



Managing Challenging Calls in Hospice



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WARMTH AND CARING

- Friendliness
- Showing concern and interest
- Valuing the other person as a human being.
- Showing concern

- The caller is still responsible for himself/herself



BUILDING RAPPORT

- Make some small talk if appropriate
- Realize that it is ok (and needed) to listen to non-essential discussion for just a bit. This will show that you care and are easy-going



MEETING THE CALLER WHERE THEY ARE

- Match Caller's tone and intensity
- Maybe they are not ready to use your services yet...that's ok. They will likely call back.



HELP TO INTEGRATE FEELINGS AND VALUES

- Discuss the feelings and the values of the caller
- This means helping the caller decide what to do about the problem and explore how to go about doing it.



ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

- What is the problem?
- What has the caller tried?
 - This is very important...if you name things that have been tried, this often angers the caller!



SIGNS OF CRISIS

- Caller cannot make a decision
- Caller or other family member wants to do harm themselves/others
- There will be immediate harm (within 24 hours) if no action is taken

- Fatigue
- Exhaustion
- Helplessness
- Inadequacy
- Confusion



ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- Paraphrasing
- Clarifying
- Perception Checking
- Summarizing
- Primary Empathy
- Advanced Empathy



BOUNDARIES

- It would be great to have all of the time in the world to help
- The reality is that you have a specific job description
- Boundaries are needed and are appropriate

- Lets find a referral for that specific issue
- I will find someone who specializes in that
- I wish we could talk more, but there are others waiting



BOUNDARIES

- Redirecting a caller helps by
 - Getting him/her in touch with someone specializes in that issue
 - Allows you to do all duties in your job
 - Allows you to help other callers
 - Helps you to limit your stress level and be more productive



BURNOUT

"It represents an erosion in values, dignity, spirit and will -- an erosion of the human soul. It is a malady that spreads gradually and continuously over time, putting people into a downward spiral ..."

Source: Christina Maslach & Michael Leiter
Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What To Do About It



SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT

- Exhaustion
- Cynical detachment from work
- Talking negatively about those you serve
- Feelings of ineffectiveness
 - Schedule Imbalance
 - Intense Work Days
 - Office and Inter-Agency Politics

Source: <http://friedsocialworker.com/socialworkburnout.htm>



COMBATING BURNOUT

- Maintain your boundaries!
 - This is number one!
- Don't participate in office gossip
- Embrace social groups
- Take a mini vacation
- Eat well and exercise
(I know...this is everyone's favorite!)



WHEN TO REFER

- When the caller seems overwhelmed—intense emotions, grief, great difficulty making decisions
- You have a great resource page here:
- <http://ihpco.org/consumer/bereavement-support>



EXERCISE

- Active listening Skills

- Challenging Calls



COUNSELING REFERRALS

- Often appropriate in a crisis
- Overwhelming feelings of sadness/anger
- Family disagreements
- Often a great referral when someone apparently needs to talk at length

- 2-1-1
- Psychology Today therapist finder
- Mental Health America
- NAMI



CONTACT INFORMATION

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