

NINE BLOCK EXERCISE

Note examples of the use of the following interpersonal helping skills.

Attending	Reflections	Summarization
Concreteness	Reframing	Closed Questions
Open Questions	Indirect Questions	Solution-Focused Questions

INTERPERSONAL HELPING SKILLS



Attending: Communicating respect, interest and acceptance for the families by actively attending to them at both the physical and psychological levels.

Elements of Attending

Physical Attending

Use of Environment

- ★ Comfortable
- ★ Minimize barriers
- ★ Minimize distractions

Use of Body

- ★ Gestures
- ★ Eye contact
- ★ Voice quality
- ★ Body posture
- ★ Facial expression

Psychological Attending

Observing

- ★ Client's congruence
- ★ Client's use of voice
- ★ Client's nonverbal behavior

Responding

- ★ Verbal following
- ★ Minimal encouragers
- ★ Congruence with client

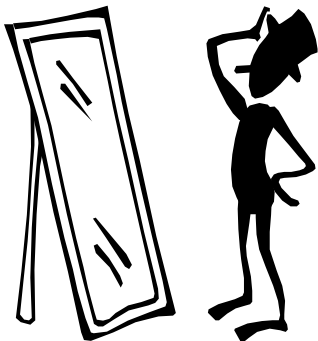
Reflections: Concise restatements of the person's immediate past message, or some part of the person's past message that result from careful, selective and/or psychological attending to both verbal messages and non-verbal cues.

√ Reflections of *content* involve attending to, then stating the beliefs, opinions, events and facts of the person's message.

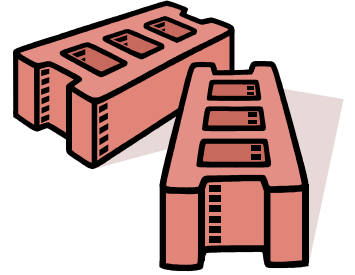
√ Reflections of *feeling* involve attending to, then stating the emotions or emotional aspects of the person's message.

Combined reflections involve mirroring both the content and feeling aspects of the message.

Summarization: Using multiple statements of feeling or content expressed over a period of time. Summarizations can be used for opening and closing an interview as well as in the middle of an interview or as a transition.



Concreteness: Asking the person for additional information when vague terms are used. For example, if a parent states: “*Johnny’s foster mother acts like she doesn’t like it when I have visitation.*” The worker should ask the parent to explain what the foster mother is doing when she “acts like...”



Reframing: Reframing is both a skill and a tool used to seek out additional meaning or explanations for family’s behaviors. It can focus on the *positive intent, trait or characteristic being expressed through family members’ behavior, feelings, or statements.* In reframing, the “lens” with which we view a behavior or statement is changed in order to get at the underlying positive intent or characteristic of the family member. We want to see the behavior from behind the person’s eyes.



Use of Questions: The way in which we ask questions plays an important role in determining the type of answer we are likely to receive. There are several types of questions:

Closed Ended: question that can be answered with one or two words, *i.e. When do your parenting classes start?*

Open Ended: questions that encourage the person to use his or her own words to elaborate on a topic, *i.e. Can you tell me more about what happened right before your child was injured.* Sometimes, an open ended question follows a closed ended question to ask the person to elaborate on their previous answer.

Indirect: questions that are statements made for the purpose of seeking information, *i.e. “It sounds like you have worked really hard at not losing your temper.”* Notice that this type of question can also serve as a reflection or a reframe, but it clearly invites the person to share additional information.

Solution-focused: questions designed to seek strengths and possible solutions. For a more thorough explanation of solution-focused questions, see the assignment box.