Hello and Welcome to Center for Family Life and Recovery’s September Healthy Huddle Express video. I’m Brittany Higgins, licensed mental health clinician and EAP Coordinator for our Syracuse office.

I would like to take some time this month to offer up a brief tool that I have developed to assist in deescalating someone who is experiencing heightened emotions. Originally I developed this tool as part of a larger suicide prevention training; however, I strongly feel as though it is highly applicable to broader situations, including situations at work, home and even the community. I do want to emphasize that I am not encouraging you to intervene in situations that are believed to pose an immediate threat to yourself, for example, if you were at a bank that was being robbed- unless of course this was part of your job as a police officer.

Now I would like you to take a moment and imagine that you are at work. You have a fellow employee in your office or work space who is extremely upset, maybe even yelling. You can see that they are red in the face, pacing and have clenched fists. A decision was made that greatly impacts them, but they were never consulted in the decision-making process. Does this situation seem relatable? Now I want you to imagine yourself there with that employee. Although it would be very easy to come to their defense and maybe even get upset yourself, you remain calm taking some slow, deep breaths.

Now I want you to think about the acronym **The End Always Leads to Recovery**. I want to teach you what this acronym stands for, and how it could be used to deescalate this situation. The “T” in The stands for **Thank** them. Thank this employee for coming you to and expressing their concerns. “Gosh Nancy. I’m glad you feel comfortable enough expressing all this to me. Thank you for coming to me.” The “E” in End stands for **Empathy**. Express empathy- which is the ability to understand another person’s perspective. This might sound like “It seems like you feel really frustrated about this situation. Is that correct?” The “A” stands for **Authenticate**. Validate that their feelings are true for them- even if you can’t relate or even disagree. “Nancy, you’re telling me your angry and frustrated. I hear that this is really real for you.” The “L” stands for **Limitations**. It’s important to let the person know your limited role as supervisor, fellow employee or whatever your position is. “Nancy, I hear your concerns and I’m glad you’re telling me. I wish that there was more I could offer, but I’m just an employee at this company as well.” The “R” stands for **Refer**. You may decide here to refer them to a supervisor or member of HR. If the concern isn’t directly connected to work and is instead someone expressing heightened feelings in general (for example, a lot of sadness, stress or anxiety) you may offer the following statement “I really think your concerns are important and I think it could be helpful to talk to an expert. Do you know about our free EAP services?”

So to summarize, Nancy is upset in your office. A decision has been made without her involvement and she is angry and frustrated. Now you know the acronym **The End Always Leads to Recovery** so you’re prepared. You reflect the following to her: “Nancy, I’m so glad you feel comfortable coming to me. Thank you for telling me this. You sound really frustrated by the situation. Is that correct to assume? I think these concerns are really valid and I wish that I could offer more, but I too am just an employee with this company. I think these concerns are important, and it could be really helpful to talk to a member of HR about them. Can I help you set up a meeting?”

Oftentimes when we just use the first 3 letters of the acronym, **Thank Empathy and Authenticate** it is enough to deescalate a very heated situation. Again, whether this is with an upset employee, outraged teenage son/daughter or your neighbor whose mailbox was once again hit by the snowplow, I believe when effectively used you will be able to intervene and prevent the situation from becoming unmanageable. Just remember, **The End Always Leads to Recovery**.

If you’d like more detailed information on the full training that this acronym was developed for, please reach to CFLR at 315 733 1709 and ask about the training called “How To Talk To Someone In Crisis”. You can also see further details in the EAP Portal under the HR side within Supervisor Resources. Thanks for watching and we will see you next month!