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