



# VALIDATION

## FOUR WAYS TO DO IT

Actively recognising and acknowledging the feelings and experiences of another person - even if you don't feel the same way!

# BE PRESENT

**Sitting with, paying complete attention in a non-judgmental way.**



## WHAT TO TRY...

- Just listen...let them talk
- Allow pauses and silences. Just sit with what they've told you and give them space to expand
- Think about natural 'listening noises' that convey your attention

## WHAT TO BE CAREFUL OF...

- "Yes, but..." – going in with a challenge
- "Never mind..." – trying to make the person feel better or say the right thing
- Having distractions in your hand or on your person (such as phones) that may convey you are not fully listening. Put them down – you can pick them back up again in a bit!
- Problem-solving – being present is about being in the here and now, understanding the reality and accepting it. Don't be tempted to try and fix!

# ACCURATE REFLECTION

**Offering back what you have heard, SAY WHAT YOU SEE.**

## WHAT TO TRY...

- "It sounds like..." – conveying back what you have heard or what you have understood
- Paraphrasing – offering back what you have heard in your own words subconsciously demonstrates your personal understanding
- Summarising – what are the key messages? Can you boil things down



for them based on what they've told you? Is there one main factor affecting them deeply that you could pull out?

# ACCURATE REFLECTION

## EXAMPLES

- *"It sounds like you're really struggling with this at the moment"*
- *"Sounds like this has been a tough time"*
- *"So you're feeling angry because you can't see your friends"*

## WHAT TO BE CAREFUL OF...

- Avoid looking for 'hidden meanings' at this point – stick to what you have been given.
- 'Parrot Fashion' – simply repeating back what they have said can seem patronising, and sometimes an unusual response in conversation

# READING BEHAVIOUR, ADDING EMOTION

**Attaching emotion to the behaviour you observe or the words that you hear.**

## WHAT TO TRY...

- Observe their demeanour. Listen to their words. Give them your focus.
- *"It looks like..."* – what are you observing from their behaviour or the words they are using?
- Keep and add – acknowledge how they are clearly and visibly feeling from their behaviour and words, and add anything else that they may be feeling.



- *"You seem really sad about this"*
- *"You sound really frustrated"*

## EXAMPLES

- *"It looks like you've found this all very stressful"*
- *"You look really angry – I'm wondering if you might also be hurt?"*
- *"It looks like you find it really hard to talk about this"*

## WHAT TO BE CAREFUL OF...

- Reading the situation wrong – only use this if you are sure of what you are seeing

# NORMALISING

Recognising and relating to normal emotions that others might feel.



## WHAT TO TRY...

- Look at the situation – is it a common situation? Would other people feel the same way in similar situations?

## EXAMPLES

- *"I'm not surprised you feel this way, anyone would in this situation"*
- *"Lots of people struggle with things like this, you're absolutely not on your own"*
- *"This kind of thing would probably stress anyone out"*

## WHAT TO BE CAREFUL OF...

- Trivialising – be careful not to make it seem like they should be able to deal with this because others manage i.e. "we are all going through this at the moment and your brother is managing OK"

