

HOW TO REACT WHEN SOMEONE PRESENTS PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS



Sometimes it's difficult to be around people that are going through a difficult situation, causing them stress, anxiety or distress.

This pamphlet summarizes the attitudes and behaviours to adopt, as well as reactions to avoid. It also includes information about the different resources available to help support you.

PUBLIC HEALTH
GASPÉSIE-ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE

Centre intégré
de santé
et de services sociaux
de la Gaspésie

Québec 

Centre intégré
de santé
et de services sociaux
des Îles

Québec 

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES

1

Stay calm and adopt compassion, warmth and honesty.

2

Listen to the person, let them express their difficulties and help them identify their needs.

3

Normalize their feeling (stress, anxiety, distress, etc.).

4

Validate the information given by the person and what they retain from the discussion.

5

Foster hope and optimism by reassuring them and providing information.








6

Know your own limits and respect the other person's boundaries. Reach out to the appropriate resources and respect confidentiality.









REACTIONS AND RESPONSES TO AVOID



-  Bring the situation back to yourself.
-  Giving your own formula for happiness.
-  Jumping too quickly to conclusions or strategies without knowing the complete situation.
-  Overestimating your skills and going beyond your role.
-  Judging the person and/or the situation, or believing that they are manipulating you.
-  Carrying the other person's issues on to your shoulders or trying to save them.
-  Making promises you can't keep or communicating false information.

EXAMPLES OF KEY QUESTIONS



-  What is most challenging for you right now?
-  When you are going through something difficult, who do you usually turn to?
-  In the past, when times were difficult, what usually made you feel good?
-  What kind of support do you need the most right now?
-  Would you like to know about the available resources that could help you?
-  What do you take away from our discussion? Does it respond to your needs?

RESOURCES

• Info-social



811

• Suicide prevention




1 866-APPELLE (277-3553)



535353 (texting)



suicide.ca (instant messaging)

 If uncertain, please call your local CLSC. They will guide you towards the recommended resources.



Gaspésie



Îles



FOR MORE INFORMATION :

[PATHFINDERS NETWORK](#)