



Ten Skills for Empathetic Listening

1. **Attending or Acknowledging:** Providing verbal or nonverbal awareness of the other person.
 - Make eye contact
 - “Ah ah...”
 - “Yes, I see...”
2. **Restating or Paraphrasing:** Responding to a person’s basic verbal message.
 - “So you think that...”
 - “So I can understand you correctly...”
 - “Let me try to summarize what I think you are telling me...”
3. **Reflecting:** Reflecting feelings, experiences or content that has been heard or perceived through cues.
 - “So you felt...”
 - “I can tell that you are feeling...”
 - “It seems like a very difficult situation...”
4. **Interpreting:** Offering a tentative interpretation about the other person’s feelings, desires or meanings.
 - “It seems to me like you are...”
 - “So you would like to resolve the conflict in the simplest way possible by...”
 - “You mean you want...”
5. **Summarizing or Synthesizing:** Bringing together in some way feelings and experiences; providing focus.
 - “From everything you are telling me, I can tell you are...”
 - “So your main issue is...”
 - “You have identified these issues for me...”
6. **Probing:** Questioning in a supportive way that requests more information or attempts to clear up confusion.
 - “I want to make sure I’ve got this straight...”
 - “To help me better tell your story, can I put those events in the correct order?”
7. **Giving Feedback:** Sharing perceptions of the other person’s ideas or feelings; disclosing relevant personal information.
 - “I would feel the same way...”
 - “I have been through a similar experience...”
 - “It’s understandable that you feel...”

8. **Supporting:** Showing warmth and caring in your own way.
 - “It’s great that you called us...”
 - “You’ve been through a lot, and I’m going to do my best to get you the right help.”
 - “You did the right thing by reporting it...”

9. **Checking Perceptions:** Finding out if the person’s interpretations and perceptions are valid and accurate.
 - “Did someone else witness this event?”
 - “How do you know how long it took?”
 - “Are other people affected the same way?”

10. **Being Quiet:** Giving the other person time to think as well as to talk
 - “Can you think of anything else?”
 - Pause between questions
 - Let the other person finish their thoughts and sentences