

You Need To Calm Down: Keys to De-Escalating Conflict in Text

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Anatomy of an argument

Triggering event

Perception of threat

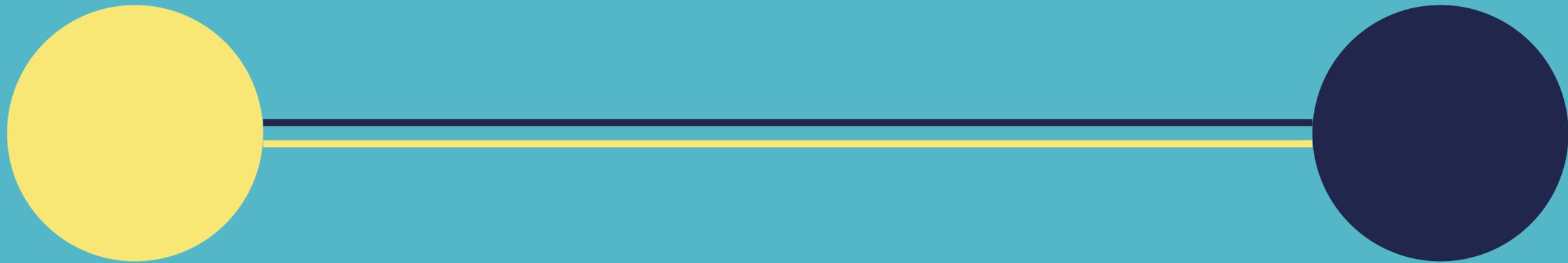
Defensive anger

Acting out

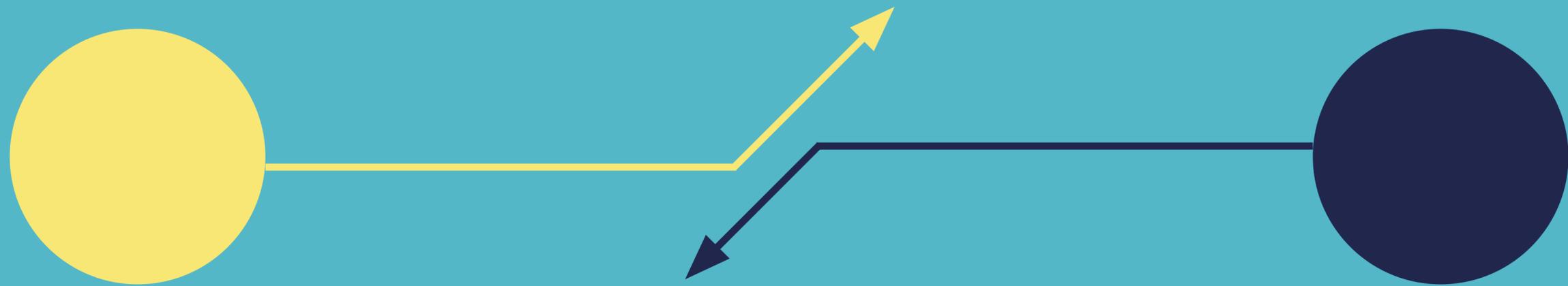
Repetition



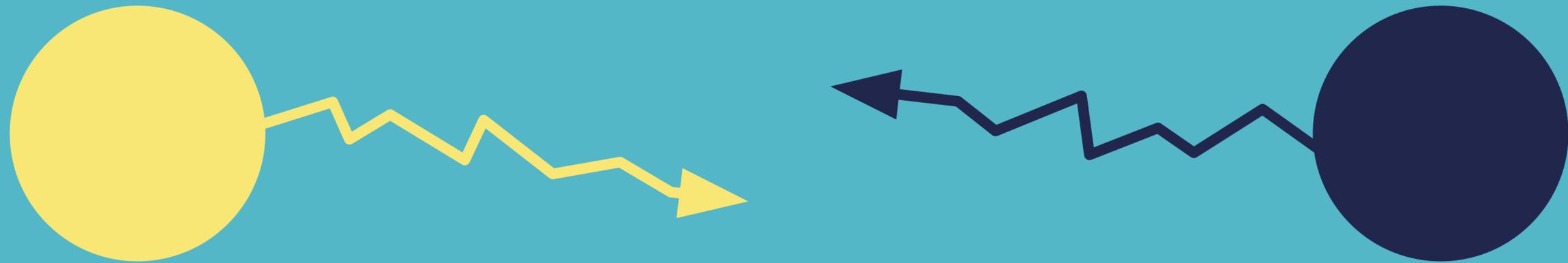
Conflict level 1 : Difference



Conflict level 2 : Misunderstanding



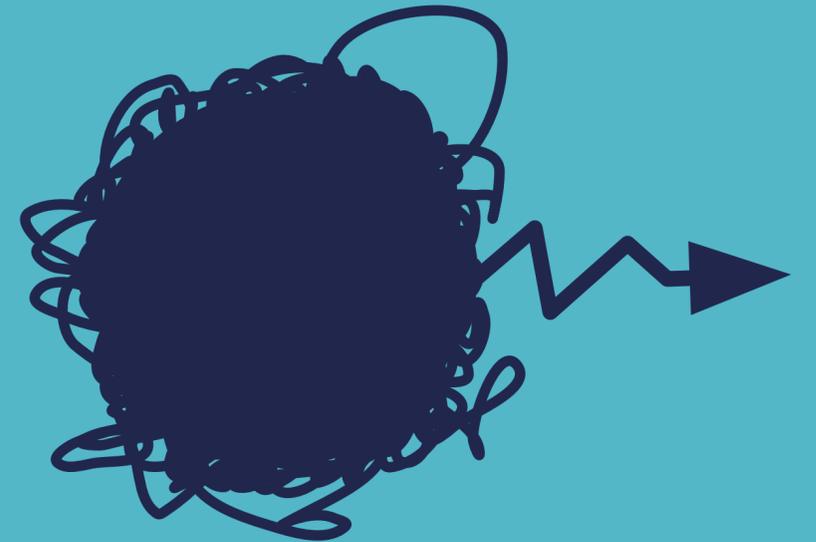
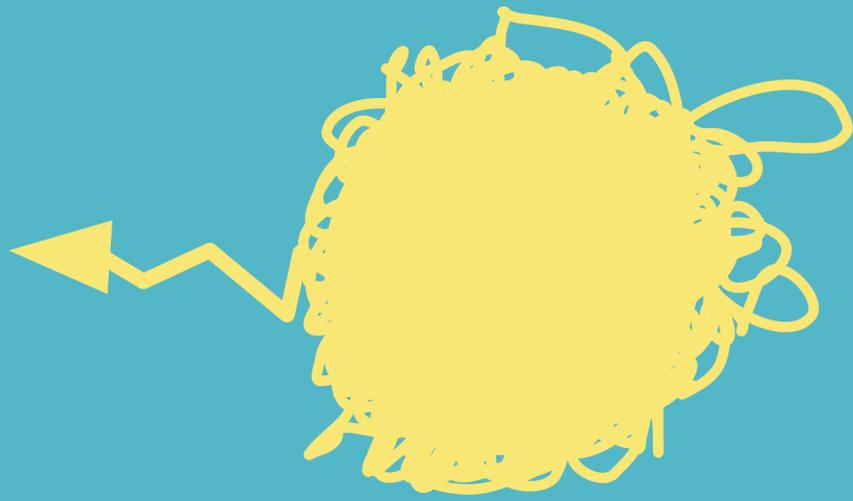
Conflict level 3 : Disagreement



Conflict level 4 : Discord



Conflict level 5 : Polarization



Conflict severity

Level 5: **Polarization**

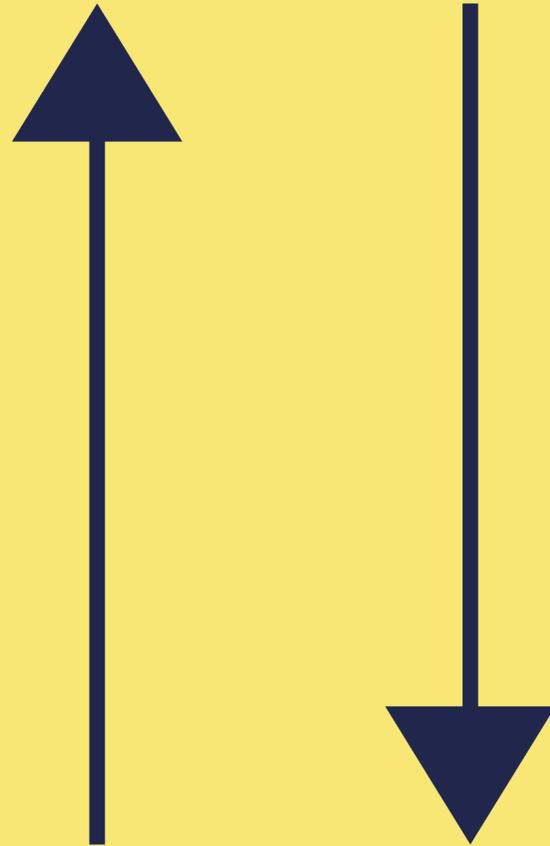
Level 4: **Discord**

Level 3: **Disagreement**

Level 2: **Misunderstanding**

Level 1: **Differences**

Conflict severity



Level 5: **Polarization**

Level 4: **Discord**

Level 3: **Disagreement**

Level 2: **Misunderstanding**

Level 1: **Differences**

Conflict severity

Level 5: **Polarization**

Level 4: **Discord**

Level 3: **Disagreement**

Level 2: **Misunderstanding**

Level 1: **Differences**



Conflict severity

Level 5: **Polarization**

Level 4: **Discord**

Level 3: **Disagreement**

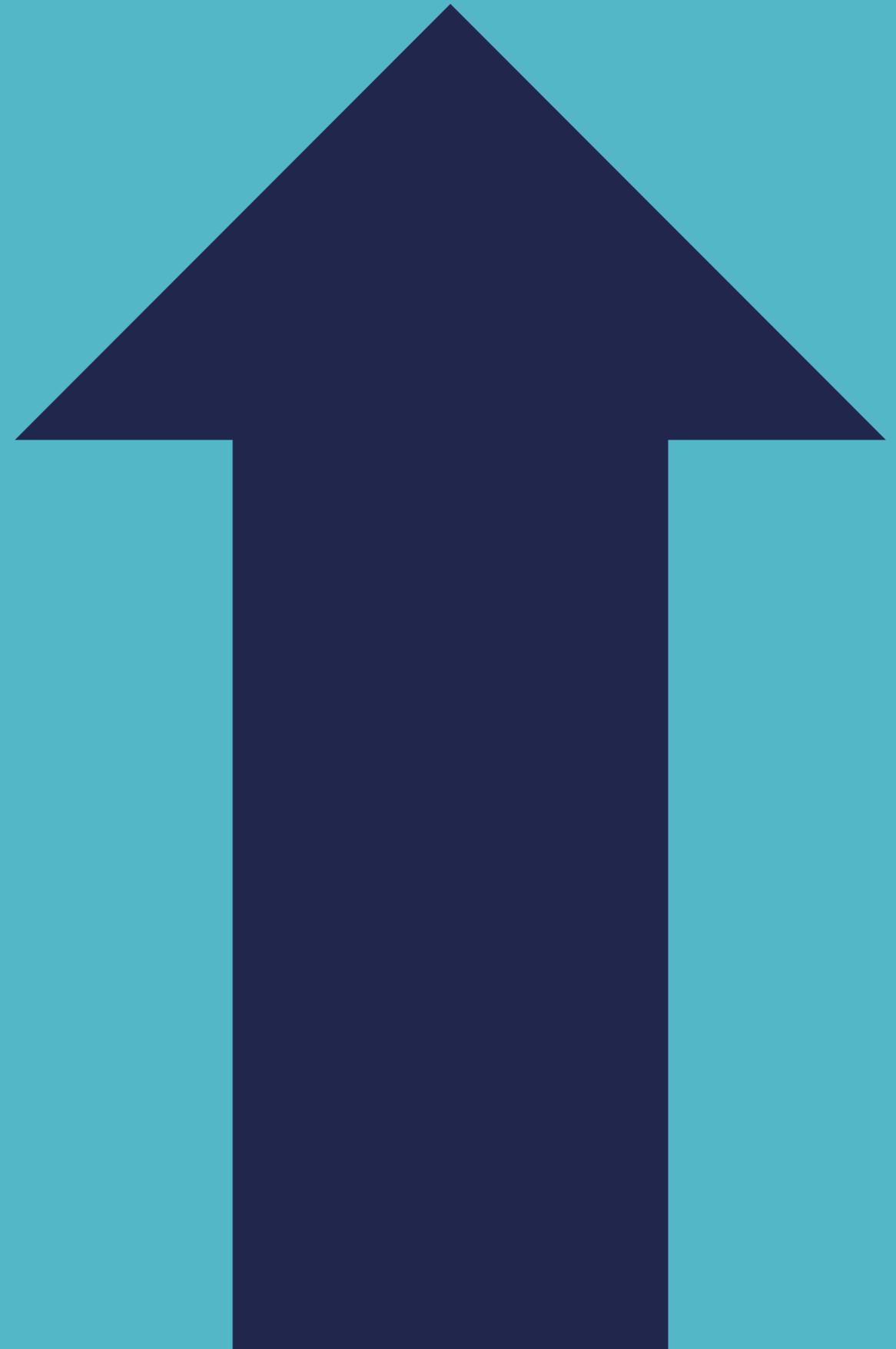
Level 2: **Misunderstanding**

Level 1: **Differences**



Escalating factors

Making it personal.



Escalating factors

Noticing a trend in the conflict partner's behavior or opinions.



Escalating factors

Feeling uncomfortable about the conflict.



Escalating factors

Associating a high level of risk or serious consequences with the issue.



Escalating factors

Accelerating the rate of interaction.



The background features a light blue water splash at the top, with bubbles and ripples. A large, dark blue arrow points downwards from the top right towards the bottom center of the slide.

De-escalating factors

Identifying common ground.

De-escalating factors

Focusing on the issue, not the people.

De-escalating factors

Centering on interests, not positions.



De-escalating factors

Embracing differences of opinions, styles,
and experience.

De-escalating factors

Making the effort to understand all sides.

De-escalating factors

Slowing the pace of interaction.



Communication setting

- Public complaining blog post/“exposé”.
- Public complaining on social media/Slack/forums.
- Open discussion with the public.
- Private group discussion (email/DM).
- Private 1:1 discussion (email, DM).
- Anticipated conflict.



Ability to
de-escalate

Responding to conflict

Compose yourself

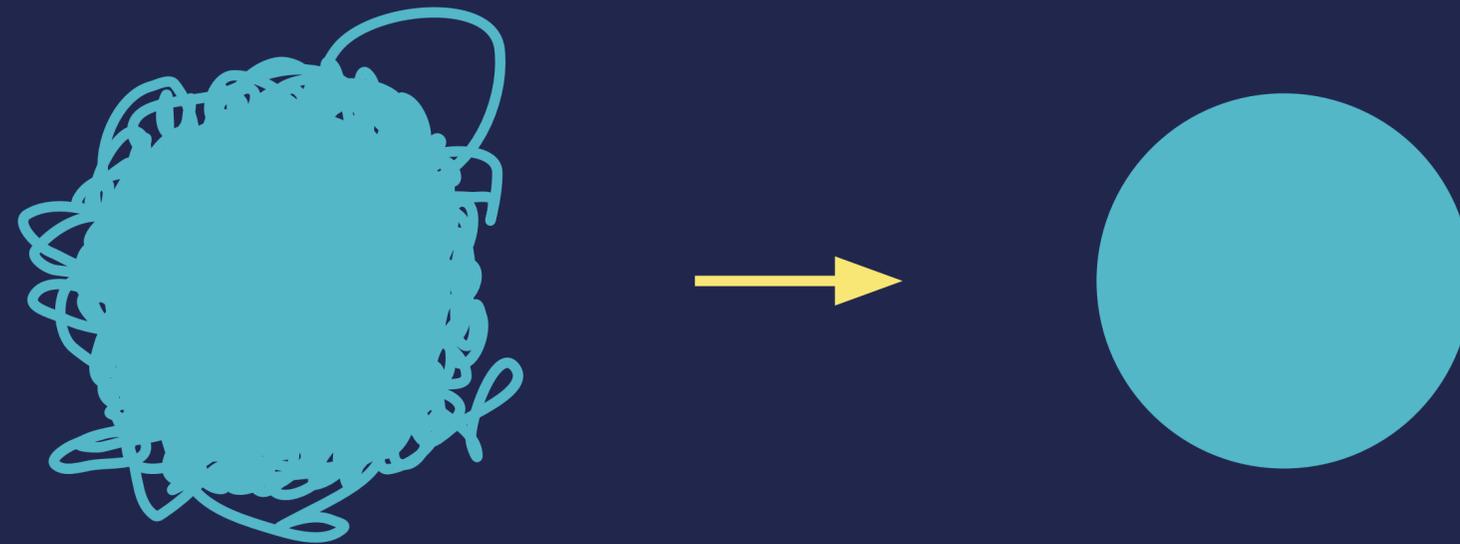
Analyze / Empathize

Contextualize

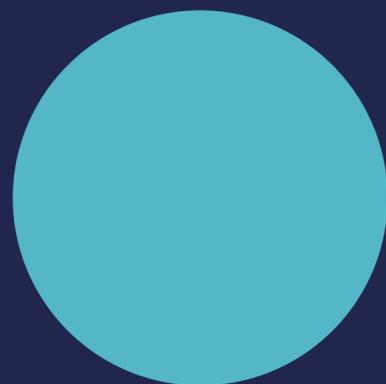
Strategize

Mobilize

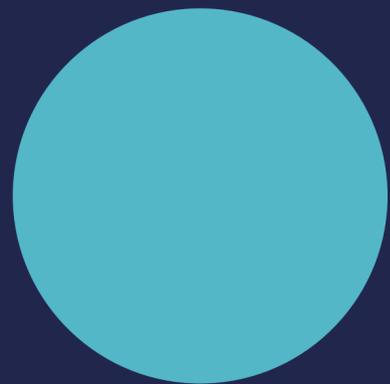
Compose yourself



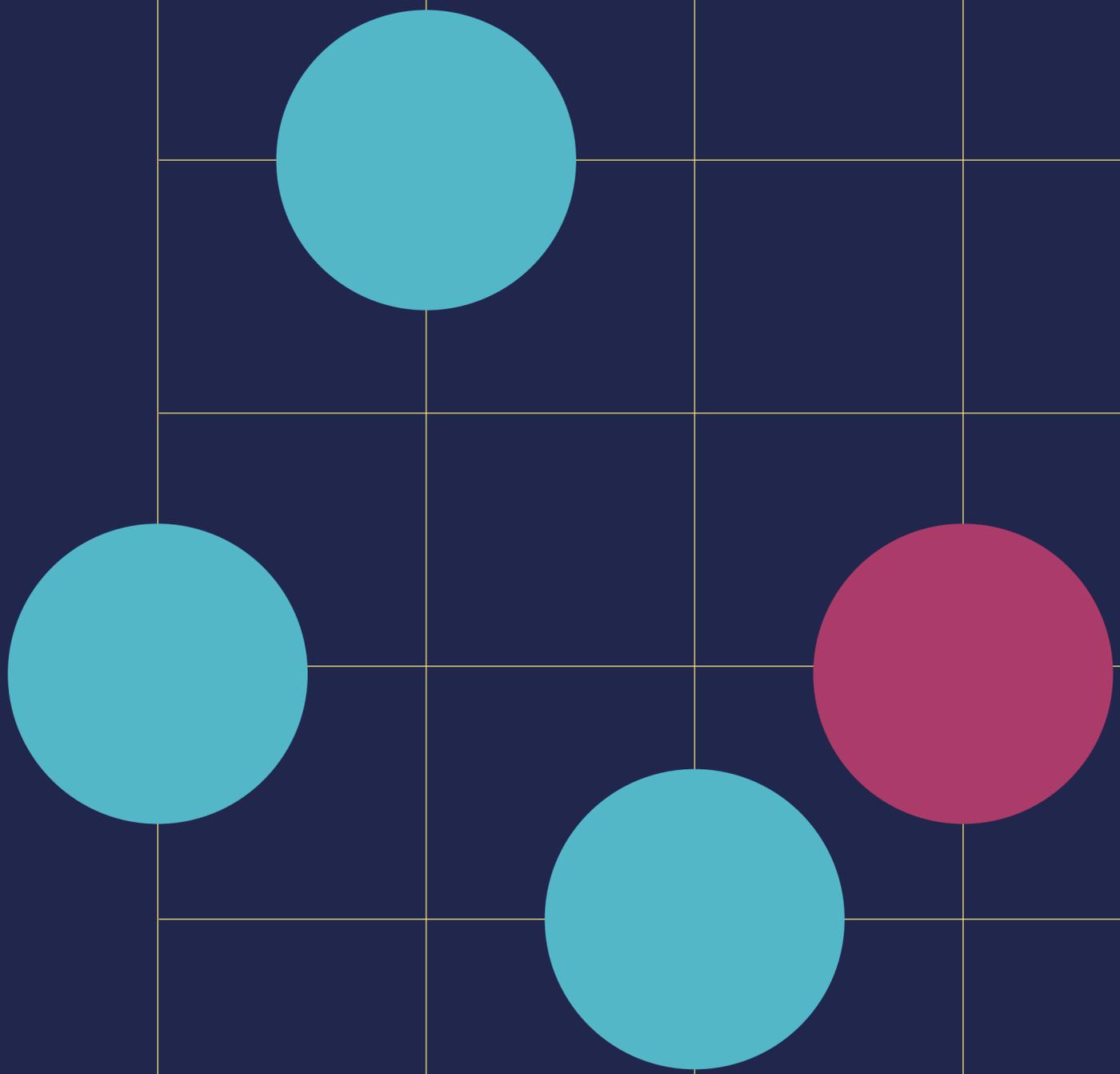
Analyze / Empathize



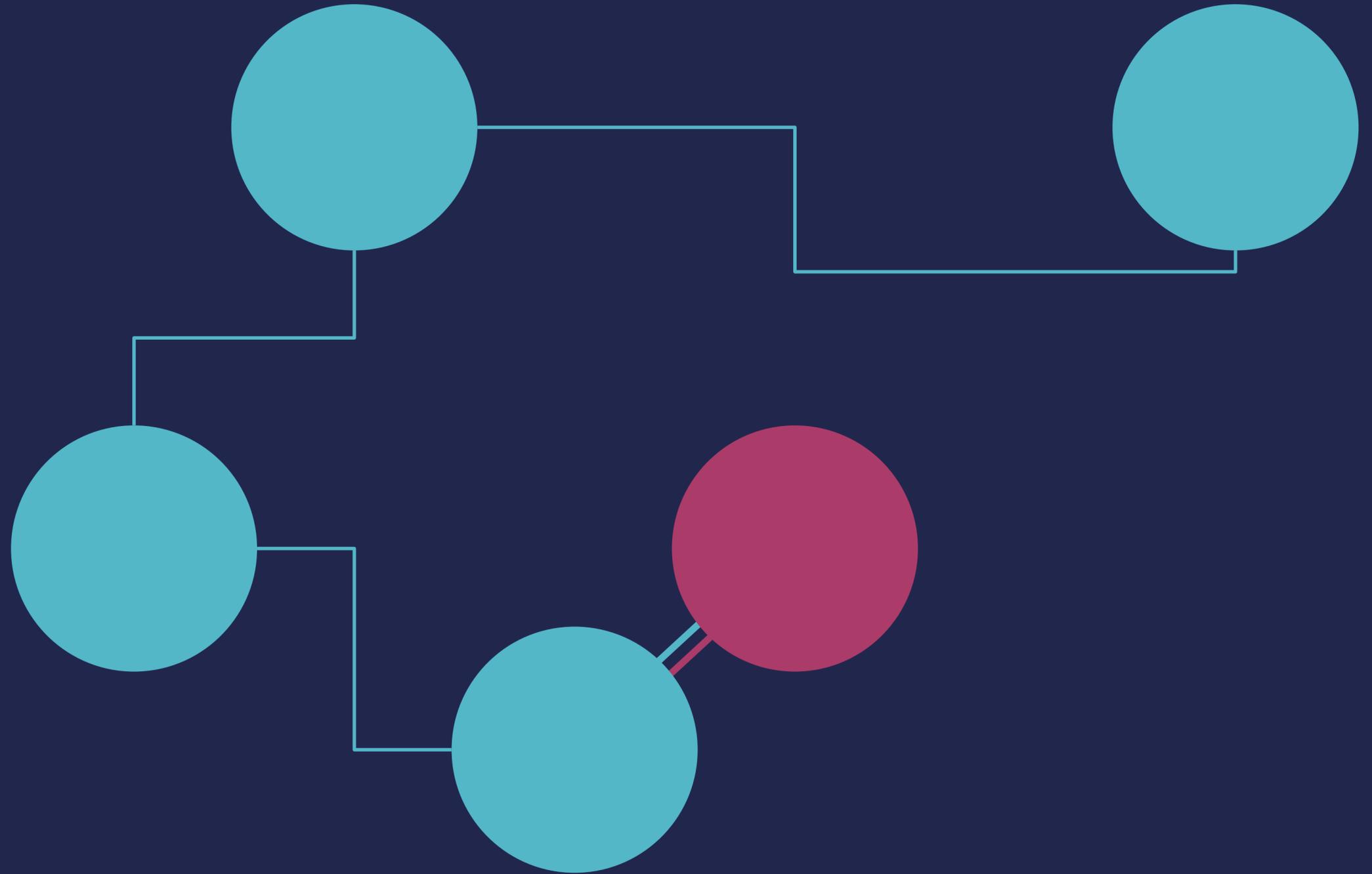
Contextualize



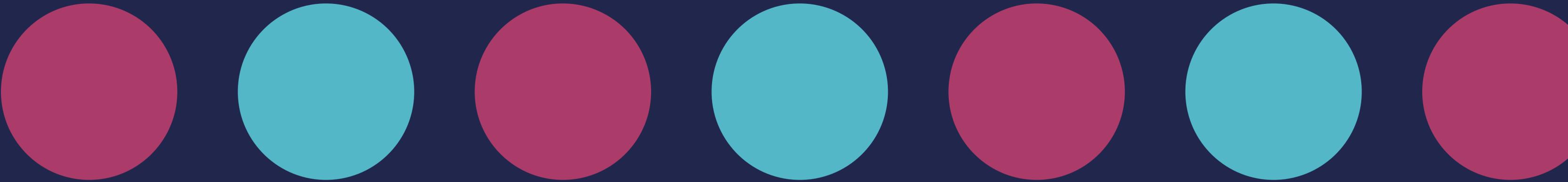
Strategize



Mobilize



Repeat as necessary



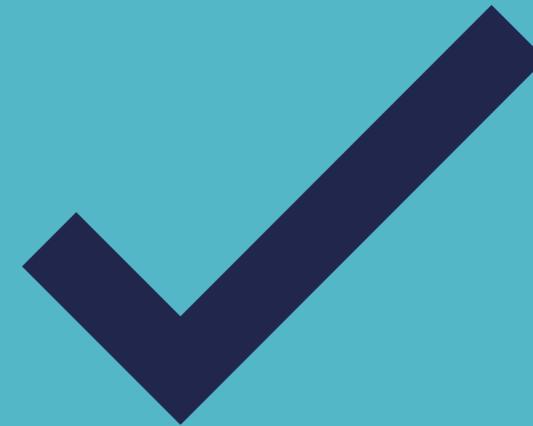
More tips

Don't lie or misrepresent the facts.



Do intervene in a discussion when...

civility, fairness, or safety are threatened, or a ***relevant*** fact is mis-stated.



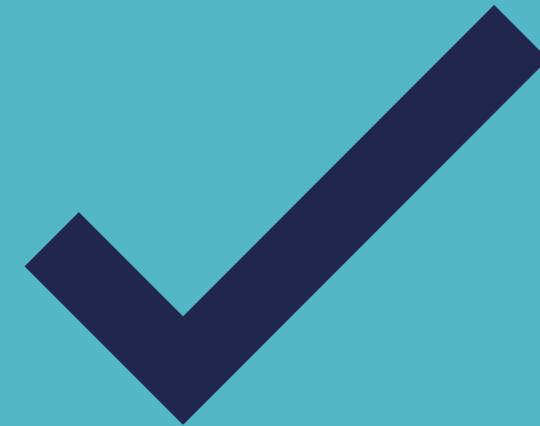
Avoid “you” statements.



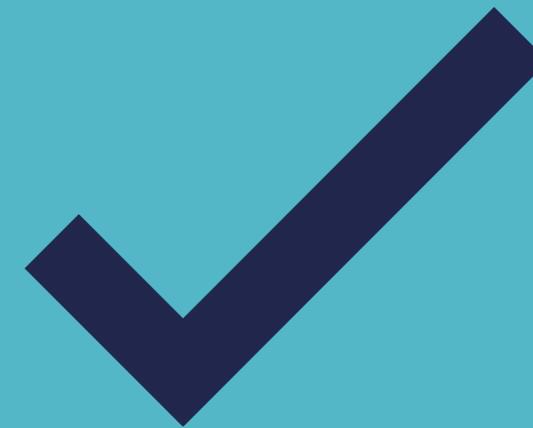
Don't try to win the argument.



“Zoom out” to find common ground.



Be nice for no reason.



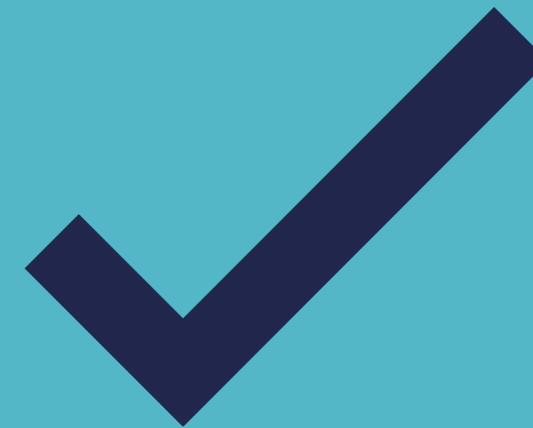
Limit the length of your response.



You've only got 1-2 chances for more info.



Use active listening.



Questions?

Thank you!

Find me on Twitter at **@andmiddleton**

I publish thoughts on **andreamiddleton.blog**

The script for this talk and my bibliography is at:

<https://andreamiddleton.blog/conflict-de-escalation-in-open-source/>

Stupendous slide design by Mark Uraine (@mapk) — Thank you Mark!