Responding to Students in Distress

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What was it about that person that made you choose them?

What did they do or say that may have helped you relax and encouraged you to confide in them?

What specific aspects of their personality or behavior did you find helpful?
AIMS AND FEARS

- To reach out to that student that you notice may be struggling and to help that student who is overwhelmed to contain

- To facilitate the student to reflect on their experience and to share those reflections with us so that we then can do what we always do well (support, refer) with more information

- I won't be able to help / I'll hurt somehow or I'll miss something
ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- Eye Contact
- Non-Verbal Skills
- Facial Expressions
- Body Language
- Silence
VERBAL ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- Encouraging Phrases
- Reflection
- Paraphrasing
- Open Questions
- Summarising
- Not trying to problem Solve
- Not sharing own concerns/outdoing other
ENCOURAGERS, PARAPHRASES AND SUMMARIES CONVEY THAT WE ARE WORKING TO UNDERSTAND THE OTHER PERSON.
To paraphrase or reflect, choose the most important details of what someone has just said and speak them back. Paraphrases are in your own words and reflections are in the other person’s words.

I have just broken up with Andy. The way I was being treated was just too much to bear. Every time I mentioned it Andy would just shut me down. I feel so much better now.

REFLECTION: It was just too much to bear.

PARAPHRASE: You feel much better after breaking up with Andy.
SUMMARISING

Summaries pull together verbal and non-verbal comments from the other person over a period of time, highlighting key parts of the communication, restating them as accurately as possible.

EXAMPLE

Joan is listening to Mary. Mary, has been speaking for 5 minutes - she is feeling down, behind in college, concerned about her relationship with her boyfriend, and overwhelmed by parents’ demands.

Here is what a succinct, tentative summary would sound like:
INTRODUCING PARAPHRASES AND SUMMARIES

- ‘So what you are saying is…’
- ‘I hear you saying that…’
- ‘If I understand correctly, you…’
- ‘You are telling me that…’
- ‘It sounds like you…’
“It sounds like you are feeling really low and you’re worried your coursework isn’t going well. Things with your boyfriend aren’t the best, and you’re unhappy with the amount of stress your parents are putting on you to get a first.

Does that sound right?”
ROLE PLAY

1 speaker
1 listener - use reflection, paraphrase, summary
Observers give feedback
ROLE PLAY

SPEAKER TALKS ABOUT BEING VERY STRESSED DUE TO:

• Needing very high exam/ project/ assignment/ placement scores to get the qualification they want not sure they can get these
• Summer plans have recently fallen through due to money worries
Trigger situation with other

Self-Treatment

GLOBAL DISTRESS-
Fear/Apprehension

CORE PAIN- primary maladaptive emotion
Loneliness
Shame
Fear/Tame

NEED
To be loved(connected)
To be accepted
To be safe

COMPASSION

Grieving, letting go

Relief

PROTECTIVE ANGER
Agency, Empowerment,

Emotional /Mental Avoidance

Behavioural avoidance

Case conceptualization framework of transformation model
SKILLS TO DEVELOP

- Good listening
- Knowledge regarding college policies.
- Ability to empathise.
- Awareness regarding referrals to appropriate services.
CHALLENGES

• Setting boundaries
• Time constraints
• Other commitments and stress
• ‘Leaving work in work’
• Supervision / debriefing
• Unrealistic goals