

Culturally Competent Crisis De-Escalation Training

Approach Warning Behaviors

The following approach behaviors can be seen as a progressive escalation toward targeted violence.

- 1. Pathway warning behavior** is any behavior that is part of research, planning, preparation, or implementation of an attack.
- 2. Fixation warning behavior** is any behavior that indicates an increasingly pathological preoccupation with a person or a cause. It is measured by:
 - a. increasing perseveration on the person or cause,
 - b. increasingly strident opinion,
 - c. increasingly negative characterization of the object of fixation,
 - d. impact on the family or other associates of the object of fixation, if present and aware, and
 - e. angry emotional undertone. It is typically accompanied by social or occupational deterioration.
- 3. Identification warning behavior** is any behavior that indicates a psychological desire to be a “pseudo-commando,” have a “warrior mentality,” closely associate with weapons or other military or law enforcement paraphernalia, identify with previous attackers or assassins, or identify oneself as an agent to advance a particular cause or belief system.
- 4. Novel aggression warning behavior** is an act of violence which appears unrelated to any targeted violence pathway warning behavior which is committed for the first time. Such behaviors may be utilized to test the ability of the subject to actually do a violent act, and may be a measure of response tendency, the motivation to act on the environment, or a behavioral tryout.
- 5. Energy burst warning behavior** is an increase in the frequency or variety of any noted activities related to the target, even if the activities themselves are relatively innocuous, usually in the days or weeks before the attack.
- 6. Leakage warning behavior** is the communication to a third party of an intent to do harm to a target through an attack.
- 7. Last resort warning behavior** is evidence of a violent “action imperative,” increasing desperation or distress through declaration in word or deed, forcing the individual into a position of last resort. There is no alternative other than violence, and the consequences are justified.
- 8. Directly communicated threat warning behavior** is the communication of a direct threat to the target or law enforcement beforehand. A threat is a written or oral communication that implicitly or explicitly states a wish or intent to damage, injure, or kill the target, or individuals symbolically or actually associated with the target.

Adapted from the work of Dr. Reid Meloy. Learn more at drreidmeloy.com