## Fact Sheet: The Skills That Communicate Caring

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| **GOALS** | **ACTIONS** |
| 1. Be present. | Focus fully on the person. Maintain eye contact. Let all else fade to the back of your mind. |
| 1. Acknowledge the person’s feelings. | In an accepting way, without judgment, reflect back the feeling you think you’re seeing or hearing.   * *“You sound upset.”* * *“You seem relieved.”* * *“Sounds like you’re really frustrated about this.”* |
| 1. Show your caring nonverbally. | Match your nonverbal signals to theirs---your posture, tone, face and pace.   * Meet calm with calm * Meet urgency with urgency * Meet anger with visible concern.   This helps you show cultural sensitivity as well. |
| 1. Explain your positive intent. | Tell the person how what you’re doing is for their sake.   * *“I want to protect your privacy.”* * *“I want to ease your mind.”* * *“I want to make you more comfortable.”* |
| 1. Use the words “for you” often. | * *“I want to make this process easy for you.”* * *“I’ll be glad to call your daughter for you.”* * *“Let me review these instructions for you.”* |
| 1. Offer the blameless apology. | Express regret that the person is somehow suffering. Don’t blame yourself or others.   * *“I’m sorry it’s been so hard for you.”* * *“I’m sorry about the inconvenience.”* |
| 1. Give the gift of positive regard. | Express thanks, appreciation and admiration when the person least expects it.   * *“Thank you so much for your patience.”* * *“This must take a lot of courage on your part.”* * *“I appreciate your concern and want to address your questions.”* |
| 1. When all else fails, use the Caring Broken Record. | Decide on your bottom line message with lots of heart. Keep repeating this message --in a kind way.   * *“I realize you’d really like to see your own doctor. The fact is, he isn’t available today, but I’ll be glad to connect you with a very good doctor who is.”* |

Source: *Physician Entrepreneurs:* *The Quality Patient Experience* by Wendy Leebov, 2008.