Election Season
De-Escalation Tips

These four techniques will help you avoid or de-escalate tense situations, keep stress low, and your environment calm.

1. **Avoid judgement.**
   Understand that everyone has a different life experience and may be overwhelmed with struggles and anxiety from things they know nothing about. Listen and focus on the feelings behind the message.

2. **Don’t take it personally.**
   Another person’s behavior is not about you. You are likely not the true cause or target of someone’s behavior. Tell yourself, “This may not be about the two of us; it may be about other issues in their life.” Or repeat to yourself, “I’m going to be respectful. I’m going to be respectful.”

3. **Control your reactions.**
   You can’t control another person’s behavior, but you can control how you react. Avoid using facial expressions, gestures and language that could make another person feel anxious or defensive.

4. **Be prepared if you have to engage.**
   Have a plan to acknowledge and redirect. Here are some things you could potentially say:
   - Yeah, this year has been difficult on everyone.
   - This is an important election year; every vote counts.
   - I’m glad to see such great voter turnout.
   - It’s great to witness so many people exercising their right to vote.
   - We’ll all be glad to have this year behind us.