

Fourth Day

Helping Skill II: Non Directive Therapy

Goal: To communicate with clients without directive advice

What can the therapist do without giving advice?

DO:	DON'T:
Show interest and concentrate your attention on the student.	Shift attention elsewhere -- Make eye contact and nod. Don't be on your computer, doing homework, or using your cell phone when talking to a student.
Attempt to understand what the student is saying. Asking questions and re-phrasing what they said for confirmation is a good way to do so.	Make judgments too quickly or jump to conclusions.
Express empathy	Ask the individual to defend what it is that they are feeling.
Try to identify problems	Argue with the student.
Help the student associate problems with causes, if discovered.	Give advice.
Listen to ideas and thoughts, and the feelings behind these.	Take over the conversation.

Non Directive Techniques

Clarify

Purpose: To get additional facts and to help the individual explore all aspects of the problem

ex) “Do you mean...?” “Are you saying...?”

Restatement

Purpose: To check understanding and show that the therapist is listening.

ex) “If I understand correctly...” “So you mean...”

Minimal Encouraging

Purpose: To convey interest and insure that they person keeps talking.

ex) Head nodding. “Go on...” “Uh, huh...”

Reflective

Purpose: To show you understand how the speaker is feeling.

ex) “You’re upset because...” “You feel that...”

Summarize

Purpose: To check understanding and bring discussion into focus.

ex) “It sounds to me...”

Non-Verbal Communication

Facial Expressions: Most important of all nonverbal cues in counseling because they communicate meaning and intent. For example, if a student talks about pregnancy or drug abuse, a shocked look on the helper’s face will not make the student feel as though they are in a non-judgmental environment.

Eye Contact: How, and the extent to which the participants look at each other. Comfort with eye contact varies cross culturally. Racial and cultural considerations should be taken into account.

Kinesics (Body Movements): Body movements, other than facial expressions and eye movements, often uncover a counselor’s feelings. These movements can be conscious or unconscious. These include, leaning back, arm folding, nodding or head shaking, etc.

Proxemics: Level of closeness between people, setting the level of intimacy of a situation.
Comfort with closeness and personal space also differs cross culturally.

Conversation Stimulators:

- Maintain eye contact if culturally appropriate. This communicates attention and interest.
- Smile. When genuine, it is the most significant indicator of warmth.
- Lead forward and face the helpee squarely. This conveys a message of involvement.
- Nodding indicated that you hear and understand what is being said.
- Providing feedback both verbally and nonverbally to indicate interest and understanding.

Conversation Blockers:

- Fidgeting or nervously engaging in distracting behaviors indicated you'd rather be elsewhere.
- Yawning indicates boredom regardless of whether that is the intention or not.
- Attending to an intruder indicates disinterest in the person you are speaking with. Close the door, disregard your cell phone and/or computer, etc.
- Avoiding feedback and failing to use verbal and/or nonverbal cues is sure to end a session quickly and not be helpful.

[Carl Rogers and Gloria](#)

Note:

Common Mistakes for Peer Counselors

The process of being an active listener is not natural for most people. It is very different from everyday, casual conversation with friends and family. It takes practice, but here are a few things to try to avoid:

1. Putting your feelings on the other person.

Problem: “I just did really poorly on my midterm and feel awful.”

Inappropriate Response: “That sucks. I feel sorry for you. Too bad you messed up.” or “I’m really disappointed in you.”

Appropriate Response: “Sounds like you feel really rotten about that exam.”

2. Giving the person your opinion, advice, or inappropriate self-disclosure; agreeing or disagreeing.

Problem: “Tom was a jerk tonight, so I told him to leave.”

Inappropriate Response: “Good! You should have told him to get lost a while ago.” or “I don’t know, I think that was a bit extreme.”

Appropriate Response: “You really got fed up with his behavior, huh?”

3. Trying to “fix” things or change negative behavior.

Problem: “I saw Mary with another guy at the bar and it made me sick.”

Inappropriate Response: “Oh, don’t worry, there are plenty of fish in the sea!” or “Don’t think about it, it was probably just a platonic relationship.”

Appropriate Response: “It sounds like seeing Mary with someone else really gets to you.”

4. Giving answers, suggestions, or problem solving for the other person.

Problem: “I’m feeling pretty homesick, but I don’t know if I should go home this weekend or not.”

Inappropriate Response: “Go ahead and go home, you will feel much better if you do.” or “There’s a lot going on here this weekend that you don’t want to miss!”

Appropriate Response: “I can see how this would be a tough decision for you. Let’s look at the pros and cons of each.”

5. Preaching or moralizing; putting the other person down and/or criticizing their ideas.

Problem: “When Emily has a test, she’s so cranky I can’t stand to be in the same room.”

Inappropriate Response: “How does it feel to have the tables turned on you? Now maybe when you have a test you’ll think twice before yelling at others.”

Appropriate Response: “It seems like Emily’s test anxiety is difficult to deal with.”

6. Only reacting to a feeling or only reacting to the content.

Problem: “My roommate never cleans up after himself and it upsets me.”

Inappropriate Response: “You’re roommate is messy, huh?” or “You’re angry.”

Appropriate Response: “You seem angry because Tim always leaves his place a mess.”

7. Sympathizing instead of empathizing.

Problem: “The thought of graduating and going into the real world is making me a nervous wreck.”

Inappropriate Response: “That’s too bad, I think we all get nervous though.” or “You’ll be fine. I’m sure something will work out.”

Appropriate Response: “You seem very nervous about your future. Let’s talk more about your specific concerns.”

8. Giving logical rationale.

Problem: “My boyfriend didn’t call me this weekend. I’m getting concerns about our relationship.”

Inappropriate Response: “There are a lot of possible reasons why he didn’t call. Maybe he just got tired or busy.”

Appropriate Response: “It sounds like him not calling has stirred up some doubts in you.”