

## Active Listening Skills

Active listening involves focusing on what the person is communicating and showing that you understand what's being expressed. It works best when we can suspend judgment and focus on understanding. This skill can increase understanding, as well as opportunities to resolve disagreement and strengthen relationships.

**Paraphrasing (restatement):** summarizing back what you just heard, without interrupting

“It sounds like you’ve tried several things and feel really stuck right now.”

**Emotional Validation:** Expressing understanding and empathy for the other’s feelings

“That seems super frustrating and discouraging”

**Silence and semi-verbal responses:** Body language and sounds can convey listening

You can be present and silent (consider head nodding, eye contact, “uh huh”).

## Holding Your Ground: Saying “No.”

Do you find yourself putting other’s needs above your own, time and time again?

Many feel pulled to constantly say “yes” to whatever is asked due to fears of letting people down, conflict, or losing friends.

It’s not just these fears that stop us from turning down requests, we may simply be caring, empathic, and driven to help others as well!

Have you ever considered this idea?

### Whenever you say “Yes” you also say “No”

By saying “yes,” let’s say to driving your friend to the airport, you are saying “no” to resting, studying, or whatever else you would have done instead. You may be saying no to something you needed or really wanted without even realizing it.

Sometimes when you say “No” you also say “Yes” to your needs! CALM is not trying to convince you to stop helping others at all. We simply ask you to consider “Before I say yes, what would I be saying no to?”

Finally, it does not have to be expressed as just “No.” You have the right to just say this, but consider what fits you. Perhaps, “I definitely can’t this weekend even though I wish I could help..”