



www.getbacktolife.org

Empathy

Ways We Stay Connected to Feelings and Needs

Give your full attention to another by either silently or verbally connecting to their feelings and needs. Be willing to set yourself aside and completely enter the other's world with acceptance and respect.

Not Empathy

Ways to Communicate with Others in Addition to Empathy (remaining connected to the needs of all)

SYMPATHY: Bring your attention back to yourself. "Oh, I am so sorry. I feel terrible for you."

ADVICE: We assume the person needs information. "Well, what you could do is..."

EXPLAIN/ANALYZE: We believe we know why someone feels the way they do, and we think that knowing why will change their feeling state. "You are just feeling bad because..."

CORRECT: We try to point out someone's mistake in interpreting. "He didn't do that to hurt you, he was just in a hurry."

CONSOLE: "It will be okay. You're okay. Everything will work out."

TELL A STORY: "The same thing happened to me. This one time..."

PUSH AWAY FEELINGS: We might be uncomfortable so we tell others not to feel what they feel. "Come on, smile. Don't be sad." "Just calm down and take a deep breath."

INVESTIGATE/INTERROGATE: "Why did you do that?" "What made you feel that way?"

EVALUATE: We decide if another's emotional response is appropriate or not. "You are overreacting. It is not such a big deal."

EDUCATE: "What I see about the situation is..." "The reason you feel like that is..."

ONE-UP: "That's awful, but something even worse happened to me and I was devastated."

DIAGNOSE: "Sounds like you had a panic attack. I know some good herbs for anxiety."

DEMAND: "If you don't get control of your emotions, I'm leaving!"

DENIAL OF CHOICE: "It's a hard thing, but we all have to do it."

NOD & SMILE: You feel uncomfortable and just want to get out of the situation.