

# Active listening skills

## Stay calm, connected, open minded and curious

- Acknowledge how you think the person is feeling - simply saying what you think you've heard: 'That sounds really upsetting' or 'You must be feeling really confused.'

## Feeling heard and understood restores our ability to think

- It will help them to process what's going on, start to understand their emotions, make links as to why they are feeling that way, get to the root of the problem and find solutions
- This is true no matter what the age - acknowledging emotions to infants helps them feel heard, understand their emotions, say more about it and move on.
- Let the other person talk at their own pace

Emotional  
regulation

## Build relationships when not at crisis point

- It's so much easier to deal with issues as they arise if you already have a connection.
- Offer prompts "That must have been hard" or "What happened then"
- If in doubt as to what to say next say: "Can you tell me more about that"
- Say "And" not "But" - it allows different points of view to exist at the same time

## Notice how you're feeling and if you can truly bare to listen

- It can be hard to hear that someone is having such struggles and naturally we want to make it better but its important to not dash in with a false reassurance or a quick fix, they need to properly think it through and get to the root of the issue.
- Listening to other people's worries can affect our own mood so make sure you are looking after yourself too.
- Think about non verbal and body language - it can be helpful to sit side by side

Attunement

## Be honest about your availability

- If someone approaches you when you are short of time
- Acknowledge how you think they are feeling,
- Be clear that you only have (however) minutes,
- If the issue is not resolved acknowledge that this needs more time and
- Arrange a time to meet later or suggest who else is available

## Offer regular check ins

- Agree with the person who is going to do what (if anything) and that if things don't improve as a result what they should do
- Don't be afraid to tell the person that you don't know what to do, but assure them that you will ask and find out what to do.
- Recognise if you're going round in circles, gently let them know and work out what else might help to move things on

Structure

## Be clear about your role and who you will share the information with

- Consider if you need to pass this on/record the conversation?