

Introductory Skills Defined

- 🗣️ **Focused listening:** attempting to concentrate on a specific part of a message and to search for connections when readily not apparent.

Relevance to practice: increases the likelihood of worker understanding of the client, and worker awareness of what the worker might do or say next to maintain engagement and to maintain relevant interview flow.

- 🗣️ **Containment:** the helping professional's ability to contain himself/herself – not acting – in order for another to be able to tell their whole “story” before the worker attempts to “help”.

Relevance to practice: helps the worker to maintain concentration on the client's issues and to avoid introducing extraneous information or non-relevant sharing of worker experience related to the problem/situation. The interview is about the client, not the worker.

- 🗣️ **Questioning:** making a request for more information as to the nature of the problem/situation to get a fuller picture of the concern expressed; the worker might offer open-ended questions or more narrowly focused questions; those requiring a forced choice or yes/no answer.

Relevance to practice: helps the worker to develop a more complete and accurate understanding of the problem and/or the situation.

- 🗣️ **Displaying understanding of client feelings:** nonverbal and verbal communication aimed at demonstrating that the helping professional comprehends the client's thoughts and feelings.

Relevance to practice: helps the client to feel understood and promotes engagement and the protective partnership.

- 🗣️ **Summarizing:** helping someone to identify the main themes of the discussion during a session/meeting; one may use summarizing at different points in the interview to close one segment and transition to another, and at the end of the interview.

Relevance to practice: creates the opportunity for both the worker and client to understand and agree upon the content and meaning of the session or interview segment and the implications for next steps.

- 🗣️ **Giving feedback:** offers an opportunity to provide observations about what, related to the task, the client does successfully and to recommend suggestions for improvement or future work.

Relevance to practice: helps the worker and client in building trust, in reinforcing useful strengths and in identifying requirements for further work.