

DO'S AND DON'TS OF GOOD LISTENING

Do's of Good Listening:

Give the person your full attention.

Tell that person that you care and are glad that s/he is talking with you.

Share your concern for the person's safety.

Help the person feel more safe and in control.

Encourage the person to talk about her/his feeling.

Validate the person's feelings.

Repeat back in your own words what you heard the person say.

Ask helpful questions.

Validate the person's feeling by indicating that you understand them. Normalize the person's feelings by explaining that other people sometimes feel like s/he does. Let the person know that s/he is not bad, weak, or selfish because s/he has these feelings and is thinking about suicide and that the feelings are important to talk about. But also be clear that you do not want the person to harm her/himself, and you are there to help.

Don'ts: Barriers to Communication

Do not interrupt.

Do not judge.

Do not say the person's feelings or actions are unimportant, overreacting or wrong.

Do not tell the person what to do.

Do not try to solve the person's problems.

Do not provoke guilt about how the person's family and friends might feel.

Do not offer false hope.