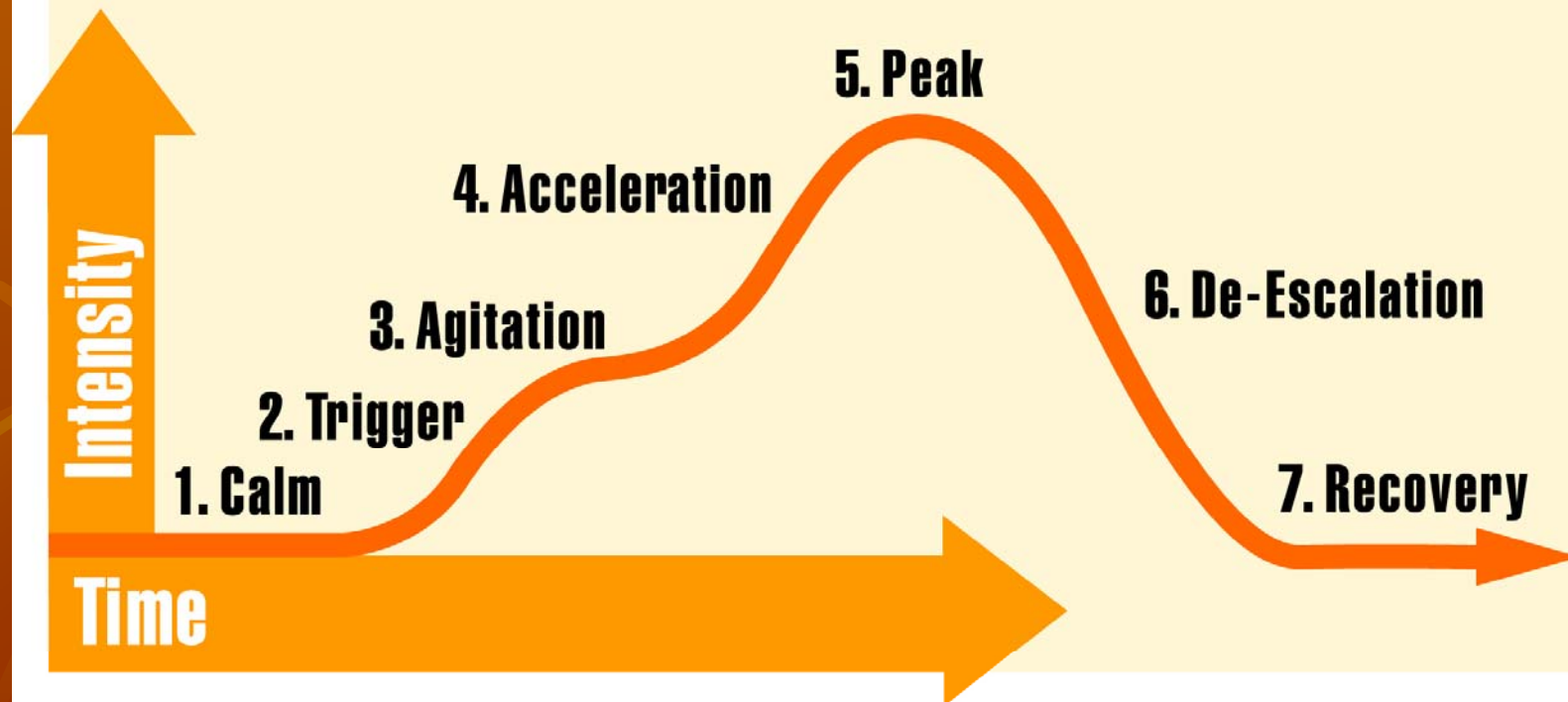
Swings arm in direction of teacher and makes solid contact with teacher’s arm.

Key Elements

- Pre-requisite academic skills.
- Signs of agitation
- Presence of an escalating behavior chain.
- Presence of successive interactions.

Model for Escalating Behavior Chain

Phases of Acting-Out Behavior



Part One: Model

Phase One: *Calm*

- **On-task**
- **Follows rules and expectations**
- **Responsive to praise**
- **Initiates behavior**
- **Goal oriented**
- **Socially appropriate**



Summary: Phase 1

CALM



Overall Behavior
Student is *COOPERATIVE*

Phase Two: *Triggers/Antecedents*

School-Based

- Conflicts
- Denial of something needed
- Something negative is inflicted
- Changes in routine
- Provocations
- Pressure
- Interruptions
- Ineffective problem-solving
- Academic errors
- Corrections



Summary: Phase 2

TRIGGERS



Overall Behavior
Series of Unresolved Problems

Phase Three: *Agitation*

Increase in Behavior

- Eyes dart
- Language non-conversational
- Busy hands
- In and out of group
- Off-task/On-task

Decrease in Behavior

- Stares into space
- Language subdued
- Hands contained
- Withdraws from group
- Off-task, “Frozen”

Summary: Phase 3

AGITATION



Overall Behavior

Student is ***UNFOCUSED OR NON-DIRECTED***

Phase Four: *Acceleration*

- Questioning & arguing
- Non-compliance & defiance
- Off-task
- Provoking students
- Compliance with accompanying inappropriate behaviors



- Criterion problems
- Whining & crying
- Avoidance & escape
- Threats & intimidation
- Verbal abuse

Summary: Phase 4 ACCELERATION



Overall Behavior
Behavior is **DIRECTED & ENGAGING**

Phase Five: *Peak*

- Serious destruction of property
- Assault
- Self-abuse
- Severe tantrums
- Hyperventilation
- Screaming, running, violence



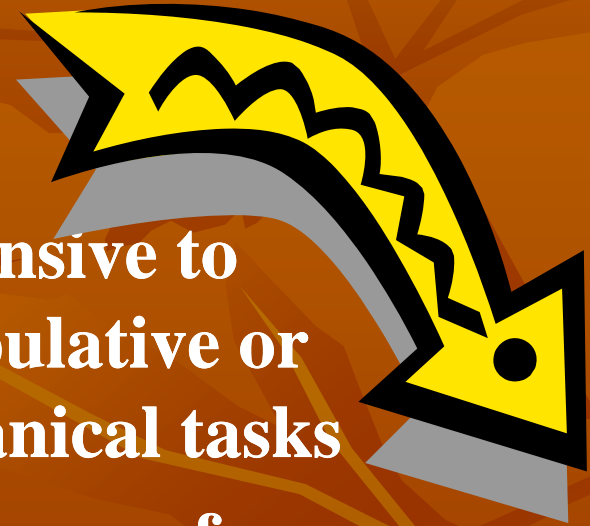
Summary: Phase 5 Peak



Overall Behavior
Student is out of control creating safety concerns

Phase Six: De-escalation

- **Confusion**
- **Reconciliation**
- **Withdrawal**
- **Denial**
- **Blaming others**
- **Sleeping**
- **Responsive to directions**
- **Responsive to manipulative or mechanical tasks**
- **Avoidance of discussion (unless there is occasion to blame others)**



Summary: Phase 6 DE-ESCALATION



Overall Behavior
Student displays confused behavior

Phase 7: RECOVERY

- Eagerness for independent work or study
- Subdued in group work
- Subdued in class discussions
- Defensive
- Avoidance of debriefing



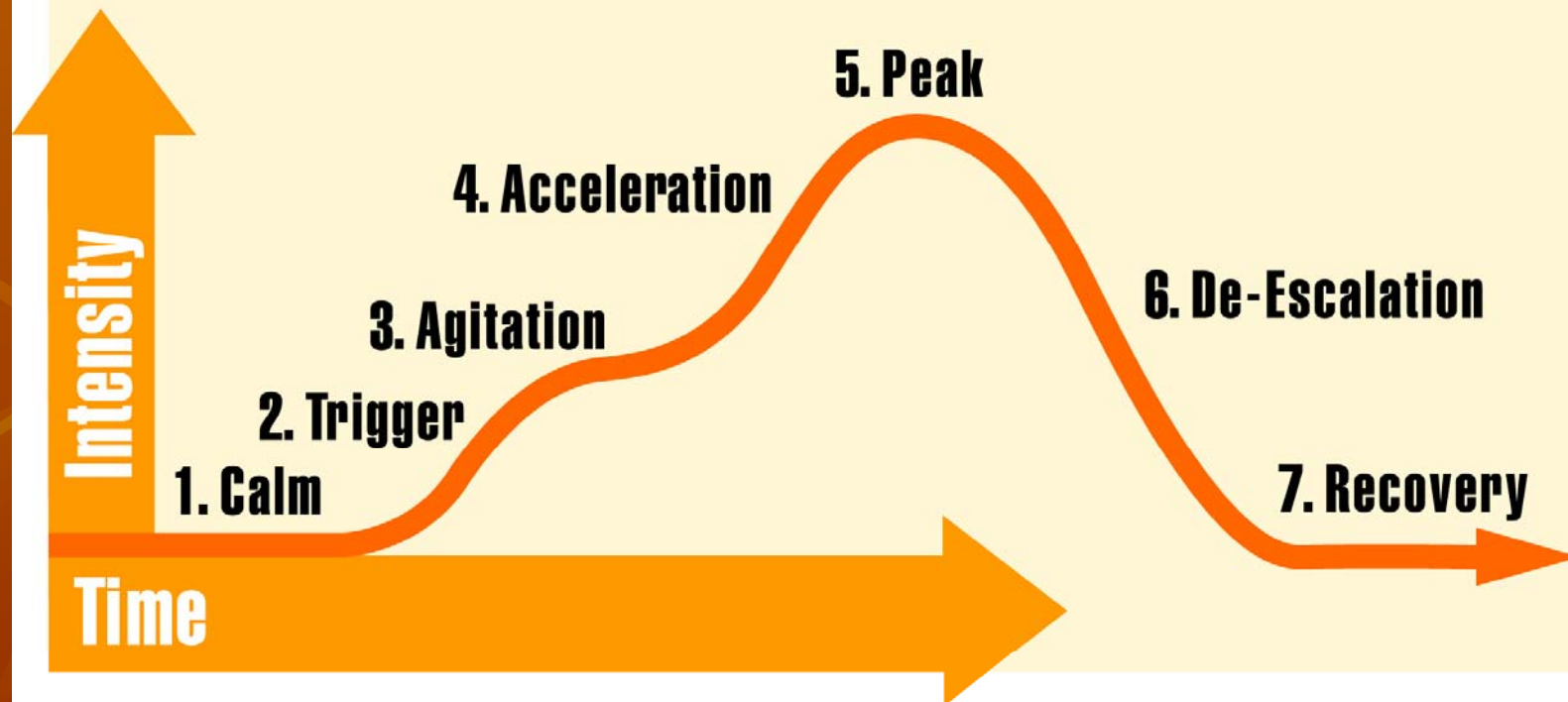
Summary: Phase 7



Overall Behavior
Eagerness for **BUSY WORK** &
reluctance to **DISCUSS**

Part 2: Strategies

Phases of Acting-Out Behavior



Phase 1: Calm

1. Classroom Structure
2. Quality Instruction
3. Managing Attention
4. Teaching Behavior

Strategies Triggers

Three Major Areas

- A. Formal programs or services
- B. Pre-Correction
- C. Addressing Non-School Based Triggers


Agitation Strategies

Key Issues

1. If not addressed student may
 - a. **Escalate** or
 - b. **Remain distracted** making instruction difficult
2. Strategies are **accommodations**
3. Implement **before** onset of escalation

Strategies for AGITATION

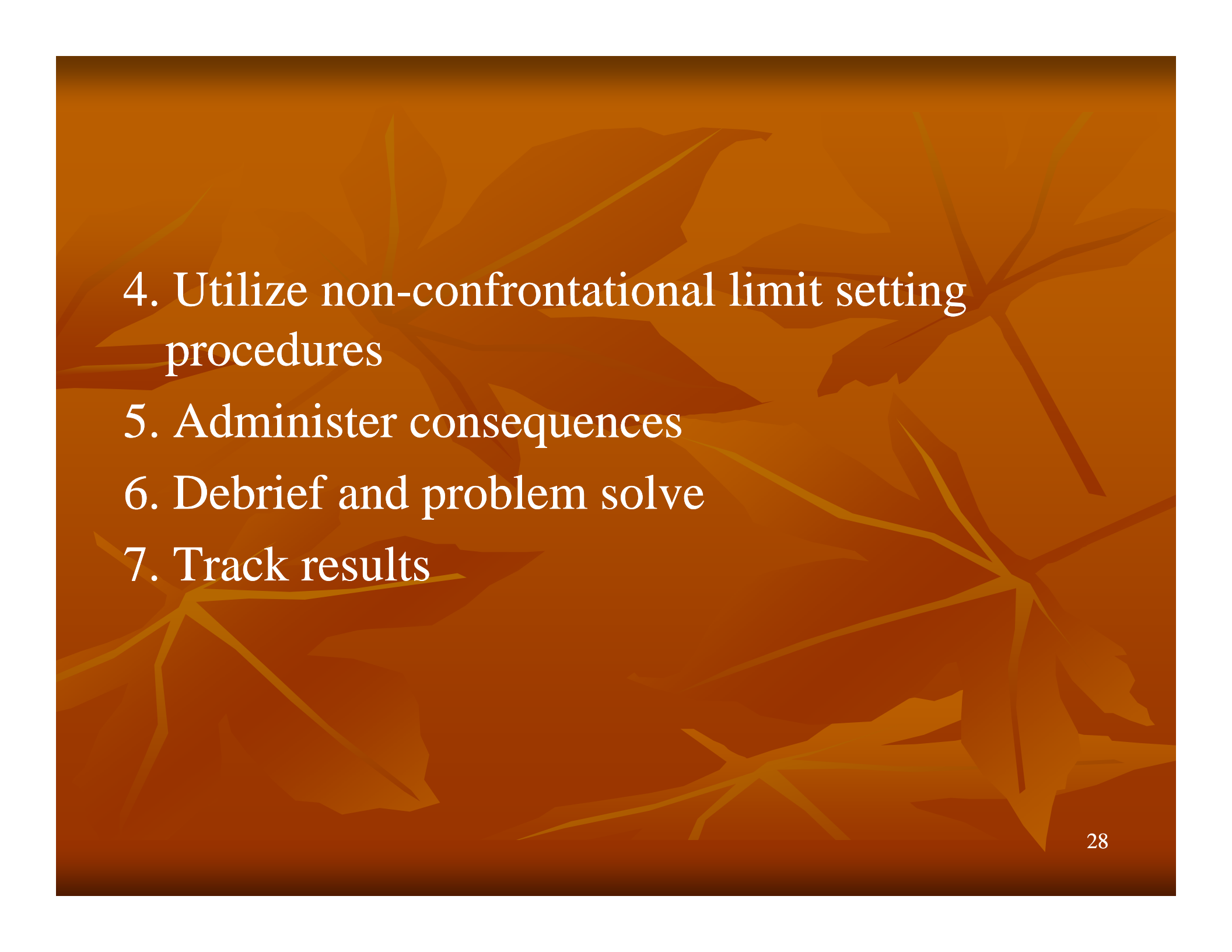
1. Teacher empathy
2. Space
3. Options
4. Preferred activities
5. Teacher proximity

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- The background of the slide features a pattern of overlapping autumn leaves in various shades of brown and orange, creating a textured, organic feel.
5. Independent activities
 6. Authorize student choices (as appropriate)
 7. Movement activities (jobs)
 8. Student involvement
 9. Relaxation techniques
 10. Pre-arranged signal

Strategies

Acceleration Phase

1. Avoid escalation responses
2. Re-Direct & maintain on task behavior
3. Emphasize student choices & responsibilities

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- The background of the slide is a solid dark brown color with a faint, stylized pattern of autumn leaves in various shades of brown and tan. The leaves are scattered across the page, with some showing detailed vein structures.
4. Utilize non-confrontational limit setting procedures
 5. Administer consequences
 6. Debrief and problem solve
 7. Track results

1. Avoid Escalation Responses

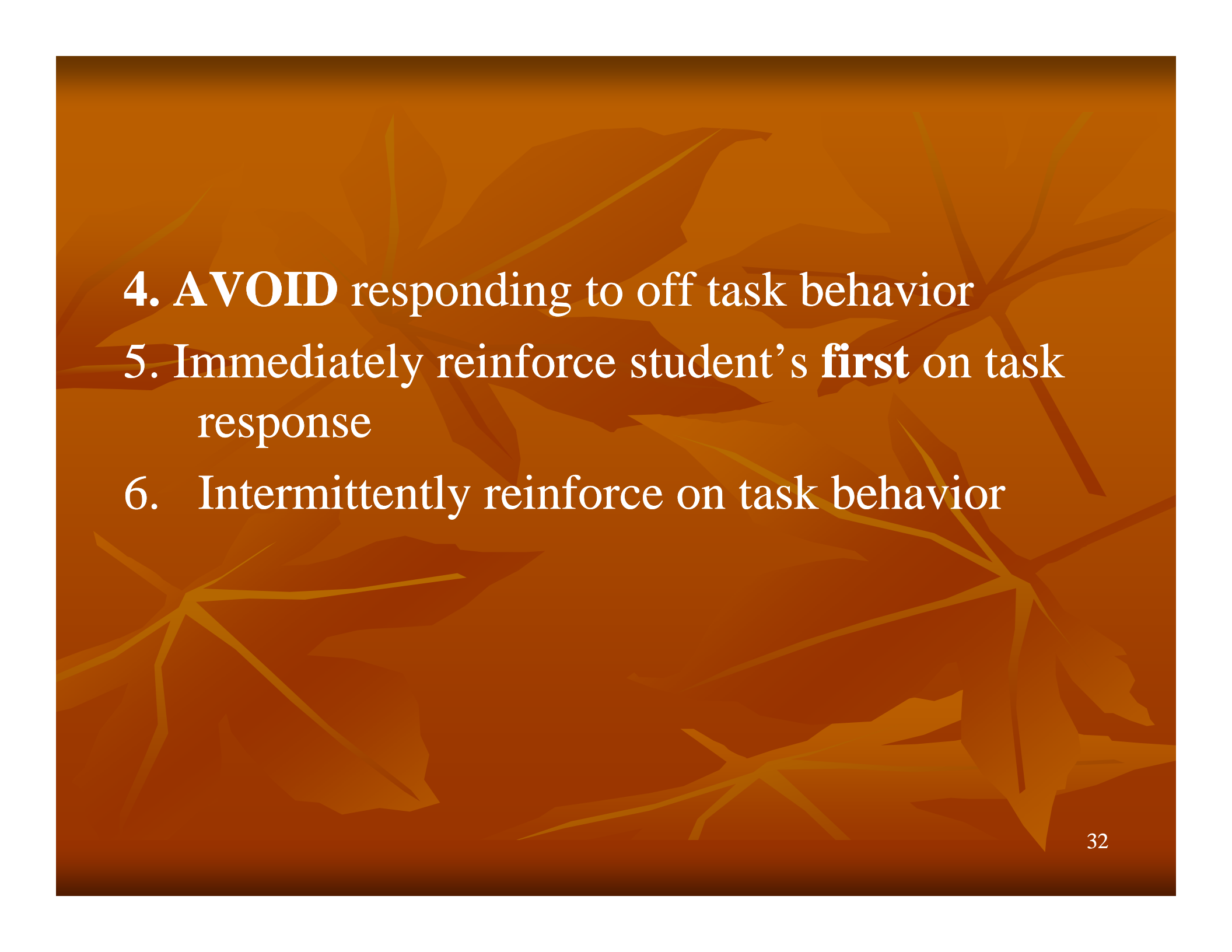
- Getting in the student's face
- Discrediting student
- Nagging or preaching
- Arguing
- Engaging in power struggles



- **Tugging or grabbing the student**
- **Cornering the student**
- **Responding in kind (challenges or threats)**
- **Overly defensive**
- **Following student behavior with corresponding demands**
- **Shouting or raising voice**

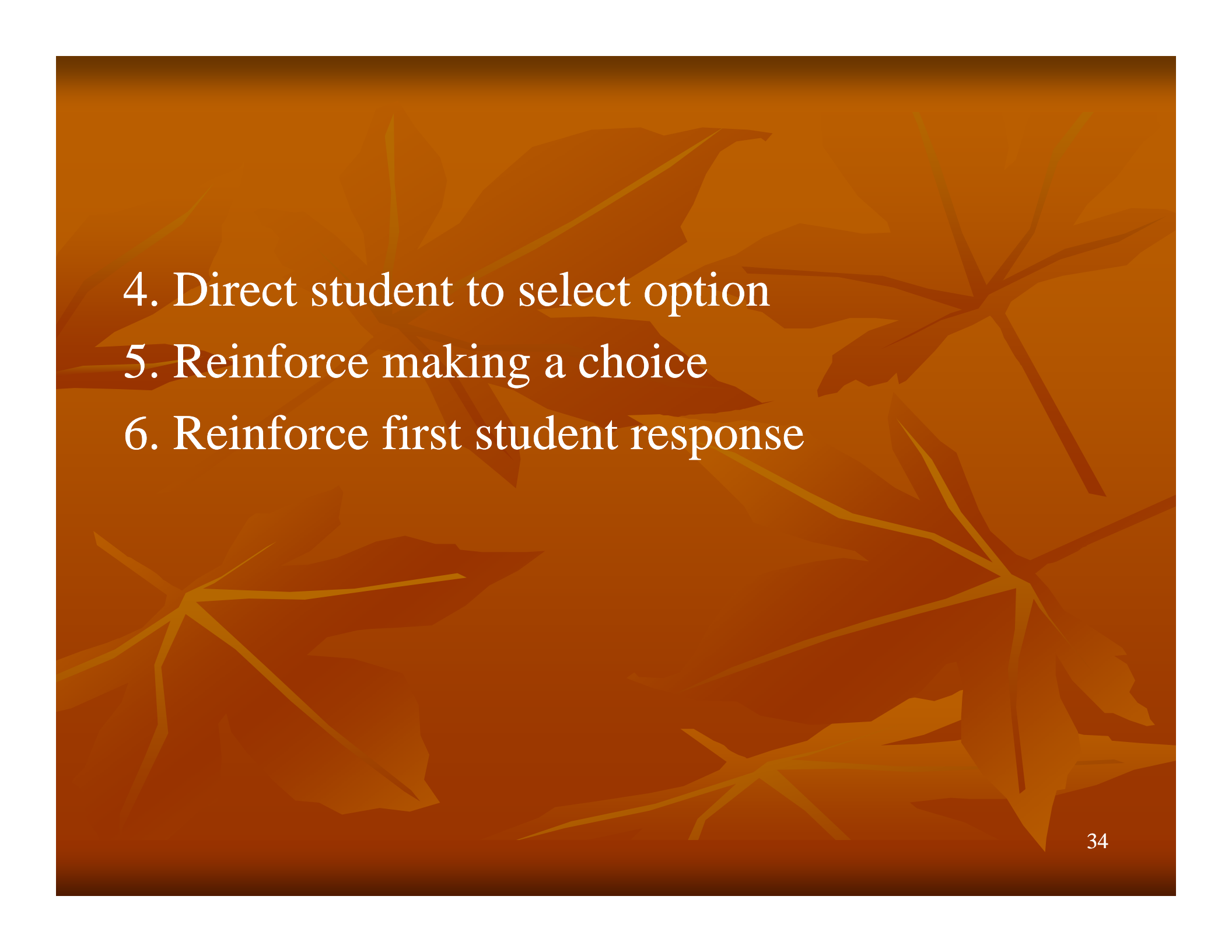
2: Re-Direct & Maintain on task behavior

1. Respond to students exhibiting expected behavior
2. Delay responding to inappropriate behavior
3. Provide prompts for expected behavior (re-direct)

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- The background of the slide is a solid dark brown color with a pattern of lighter brown, semi-transparent autumn leaves scattered across it. The leaves vary in size and orientation, creating a textured, seasonal feel.
4. **AVOID** responding to off task behavior
 5. Immediately reinforce student's **first** on task response
 6. Intermittently reinforce on task behavior

3. Emphasize student choices & responsibilities

1. In problem context identify problem
2. Indicate that student needs to take care of the problem
3. Present options if need be

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- The background of the slide is a solid dark brown color with a pattern of lighter brown, stylized autumn leaves scattered across it. The leaves have prominent veins and are in various orientations, some overlapping.
4. Direct student to select option
 5. Reinforce making a choice
 6. Reinforce first student response

4. Utilize non-confrontational limit setting procedures

Context:

1. Defiance, non-compliance. Insubordination

OR

2. Sustained minor disruptive behavior

“enough is enough”

1. Pre-teach the procedures
2. Delivery of “ultimatum”
 - a. Present **expected behavior** and **negative consequence** as a **decision**
 - b. Allow a **few seconds** to **decide**
 - c. **Withdraw** and attend to other students or task
3. Follow-through based on student’s decision.

“Michael, you are asked to join the group or you will miss recess. You have a few seconds to decide.”

Teacher then moves to other students, returns to Michael in a few seconds and follows through a/c to his choice.

5. Administer consequences

1. Consequences should be **expected**
2. Consequences are a **function** of the student's choices/decisions
3. Deliver the consequences consistently, and as “matter of fact” as possible

Administer Consequences Cont'd

4. Focus on the behavior warranting consequences, “because you hit you will have to miss recess.”
5. Catch the student being appropriate following the consequences and reinforce
6. Reinforce occurrences of appropriate choices in future situations

7. Track results

Is the plan working?

1. Develop tracking system to evaluate progress:
 - a. Office referrals
 - b. Incident reports
 - c. Teacher data system
 - d. Observations

Phase 5: Peak Behavior

- Systems response
- Safe strategies





SAFETY TIPS



- Move slowly and deliberately
- Keep reasonable distance
- Minimize body language
- Speak privately
- Speak calmly

- **Speak respectfully**
- **Use simple language**
- **Acknowledge cooperation**
- **Withdraw if problems escalate**
- **Give student space**
- **Do not communicate “urgency to gain control”**

Managing Phase 6: De-escalation

- Monitor for health and safety of all involved
- Monitor student for re-escalation of behavior
- Allow time and space



- **Provide opportunity for non-judgmental discussion**
- **Provide easy/concrete tasks**
- **Determine appropriate time to de-brief with student and staff**

Phase Seven: *Recovery*

**Return to Phase One:
Calm**

**Assist student in
returning to normal
activities**

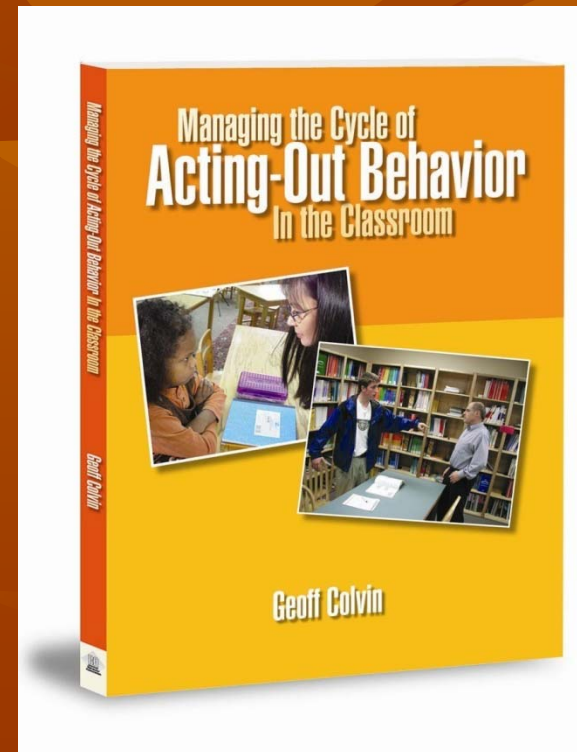
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Principal Reference

Available with

Silvereye Publications



Soon to be published with Corwin Press

New Book by Geoff Colvin

“Managing Noncompliance and Defiance in the Classroom: A Roadmap for Teachers, Specialists, and Behavior Support Teams.”

Check website:

www.behaviorassociates.org

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Closing Message

A famous sculptor was asked:

“How can you make such a beautiful statue out of a piece of stone?”

His answer was remarkably simple:

“The statue is in the stone, all I do is chip away at the residue”

~Michelangelo~

