

Useful Tips & strategies

How to validate someone's experience through language



Try not to...

Deflect

"That's awful. How's Ben doing at college now?"

Diminish

"Things are tough for everyone at the minute, I know of a family who only eat once a day."

Dismiss

"Calm down, it'll be ok."

Dish out (unwanted) advice

"Here's what I would do in your situation. I'm sure you will be fine."

Directionally question-

"You're ok right? It's been a month, are you feeling better now?"

Try to...

Call out their courage

"Thanks for sharing that, I appreciate it may have been difficult."

Clarify

"From what I'm hearing you're feeling..."
"It sounds like you might be feeling worried about..."

Character Boosting (validate)

"That's a really difficult situation, I can see why you're upset."
"This is a really difficult situation and I think you've shown a lot of strength and courage."

Convey you care

"You know yourself best, what do you think would be the most helpful for you right now"
"I want to help, what can I do in the time we have."

Breathing Exercises



Square Breathing

Find something square to focus on e.g a door/window/book or trace your finger along the edges of something square

- 1 Breathe in as you count 1, 2, 3, 4 on the first side.
- 2 Hold as you count 1, 2, 3, 4 on next side.
- 3 Breathe out as you count 1, 2, 3, 4 on next side.
- 4 Hold as you count 1, 2, 3, 4 on next side.
- 5 Keep your counting even and trace your finger along the 4 edges of a square object if it helps you to keep focus.
- 6 Repeat 3 times.

Useful Tips & strategies



Breathe and Sigh

- 1 Breathe in through your nose.
- 2 Make a big sigh and drop your shoulders downwards as you breathe out through your mouth.
- 3 Repeat 4 times.

Slow Breaths

- 1 Breathe in slowly while you count 1, 2, 3, 4.
- 2 Breathe out slowly while you count 4, 3, 2, 1

Grounding Techniques

Acknowledgment

Acknowledge 5 things that you can see around you. 👁️👁️

Acknowledge 4 things that you can touch around you. 🖐️

Acknowledge 3 things that you can hear around you. 👂

Acknowledge 2 things that you can smell around you. 👃

Acknowledge 1 thing that you can taste around you. 🗑️

Distress Tolerance Skills

Activities

Enjoyable and/ or distracting activities

Thoughts

Occupying and diverting attention with other thoughts, such as by doing a puzzle

Senses

Stimulating physical sensations using multiple senses e.g holding an ice cube.

Mindfulness

Take a mindful walk - be aware of feeling your feet on the ground.



Useful Tips & strategies

Working with Parents and Carers



Have conversation with parent to see if there is anything they need support with

Non-blaming approach.

Important to empower families to voice their ideas, opinions and communicate effectively.



Important to understand the family.

Signpost or run training sessions in school around mental health to reduce the stigma which still can be attached to mental health/parenting support groups.



Ensure staff are kept up-to-date about internal and external services that support parents and carers and have a list of services to hand that parents can be signposted to for more specialist help.

Be respectful and warm.

Allow for them to understand you are here to support and not judge.

Actively listen to them.

Empathy and Compassion

Be self-compassionate - be kind to ourselves as this allows us to be compassionate to others.

- 1 Actively listen and be present
- 2 Avoid assumptions.
- 3 Do not be judgemental.
- 4 Be genuine
- 5 Language to show you care and understand 'I understand this is a really difficult time for you right now' See page 1.