

Helping Challenging Evergreen Patrons

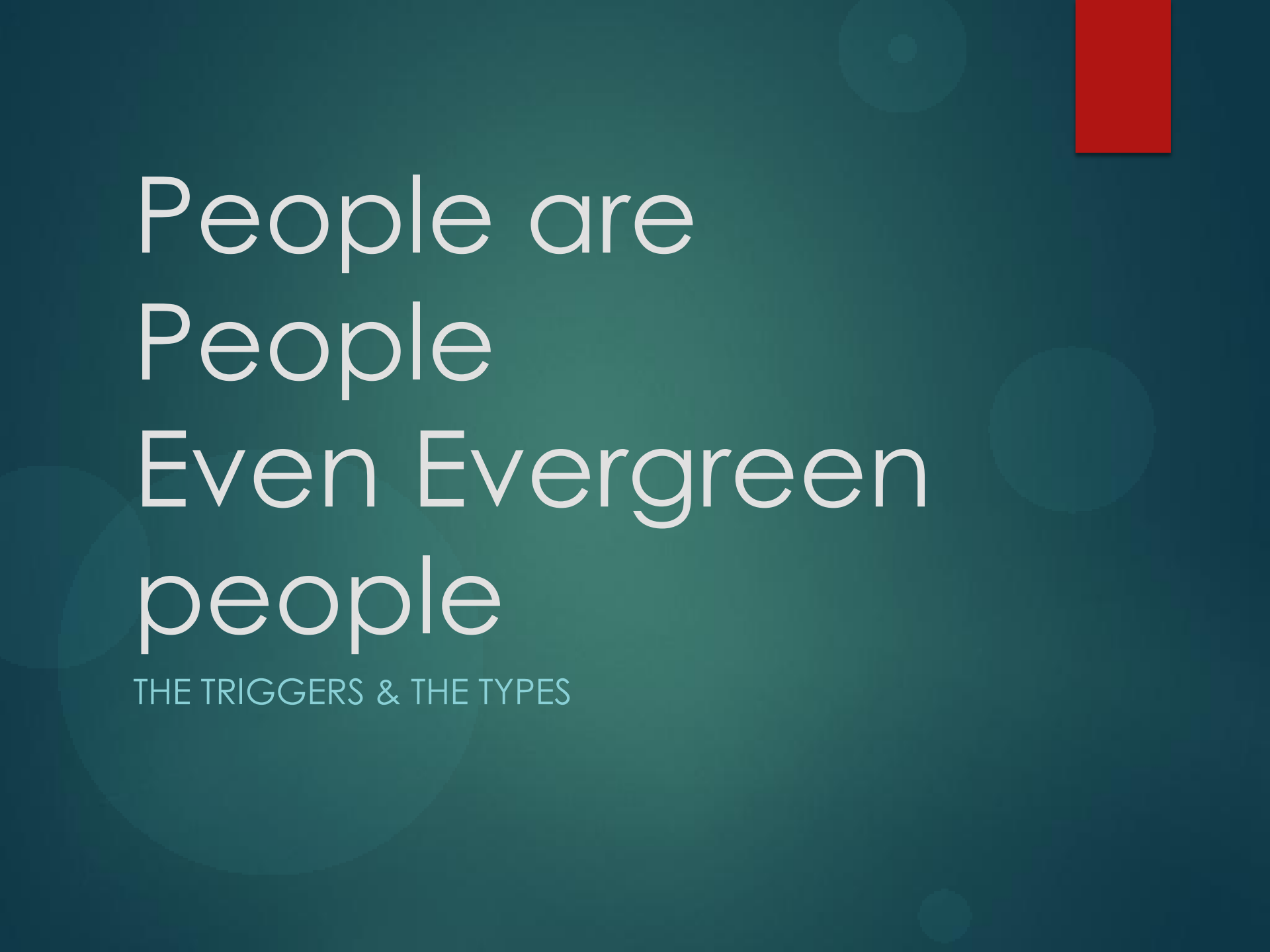
INDIANA STATE LIBRARY
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
EVERGREEN INDIANA 2013

“You won’t believe what just happened!”





Start with
you!!!!



People are
People
Even Evergreen
people

THE TRIGGERS & THE TYPES

Why Do Patrons Get Upset?

- ▶ Evergreen Fines and fees
- ▶ Evergreen Rules/Policies
- ▶ Staff attitude
- ▶ Perception

Types of Challenging Patrons

- ▶ Disruptive (adult, teen, child)
- ▶ Oblivious parent
- ▶ Chronic complainer
- ▶ Patron who is dissatisfied with a service or policy

Types of Challenging Patrons

- ▶ Irrational patron
- ▶ Lonely conversationalist
- ▶ Hygienically challenged
- ▶ Alcohol or drug abuser
- ▶ Mentally ill

Types of Challenging Patrons

- ▶ Sleeper
- ▶ Internet voyeur
- ▶ Politically connected
- ▶ Know-it-all
- ▶ Teen

Challenging Evergreen Patrons – Some common foes

- ▶ What do you mean I cannot pick up my husbands books?
- ▶ What do you mean I can't check out on my husband's card?



Challenging Evergreen Patrons

- ▶ What do you mean you don't know when that Janet Evanovich book is going to be here? I've been on the holds list for 3 months!!!!!!



Challenging Evergreen Patrons

- ▶ I owe a fine at my home library. Why can't I pay it here?



Challenging Evergreen Patrons

- ▶ What do you mean I have to have ID to renew my card? All my information is the same.



Types of Challenging Patrons

- ▶ Who did I forget?

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People are People

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

People are People

- ▶ Judging
- ▶ Empathize
- ▶ Relate
- ▶ Understand what they are asking you to do in terms of Evergreen.
- ▶ Assist with needs

You Control You!

- ▶ Breathe
- ▶ Talk slowly and calmly
- ▶ Be courteous and respectful
- ▶ Don't become defensive or angry
- ▶ Never touch a patron
- ▶ Assess the situation

Tactical Styles

- ▶ Forcing
- ▶ Avoiding
- ▶ Accommodating
- ▶ Compromising
- ▶ Collaborating

Acknowledge Patrons' Concerns

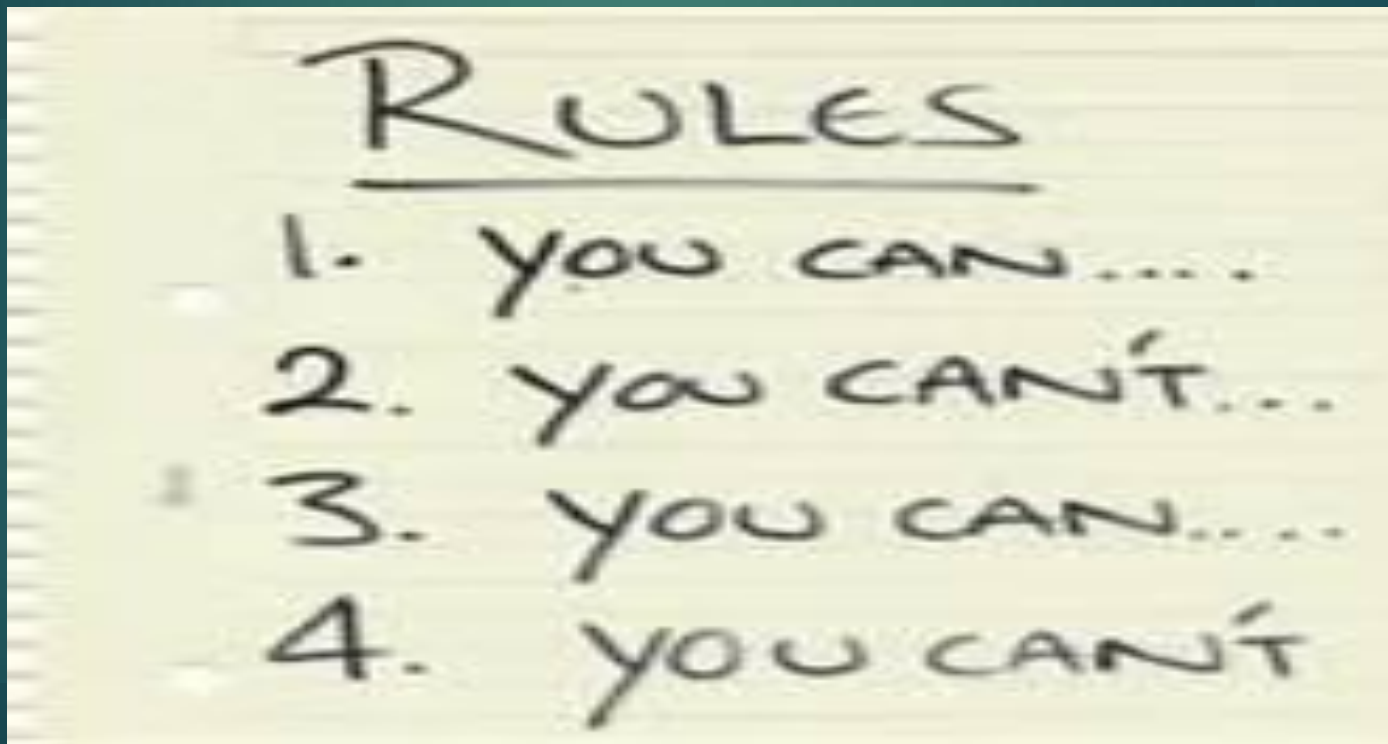
- ▶ No problems
- ▶ Paraphrase
- ▶ Policy – know your Evergreen policies
- ▶ Appropriate staff member - know who has Admin privileges.
- ▶ What to do during evening, weekend hours

Accentuate Positive to Eliminate Negative

- ▶ No excuses
- ▶ Take responsibility *and* action
- ▶ Avoid negative words
- ▶ Empower the patron – help them understand what all the benefits are of using Evergreen
- ▶ Don't forget to use Help desk tickets if you encounter a problem.

Rules are Made to be Broken

- ▶ Exceptions
- ▶ Managers empower staff



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Policies and Procedures

Know your Evergreen!

- ▶ The Evergreen Indiana blog is the source of updates for all things Evergreen.
- ▶ <http://www.in.gov/library/3382.htm>
- ▶ Contact the Evergreen Indiana Coordinator for further information as well.
- ▶ Consider service on one of the many Evergreen Indiana committees as well : Circulation, Cataloging, etc.

Policy vs. Procedure

Patron Policy Manual

- ▶ Public document
- ▶ Approved and adopted by Library Board
- ▶ ISL, WebJunction, listservs great places to get ideas
- ▶ Make sure your Evergreen policies are included in your patron policy manual

Procedures Manual

- ▶ Internal document
- ▶ Step-by-step instructions for staff in dealing with difficult patrons or situations
- ▶ ISL, WebJunction, listservs great places to get ideas
- ▶ Make certain your EI policies are included in your procedures manual.

Work to Eliminate Problems

- ▶ Customer Comment Cards – maybe solicit suggestions on how to improve Evergreen.
- ▶ Do library policies make sense or are they creating more problems?
- ▶ Have staff meetings to address Evergreen Indiana changes and issues. Make sure you know what's going on and you are able to back it up.

Educate and Empower Staff

- ▶ Staff trainings
 - ▶ Police
 - ▶ Mental health professionals
 - ▶ Customer service trainings
- ▶ Staff meetings
 - ▶ Patron comment cards
 - ▶ Incident reports
 - ▶ Library policy and procedure manuals

Incident Reports

- ▶ File a report even if you do not think it was “big deal”
- ▶ Include all relevant information
- ▶ Immediately give copy to supervisor

Police / Security

- ▶ Always trust your instincts on calling police or internal security guard
- ▶ Steps in procedure manual for calling police
- ▶ Have police come in once a year for all-staff meeting

Directors / Supervisors

- ▶ Communicate with staff
- ▶ Communicate with patrons
- ▶ Staff training - make sure your staff is properly trained in Evergreen. ISL offers a variety of resources: classes, webinars, and documentation.
- ▶ Keep policies and procedures up to date
- ▶ Establish and communicate parameters for staff



When
Opportunity
Knocks...

Conflict as Reality

- ▶ Natural part of life
- ▶ Neither positive or negative
 - ▶ the way we deal with conflict makes the situation positive or negative

Conflict as an Opportunity

- ▶ Opportunities to learn and grow personally and professionally
- ▶ Chance to create regular library patrons, and strong library advocates

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Examples?

QUESTIONS?

Works Cited

- Search For Common Ground,
http://www.sfcg.org/resources/resources_tips.html
- Patterson, Kerry, et al. **Crucial Conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high**. McGraw Hill. New York. 2002.
- Safe Harbor,
<http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/safeharbor/index.cfm?sectionID=206>
- Librarian411.org
- The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, <http://www.nami.org>

Contact

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