

When Behavior Escalates... It's Not What It Looks Like

Behavior is what we **see**.

The body is what's **driving** it.



BEHAVIOR (outside)

- Loud
- Fast
- Disruptive
- Hard to ignore



BODY (inside)

- Breathing faster
- Muscles tightening
- Heart rate increasing
- Scanning for safety



**This is not misbehavior.
It's a nervous system trying to protect.**

1



The body is activating

Big, loud, fast...
or small, quiet, still

2



Thinking is narrowing

Fewer words.
Less flexibility.
Less access.

3



The body is signaling

Too much.
Too fast.
Too uncertain.



In the Moment, Try This Instead



Pause.

Just for a second, ask:

- What is their body doing?
- What is my body doing?
- What might their body be telling me?



Not: "Stop doing that."

→ **Slow the moment**



Not: "Use your words."

→ **Reduce Language**



Not: "Calm down."

→ **Co-regulate and wait**



Remember:

- Body signals are information
- Escalation is not personal
- Co-regulation comes first
- You don't have to fix it
- **Noticing is enough to begin**



This shift—from behavior → body—changes everything.

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