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Empathetic Listening in Crisis Response

Experiment 3 - Practical Notes

Name: _____ Roll no.: _____ Date: _____

Aim

To use calm listening and practical support during a simulated distressing event.

Principle

Psychological first aid offers humane, practical support after distress. The learner checks safety and immediate needs, listens without pressure and helps connect the person with appropriate resources. It does not require a detailed retelling of the event or a diagnosis.

Practice Case

Fictional simulation: After a small building fire has been brought under control, Saira is shaking and says she cannot find her sibling. Emergency personnel are present. The learner is asked to offer brief support in a safe waiting area.

Roles and Scoring

Work in a group of three: learner, patient or partner, and observer. Score each criterion 0 = not demonstrated, 1 = partly demonstrated, 2 = clearly demonstrated. The checklist is for classroom feedback, not a validated clinical assessment.

Requirements

- Case sheet, quiet practice space and timer.
- Observer checklist and notebook; no real patient details.

Procedure

1. Check the environment

Confirm with responders that the place is safe. Introduce yourself and ask if the person would like help.

2. Identify urgent needs

Ask about immediate medical needs and the most pressing practical concern. Use the emergency team for physical danger or urgent medical problems.

3. Listen calmly

Use short sentences, an unhurried tone and attentive silence. Let the person decide what to share.

4. Offer practical help

With permission, connect them to the responder coordinating family information or another appropriate support. Do not make promises about the missing person.

5. Close the contact

Explain who will help next, check that the person is not left unsupported and record only necessary non-identifying classroom observations.

Healthcare Psychology and Communication Skills

Suggested Practice Dialogue

- Learner: "My name is _____. We are in the safe waiting area. Would you like me to help contact the information desk?"
- Person: "I need to know where my sibling is."
- Learner: "I hear that finding them is your main concern. Let us ask the responder who is coordinating family enquiries."

Observations and Record

Criterion	Score 0 / 1 / 2	Observed behaviour
Checks safety and asks permission	_____	_____
Listens without forced retelling	_____	_____
Identifies the stated practical need	_____	_____
Connects to appropriate support	_____	_____

Worked Example

The numbers below are illustrative; enter your own observations in the record.

- Illustrative scores: 2 + 2 + 2 + 1 = 7/8. Feedback: name the next helper and confirm that contact has actually been made.

Result

Total score: ____ / 8. Record one effective phrase, one missed opportunity and one specific action for the next attempt.

Precautions

- Do not force the person to recount distressing details or participate in emotional debriefing.
- Do not give unsupported reassurance about safety or family members.
- Escalate immediate danger or urgent medical needs to emergency personnel.

Viva Questions and Answers

1. What is the first concern?

Immediate safety and urgent practical or medical needs.

2. Must the person tell their whole story?

No; listening should not pressure them to disclose details.

3. Why link to resources?

Practical support can address an immediate need that conversation alone cannot solve.

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