Therapeutic Communication

Mental Health "Psychiatric Care"

SimpleNursing

Open-ended questions

These are **NOT simply "Yes" or "No"** questions, rather it requires an in-depth response.

Closed-ended comments

Stating facts used portray empathy, builds trust & assess further.



HESI

Open-ended questions?
Select all that apply.

- **"How do you cope** with anxiety? "
- **"What event in your life** has been the most stressful?"
- "Can you **please tell me more** about what was happening to you that led you to be hospitalized here?"

Build TRUST — 2 NCLEX TIPS

1. Ask & Assess Emotions

- "**Tell me when** you started noticing ..."
- "**Tell me what concerns** you have ..."
- "**What are you feeling** right now?"
- "**How are you feeling** about your baby?"

2. State Facts

- "**We have the vital signs** under control"
- "**You must be very upset** after experiencing this"
- "**I understand** you are worried"
- "**You sound** very discouraged & scared."
- "**You sound angry**. Anger is a normal feeling associated with loss."

Combo:

- "This experience **has been overwhelming for you. What are you feeling** right now?"
- "Clients with cancer **experience fear of dying, tell me about** your concerns."

AVOID

"Non-Therapeutic" Communication

- **NEVER:** Offer opinions, advice, or personal experiences
- **NEVER:** Minimize client's feelings
- **NEVER:** Leave the room!
- **NEVER:** Give false reassurance **NCLEX TIP**
  - "Everything is going to be alright"
  - "I'm sure you will do the correct thing"
- **NEVER: Ask "WHY?"** **NCLEX TIP**
  - "WHY do you feel angry when..."
  - "WHY do you act this way?"
  - "WHY did you leave your child alone"

Top Missed NCLEX Question

Elderly client losing their spouse to pancreatic cancer. Choose the most **therapeutic response. Select All That Apply**

- ○ 1. Leave the room to allow the client to grieve in private.
- ○ 2. "I recently lost my grandfather to cancer, so I understand what you are going through."
- ✓ ◉ 3. "I know **this is a difficult time for you. Tell me how you** have been coping with this loss."
- ✓ ◉ 4. "**What are your feelings** & thoughts about attending a support group."
- ○ 5. "It takes time to deal with & come to terms with a lost spouse, but it will be ok"
- ○ 6. "Why do you feel sad when you are alone?"



Ask Questions

- **Exploring emotions:** gather more information
- **Restating:** repeating patient words to confirm what you understand
- **Reflecting:** return focus on client

Stating Facts

- **Voicing doubt & presenting reality:** refutes misconceptions or delusions
- Suggesting **resources or strategies:** helps offer guidance



Practice Questions

HESI

Q1: What is the **most helpful nursing response** to a patient who reports thinking of dropping out of college because it is too stressful?

- **"School is stressful. What do you** find most stressful?"

Q2: Which statements will the nurse indicate as **therapeutic**? Select all that apply.

- "Am I correct in **restating that you are feeling** less anxious today?"
- "In looking back at what you said, **you stated you are feeling better**."
- "**Help me understand** what you are feeling today?"

Q3: A man was killed during a robbery 10 days ago. His widow... cries spontaneously when talking to the nurse. What is the nurse's **most therapeutic response**?

- "The sudden death of your husband is **hard to accept**. **Tell me about** how you are feeling?"

KAPLAN

Q1: Client with ... end stage heart failure, says "Why can't this just end? I'm no good to anyone anymore." Which response is best?

- "**This must be difficult. Please tell me** about your feelings?"

Q2: The nurse finds the **client crying** ... & says, "What do you want? Go away, you can't help me. I hate you and I hate myself." Which response by the nurse is best?

- **"You seem to be in pain**; I'll stay with you for a while."

Q3: Client's spouse has been unemployed for more than six months, and **is afraid of not being able to pay the rent**. Which response is most appropriate?

- **"You're worried that you won't be able to pay the rent?"**

ATI

Q1: "I am really concerned about my mom." Which of the **following responses** should the nurse make? **Select all that apply.**

- **"Tell me** what is troubling you."
- **"Tell me about what you are feeling** right now. What is upsetting you?"
- **"It seems that you feel responsible** for what happened to your mother."

Q2: Client who has cancer is scheduled to receive chemotherapy ... she wants to try **homeopathic treatments first**. Which of the **following responses** should the nurse make?

- **"Tell me more about your concerns** about taking chemotherapy."

Q3: A parent who recently lost her child ... states she cries frequently and can't bear the loss ... **which therapeutic statements** should the nurse make?

- **"You are feeling great pain** at the loss of your child."

SAUNDERS

Q1: ... "I can't believe that my wife died yesterday. I keep expecting to see her everywhere I go in this house." ... **therapeutic** nurse response?

- **"It must be hard to accept** that she has passed away"

Q2: ... "This condition is just another nail in my coffin." Which response by the nurse is therapeutic?

- **"You seem very distressed** over learning you have asthma."

Q3: A client diagnosed with terminal cancer says to the nurse, "I wish my family would stop hoping for a cure! I get so angry when they carry on like this." Which response by the nurse is most therapeutic?

- **"You're feeling angry** that your family continues to hope for you to be cured?"