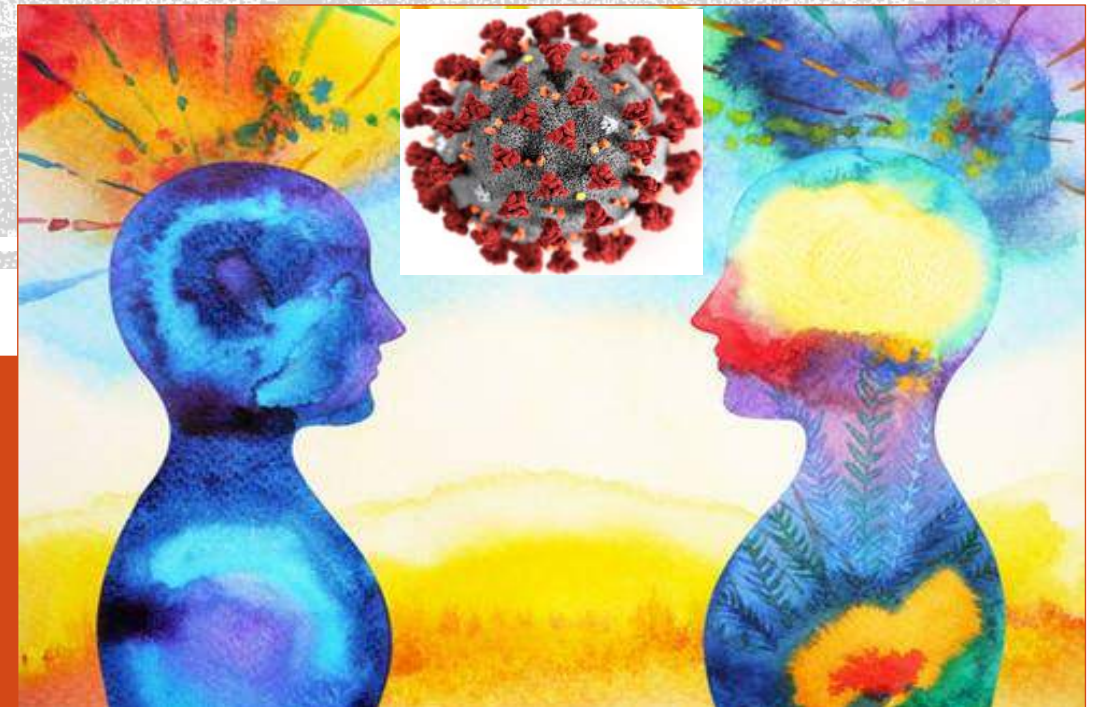


# PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK



**Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists (IACP)**

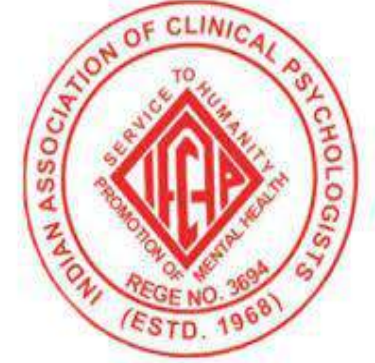
Secretariat: #1220, GMCH Doctor Complex,

Sector 32 B, Chandigarh PIN: 160030

Website: [www.iacp.in](http://www.iacp.in) Email: [iacpsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:iacpsecretary@gmail.com)

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# ***'COVID 19 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT GROUP'***



- **Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists(IACP)** has taken an initiative to form a ***'COVID 19 Psychological Support Group'*** which aims to provide free telephonic / online counselling to people in emotional distress to help them to cope better in this crisis.





# PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING

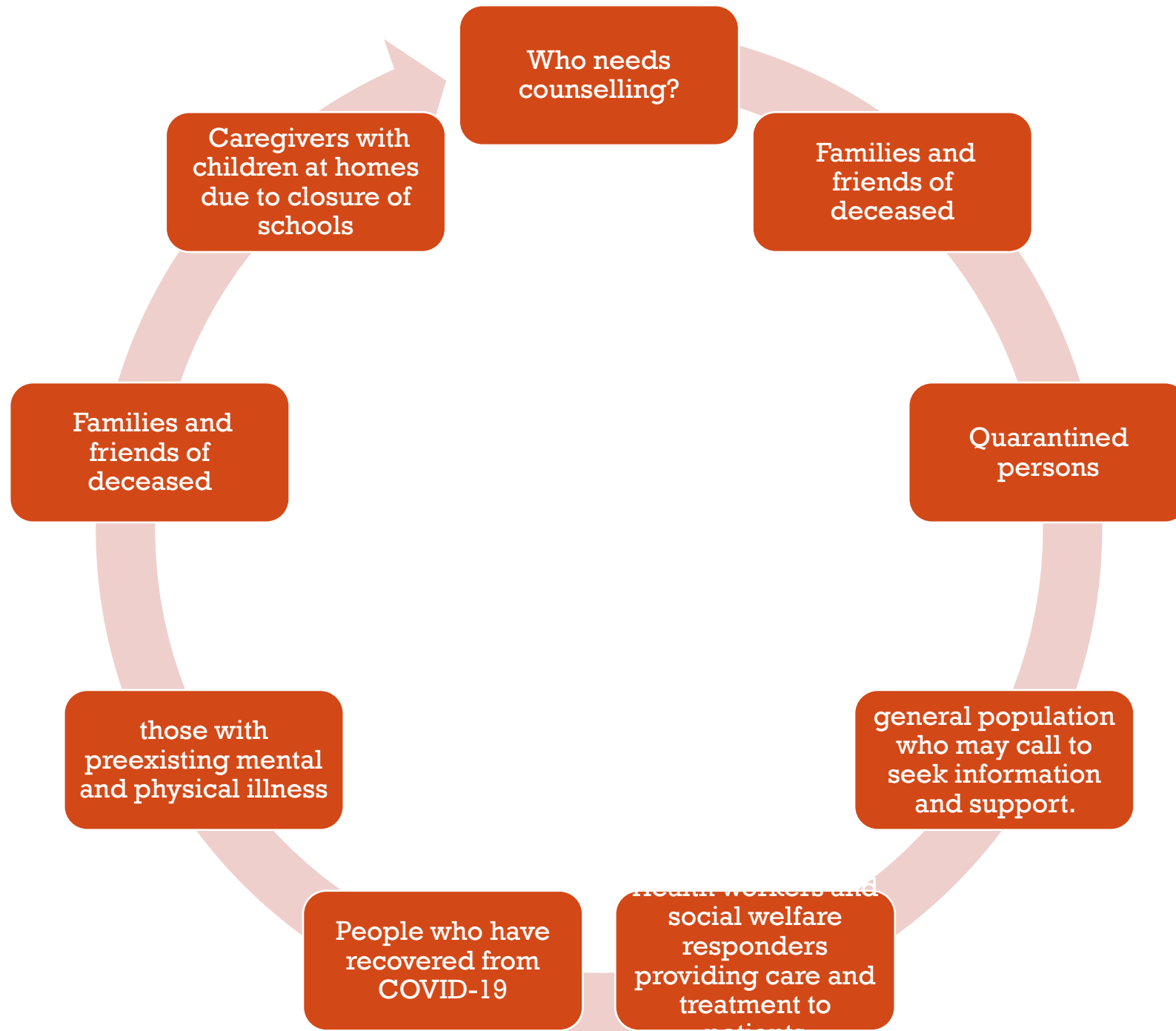
- Psychosocial Counselling is a method of helping people in distress.
- helps normalize worry and other negative emotions,
- provides feelings of safety, calming, and hope.
- cope better with their challenges.
- It involves paying attention to reactions, active listening and problem solving. Practical assistance involves problem solving, referring to further options for assistance.



# PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING

- Counselling can happen through phone or internet calls.
- Social media can also help.
- everyone affected by COVID-19 may require it at some point in time during an outbreak,

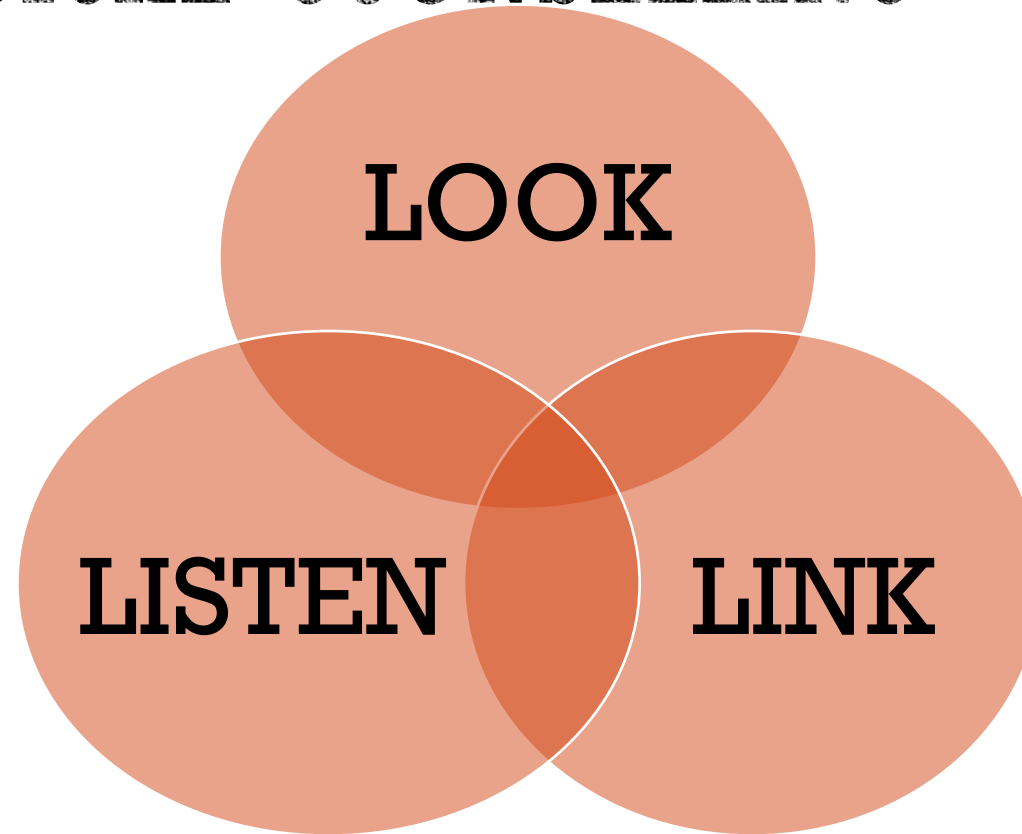








# **ACTION PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING**













# **ESTABLISH CALL IN OPTIONS AND PREPARING TO SUPPORT**

- There will be situations where helpers are working from home.
- In such cases, it is important to consider and adapt the physical environment, to ensure privacy and to avoid disturbance during a call: e.g. make sure no one will disturb.
- family members and others know that the room is used for a call or video conference, and choose a quiet place.



## **The principle of Listen when responding to a call**

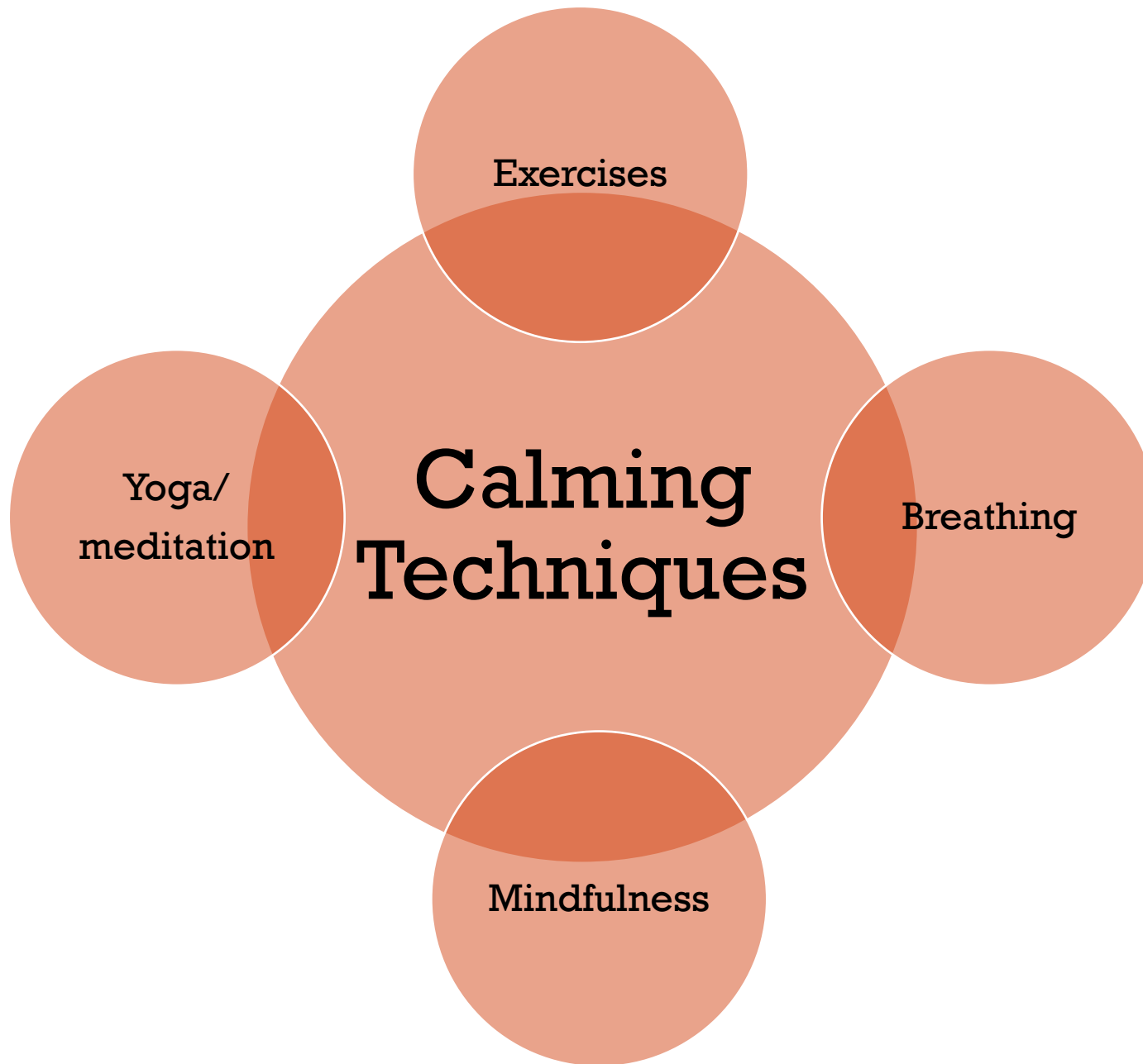
- begins the conversation
- introduces him or herself
- pays attention and listens actively
- accepts feelings
- calms the distressed
- asks about needs and concerns
- helps those in distress find solutions to their needs and problems

## During the call

- Listen more than you speak to identify concerns
- Ask gently probing questions
- Use open questions: when, where, what, who
- Acknowledge feelings and understanding of events
- Normalize emotions and reactions
- Recognize internal resources and capacity to cope Provide information about COVID 19.
- Be honest of what you don't know. This is a new virus that we are all learning about.

**Key  
psychosocial  
phrases  
conveying  
interest and  
empathy**

- I understand your concerns and most people do think a lot about the situation ...
- It is very natural to be sad, angry, upset or ....
- I hear what you are saying, about having to ...
- I fully understand that you are feeling this way ...
- In this situation, your reaction is quite natural ...
- Maybe we can discuss possible solutions ...  
What we can offer is ...
- I am concerned about you, and would like to suggest to refer you to someone who can help you....



# ADVICE TO ISOLATED OR QUARANTINED PERSONS

Stay socially close

Even when maintaining physical distance

Daily routine

Set goals

- Keep active
- Problems solving
- Look for humour

Maintain hope

- Use stress management techniques
- Accept feelings
- Plan time alone and time together if living with others





# LINKING, REFERRING AND ENDING THE CALL



# REFER TO MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL



- has not been able to sleep for the last week and is confused disorientated
- is so distressed that they are unable to function normally and care for themselves or their children by, for example, not eating or keeping clean
- loses control over their behavior and behaves in an unpredictable or destructive manner
- threatens harm to themselves or others
- starts excessive and out-of-the-ordinary use of drugs or alcohol
- are living with a psychological disorder and/or were taking medication prior to the situation of distress may also need continued mental health support.
- presents chronic health conditions and need more supports.
- presents symptoms of severe mental health conditions



# **CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION USING THE ACTION PRINCIPLE LINK**



- If relevant, ask what they know and believe about the virus
- where and how they get updated information
- Ask how the caller stays in touch with social networks like trusted friends, family or others
- Ask if there are any practical problem or challenges
- If needed, refer to other services...



# ENDING THE CONVERSATION



- Summarize the conversation by highlighting key issues discussed
- and also action points
- Agree if a follow up conversation is needed
- and if so, find a suitable time





# **DOS AND DON'TS WHEN OFFERING PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING..**



## Do's

- Listen more than you speak to identify concerns
- Ask gently probing questions
- Use open questions: when, where, what, who
- Acknowledge feelings and understanding of events
- Normalize emotions and reactions
- Recognize internal resources and capacity to cope Provide information about COVID 19.
- Be honest of what you don't know. This is a new virus that we are all learning about.

## Do's

- Be patient and calm
- Allow processing and ventilation of emotions
- Listen for individuals' options and help them make the choices
- Ensure confidentiality unless issues mentioned affect the safety of the individual or others
- Ensure the do no harm principle is upheld



# Don'ts

- Pressure others to speak if they do not want to speak
- Ask why this or that
- Be judgmental
- Use technical terminology
- Talk about yourself or personal issues or troubles
- Give false promises or false assurances
- Share someone else's story or experiences
- Exploit the trust and confidentiality shared



# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING

- **Listening/observing** - capturing and understanding the information communicated by that pt.
- **Attending** - orienting oneself physically to the patient (pt) to indicate one is aware of the patient, and, in fact, that the client has your full, undivided attention and that you care.
- **CONTENT** - what is specifically said. Listen carefully for, not only what a person says, but also the words, expressions and patterns the person is using, which may give you a deeper insight. Counselors should develop their ability to remember what was said, as well as to clarify what was said or finding out what was not said.
- **PROCESS** - all nonverbal phenomena, including how content is conveyed, themes, interactions, etc



# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING



- Primary skills associated with the communication of
- empathy include: verbal attending
  - b. paraphrasing content of client communications
  - c. reflecting patient feelings and implicit messages
- **ATTENDING** – involves our behaviors which reflect our paying full attention, in an accepting and supportive way, to the client.
- **PARAPHRASING** - Selective focusing on the cognitive part of the message – with the client's key words and ideas being communicated back to the patient in a rephrased, and shortened form. There are four steps in effective [paraphrasing:
  - Listen and recall. The entire client message to ensure you recalled it in its entirety and do not omit any significant parts.
  - Identify the content part of the message by deciding what event, situation, idea, or person the client is talking about.



# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING



- Rephrase, in as concise a manner as possible, the key words and ideas the client has used to communicate their concerns in a fresh or different perspective.
- Perception check is usually in the form of a brief question, e., “It sounds like...,” “Let me see if I understand this,” which allows the client to agree or disagree with the accuracy of your paraphrasing.
- **REFLECTING patients' FEELINGS-** Affective reflection in an open-ended, respectful manner of what the client is communicating verbally and nonverbally, both directly through words as well as reasonable inferences about what the client might be experiencing emotionally. It is important for the helper to think carefully about which words he/she chooses to communicate these feelings back to the client.



# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING



- **Genuiness**
- Ability of counselor to be freely themselves. Includes congruence between outer words/behaviors and inner feelings; nondefensiveness; non-role-playing; and being unpretentious. For example, if the helper claims that they are comfortable helping a client explore a drug or sexual issue, but their behavior (verbally and nonverbally) shows signs of discomfort with the topic this will become an obstacle to progress and often lead to client confusion about and mistrust of the helper.
- Unconditional positive regard
- An expression of caring and nurturance as well as acceptance.
- Includes conveying warmth through:
  - Also conveying acceptance by responding to the pt's messages (verbal and nonverbal) with
  - nonjudgmental or noncritical verbal & nonverbal reactions.
  - Respect - ability to communicate to the pt the counselor's sincere belief that every person possesses the
  - inherent strength and capacity to make it in life, and that each person has the right to choose his own alternatives and make his own decisions.





# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING

## **Concreteness**

Keeping communications specific -- focused on facts and feelings of relevant concerns, while avoiding tangents, generalizations, abstract discussions, or talking about counselor rather than the client.

Includes the following functions:

1. Assisting client to identify and work on a specific problem from the various ones presented.
2. Reminding the client of the task and redescribing intent and structure of the session.
3. Using questions and suggestions to help the client clarify facts, terms, feelings, and goals.
4. Use a here-and-now focus to emphasize process and content occurring in current session, which may of

help to elucidate the problem being worked on or improving the problem-solving process.

Open Questions -- A questioning process to assist the client in clarifying or exploring thoughts or feelings. Counselor id not requesting specific information and not purposively limiting the nature of the response to only a yes or no, or very brief answer.





# SKILLS OF COUNSELLING

- Be honest and trustworthy.
- Respect a person's right to make their own decisions.
- Be aware of and set aside your own biases and prejudices.
- Make it clear to people that even if they refuse help now, they can still access help in the future.
- Respect privacy and keep the person's story confidential, as appropriate.
- Behave appropriately according to the person's culture, age and gender.







# ETHICS OF COUNSELLING

- Don't exploit your relationship as a helper.
- Don't ask the person for any money or favor for helping them.
- Don't make false promises or give false information.
- Don't exaggerate your skills.
- Don't force help on people, and don't be intrusive or pushy.
- Don't pressure people to tell you their story.
- Don't share the person's story with others.
- Don't judge the person for their actions or feelings



# IACP DISASTER MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE



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# Thank you !

# Stay safe !



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