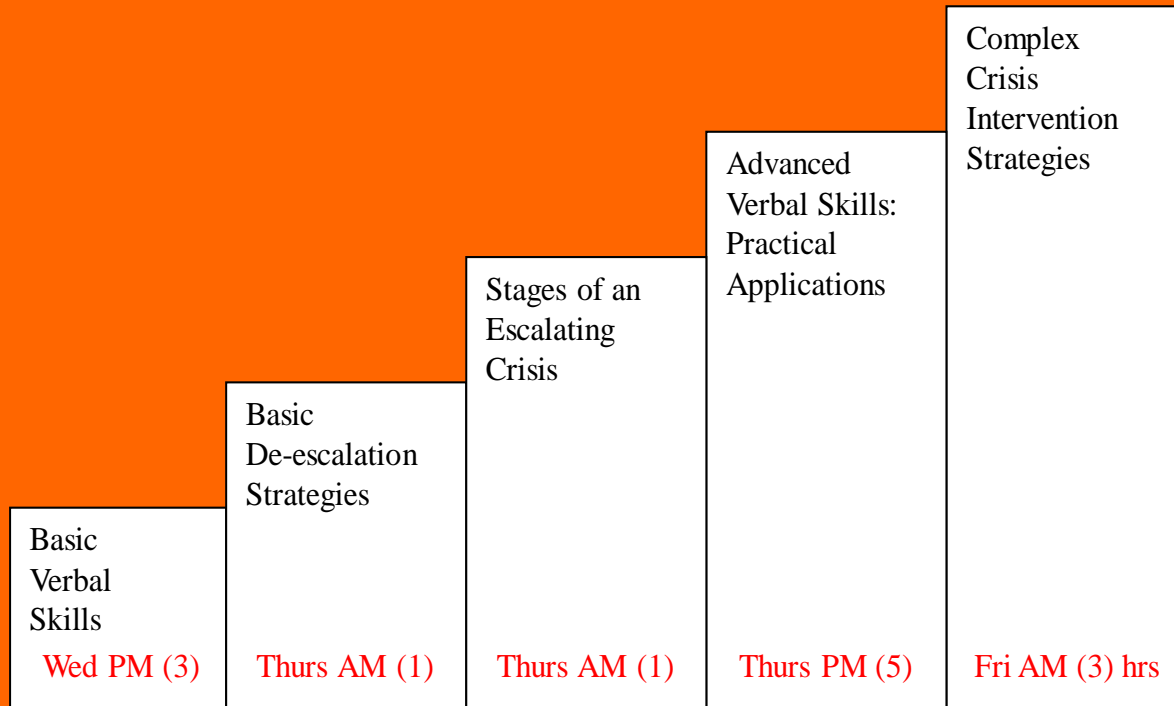


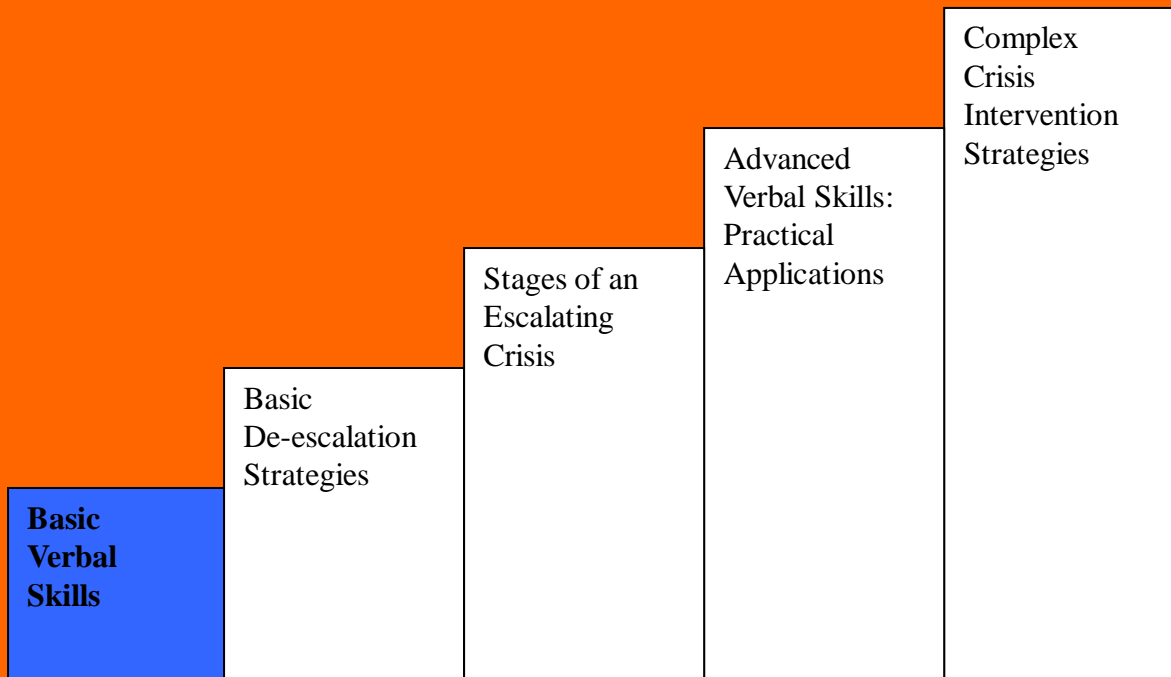
Verbal De-escalation Skills: The Basics

**Memphis Police Department
Crisis Intervention Team
October 23, 2013**

**Thomas M. Kirchberg, Ph.D., ABPP
Chief Psychologist
V A Medical Center, Memphis**



Scheduling De-Escalation in the 40 Hour CIT Training



Basic Skills →

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Plan of Learning

- 1. Crisis, Intervention, Team**
- 2. Emotional Crises impose suffering**
- 3. Empathic understanding**
 - A. Active listening & Active observing**
 - 1) Filter or “noise”**
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection**
 - 3) Exercise**
 - 4) Questions**
 - 5) “I” statements**
- 4. Genuineness**
- 5. Acceptance**
- 6. Skills practice**

Crisis

- **An emotionally stressful event or traumatic change in a person's life**
- **A point in a story or drama when a conflict reaches its highest tension and a solution must be found**

Intervention

- **To compel or prevent an action**
- **To maintain or alter a condition**

Team

- A number of persons associated together in work or activity
- A group on the same side



DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Goodwin, U.S. Marine Corps.
(Released)



asroma.it



University of Memphis CIT Center



Photo Run
with permission

2012 London Olympics Women's Marathon: Tiki Gelana, Tirunesh Dibaba , Mary Keitany, and Priscah Jeptoo

Crisis

- **People are in crisis when they:**
 - ✓ **perceive an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds their resources and coping mechanisms.**
 - ✓ **face an obstacle to important life goals.**
- **Crisis creates physiological arousal in the form of anxiety which disrupts a person's capacity to think clearly—it hurts too much**





Photo Run with permission

Crisis...continued

- **My body struggles to maintain physical homeostasis, equilibrium or balance—on a hot day, I need water and shade**
- **My mind also struggles to maintain a similar balance—a steady state of psychological functioning**



Licensed for use by AP

Crisis Intervention

- The focus of crisis intervention is not on past crises and not on chronic factors contributing to crisis.
- The focus of crisis intervention is on what is happening here and now.
- Crisis intervention involves intense, immediate, and short-term effort.



Photo Run with permission

Crisis Intervention...continued

- Crisis intervention is psychological “first aid”.
 - ✓ Crisis intervention is not psychotherapy.
- The **C**risis **I**ntervention **T**eam Officer assists people in crisis to begin returning to baseline functioning without acting out.
 - ✓ Crisis intervention is not solving the person’s problems.
 - ✓ Human beings have the will to solve their own problems.

James, R.K. & Gilliland, B.E. (2001). *Crisis intervention strategies* (4th ed.) . Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole
Brown, L. (2008). *Cultural competence in trauma therapy: Beyond the flashback*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.



Photo Run with permission

2:23:07



Photo Run with permission

Crisis Intervention Team: A Community Partnership

CIT Officers belong to a larger team

- **other law enforcement officers**
- **mental health providers**
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**
- **consumers and family members**
- **hospital staff**
- **victim advocates for domestic violence & sex abuse**
- **officers of the court**
- **clergy**

McCutcheon, J., Roland, J., Mann, M.P., Schneidmiller, D., & Jones, E. (2013). Responding to calls with suicidal suspects: Practical command and psychological considerations. *The Police Chief*, 80, 5, 32-35; Tucker, A.S., Van Hasselt, V., Vecchi, G.M., Browning, S.L. (2011). Responding to persons with mental illness. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 80, 10, 1-6.

Essential character strengths and skills for effective CIT performance

- Professional experience
- Attention to safety
- Self-awareness
- Capacity to remain calm and in control
- Good Listening
- Supportive Skills
- Problem solving skills
- Assertiveness
- Ability to analyze
- Commitment to training and knowledge
- Creativity & flexibility
- Energy & strength
- Engaged in life
- Resilience
- **Courage**

The Basics

- **Crisis: Temporary**
- **Intervention: Skills to be learned**
- **Team: Provides safety / backup / consultation / support so the CIT Officer can use crisis intervention skills**



Photo: University of Memphis CIT Center

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Emotional crises impose suffering

Depression

- “gray drizzle of horror”
- “a smothering confinement”
- “a howling tempest in the brain”
- suicidal and homicidal ideation

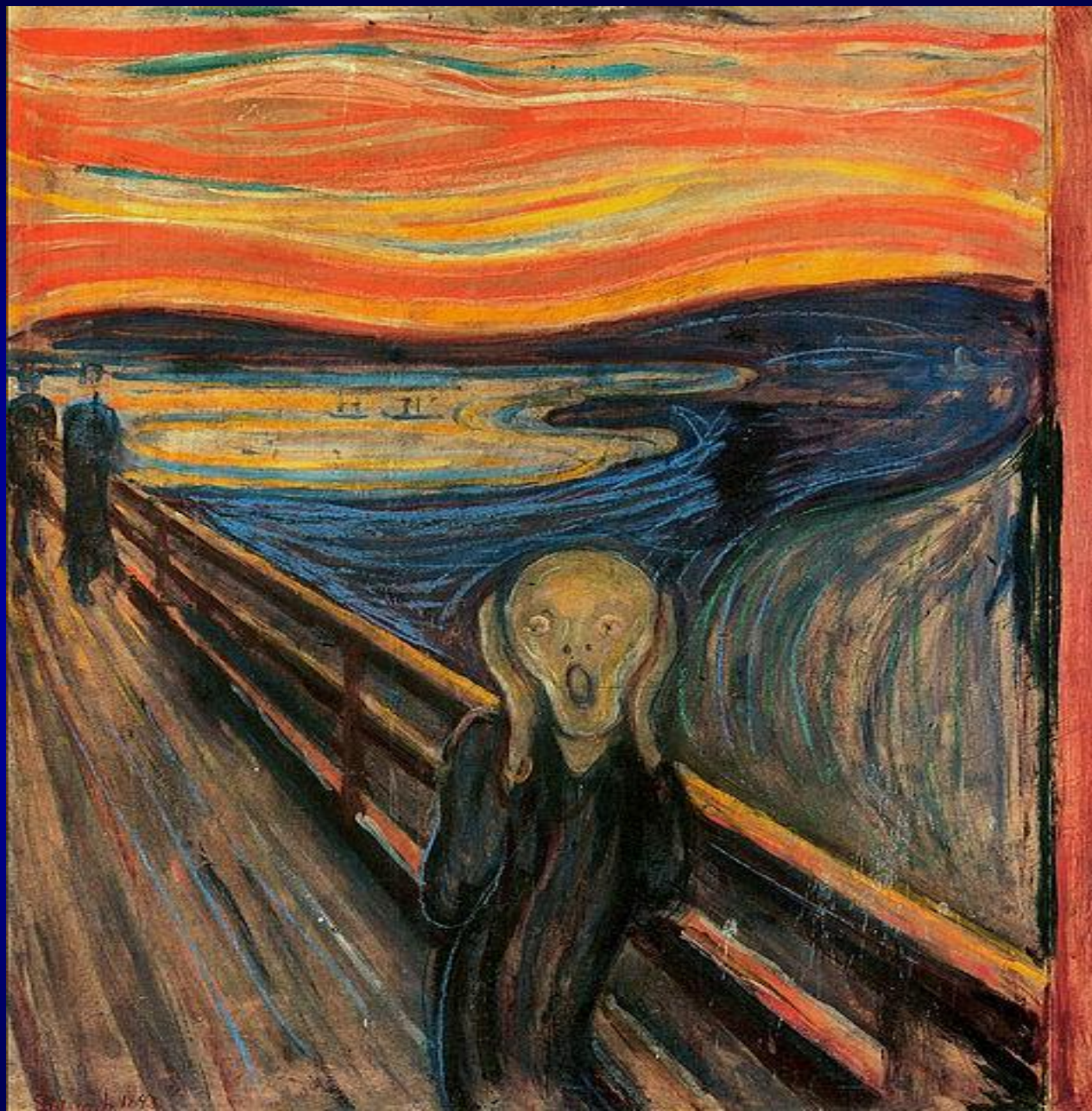
Styron, W. , (1990). *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness*. New York: Random House

Psychotic Episode

- delusions of guilt, persecution, physical decay, and impending death
- visual hallucinations and perceptual distortions
- auditory hallucinations
- rapid fluctuations of consciousness
- increasing paranoia and intense panic

Kiser, S. (2004). An existential case study of madness. Encounters with divine affliction. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 44, 441.

Saks, E. (2012). A tale of mental illness from the inside. www.ted.com/talks



The Scream

Psychological Anguish of War

- Sleep disturbance
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Physiological distress
- Detached from people
- Loss of loving feelings
- Alcohol and drugs
- Irritability
- On guard



*American Psychiatric Association. (1994). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
Photo: <http://www.defense.gov/photos/> U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Lynne Eickstedt ; U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Kelsey J. Green*

Moral Anguish of War

Guilt

- Accident guilt
- Survivor guilt / Luck guilt
- Collateral damage guilt



Maguen, S. & Litz, B. (2012). Moral Injury in veterans of war. *PTSD Research Quarterly*, 23 (1), 1-6.; Sherman, N. (2010). What good soldiers bear. *America*, 202, 11-15. Sherman, N. (2010). *The untold war; Inside the hearts, minds, and souls of our soldiers*. New York: Norton
DoD photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Kim Smith, U.S. Navy. (Released) ; DoD photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Willam ; DoD photo by Senior Chief Petty Officer Kevin S. Farmer, U.S. Navy. (Released)

“...if an incident rises to the level of police involvement and if the responding officers understand the Veteran’s perspective, they have a good chance of defusing it. Indeed, the best friend and best hope the combat Veteran may have in a situation escalating out of control is the informed police officer or negotiator.”

Etter, D., McCarthy, L., & Asken, M.J. (2011). Police Negotiations with war veterans: Seeing through the residual fog of war. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 80, 7, 1-10.

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Basic Skills for the CIT Officer

- Empathic Understanding
- Genuineness
- Acceptance

Rogers, C.R. (1957). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 21, 95-103; Norcross, J.C. (Ed.) . (2002). *Psychotherapy relationships that work: Therapist contributions and responsiveness to patients*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Empathic Understanding

- The ability to understand another's concerns and feelings
- Leads to compassion
- Sets the stage for successful crisis resolution

Empathy: Bridge to another's feelings



Brain response to pain, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) computer models. Two brains are shown from the side, front of brains at left. The brain at left is that of a person experiencing pain (active brain areas are yellow/red). The brain at right is that of a person watching someone experience pain, producing a response known as empathy, where they are able to imagine the pain the other person is feeling. The MRI scan confirms that similar brain areas are activated in empathy, but that areas producing the actual sensation of pain (one at top of brain) are not triggered.

Singer, T., Seymour, B., O'Doherty, J., Kaube, H., Dolan, R.J., Frith, C.D. (2004). Empathy for pain involves the affective but not sensory components of pain. *Science*, 303, 1157-1162. Image: Wellcome Department of Imaging Neuroscience

CLOSE TO HOME JOHN McPHERSON

e-mail: 76702,2263@Compuserve.com

© 1996 John McPherson/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate



The Galsteins were experiencing some serious communication problems.

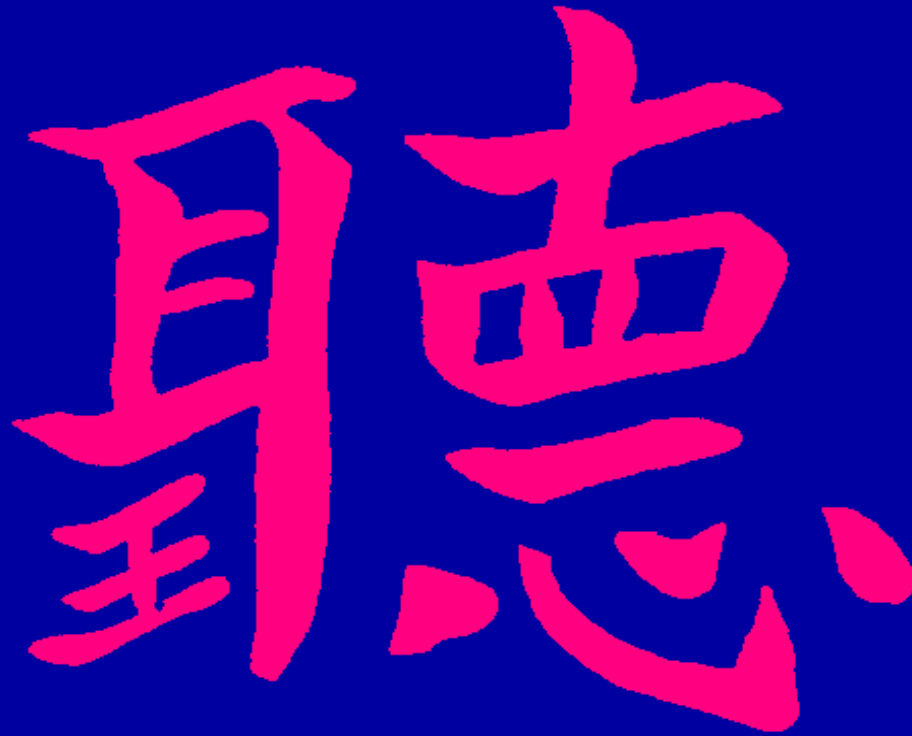
Active Listening

You

Eyes

Undivided
attention

Heart



Ear

Active Listening

- **Focusing on the consumer and his/her world—Blocking out distractions**
- **Attending to words, voice tone, and body language—Fully Engaged**
- **Making sure I understand what the consumer is saying and feeling about the crisis situation—Checking In**

Emotional Communication

- **Albert Mehrabian established the importance of three elements in any face-to-face communication:**
 - 1. Words used**
 - 2. Tone of voice**
 - 3. Body Language**
- **Congruence among all three elements is essential for effective communication.**

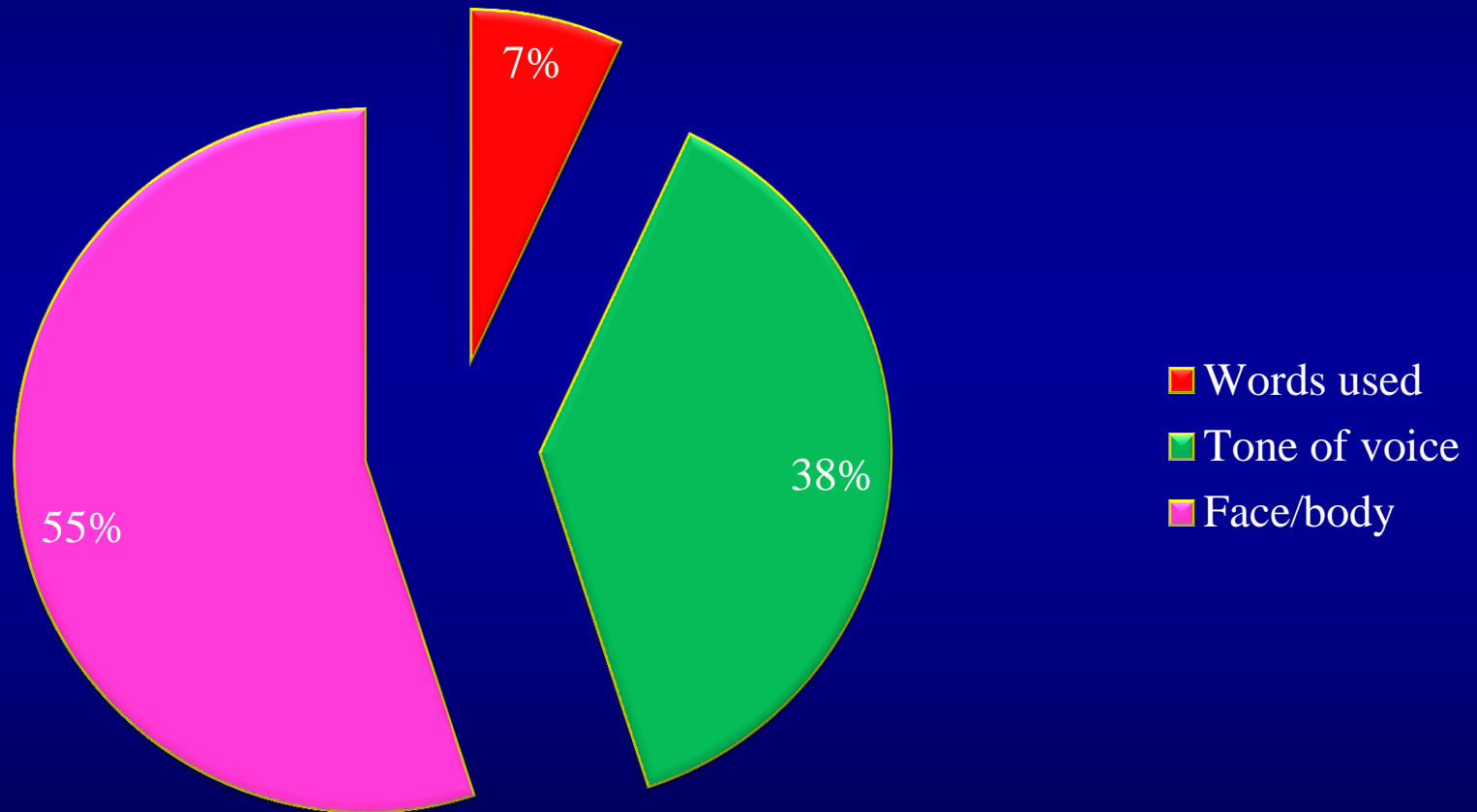
Mehrabian's Rule

1. If the speaker's words are inconsistent with the speaker's tone of voice and / or the speaker's body language,
2. ...the listener will be more influenced by the speaker's tone of voice and body language.

Mehrabian, A. (1972). *Nonverbal communication*. New Brunswick: Aldine Transactions

Parkinson, B. (2005). Do facial movements express emotions or communicate motives? *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 9, 278-311.

Emotions and Communication



Mehrabian, A. (1971). Nonverbal betrayal of feeling. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality*, 5, 64-73.

Empathic Understanding requires close attention to the complete message

- words used
- voice tone
- rate of words spoken
- facial expression
- body language



Photo: University of Memphis CIT Center

I ask myself

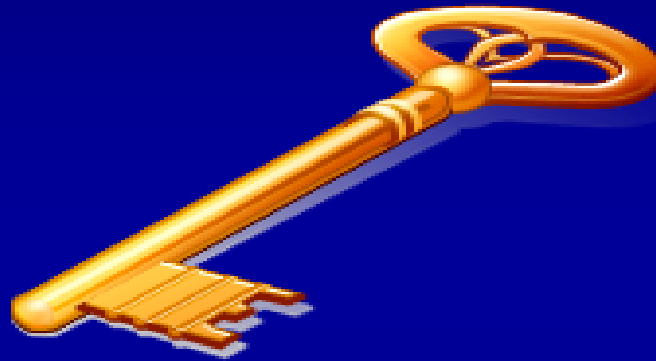
- ✓ *Do the consumer's words, voice tone, rate of speech, facial expression, and body language match?*
- ✓ *Do my words, voice tone, rate of speech, facial expression, and body language match?*

Smith-Haven, S.S. (1977) . Effects of nonverbal behavior on judged levels of counselor warmth and empathy. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 24, 87-91; Haase, R.F., & Tepper, D. (1972). Non-verbal components of empathic communication. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 19, 417-424.

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

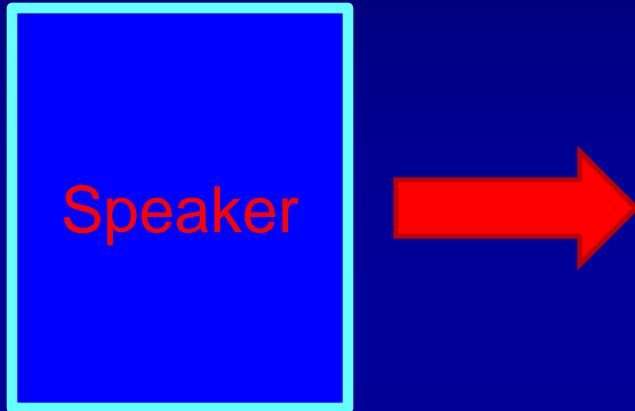
Active Listening: The Key to Empathic Understanding



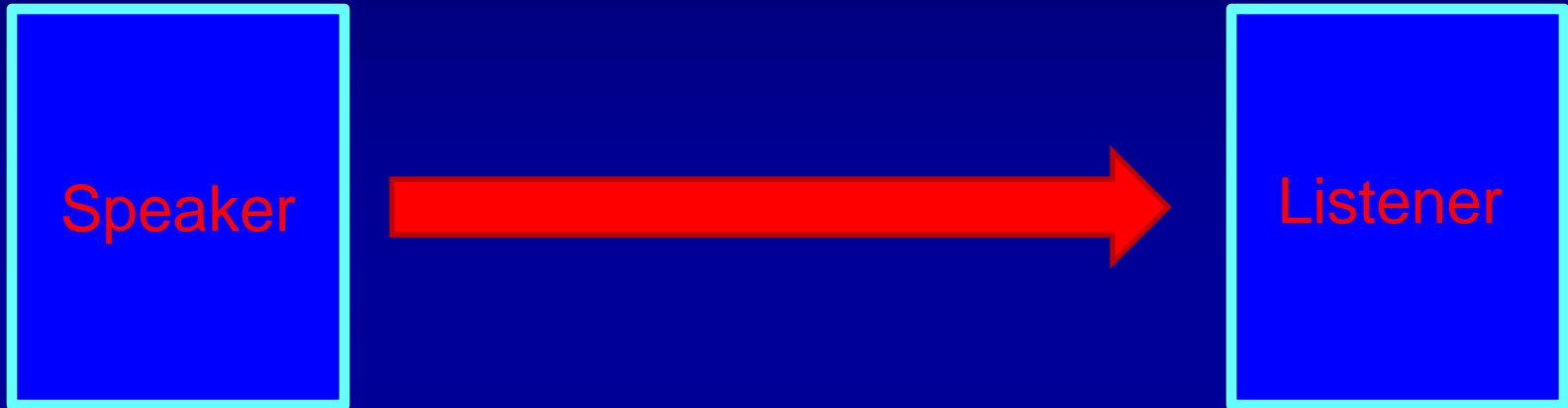
“...they have to know that you care before they care what you know.”

Sheeler, R. (2013). Nonverbal communication in medical practice. In D. Matsumoto, M.G. Frank, & H.S. Hwang (Eds.), *Nonverbal communication: Science and Applications* (pp237-246). Los Angeles: Sage.

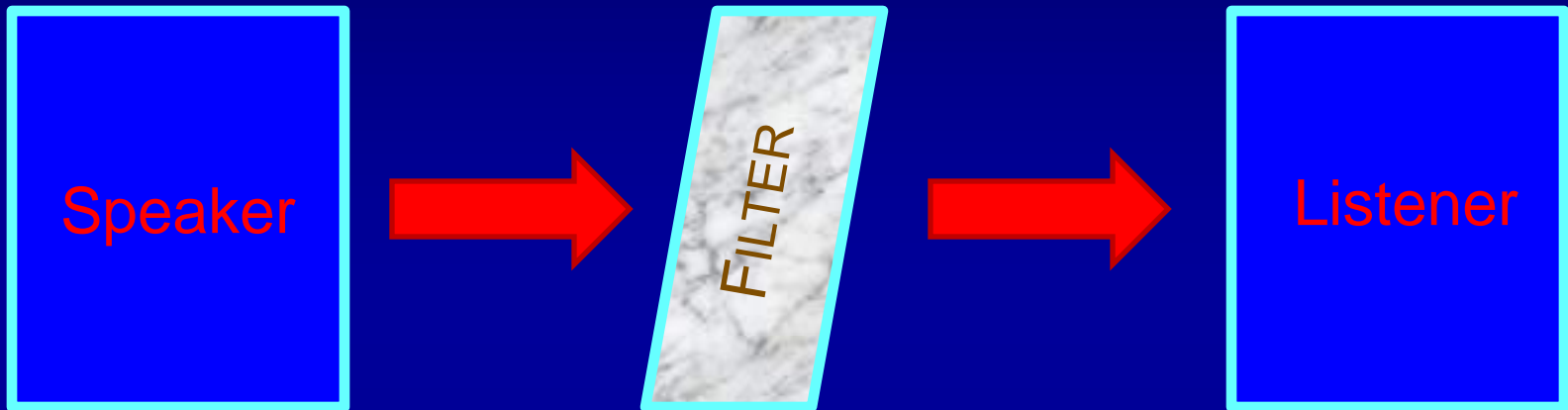
Active Listening

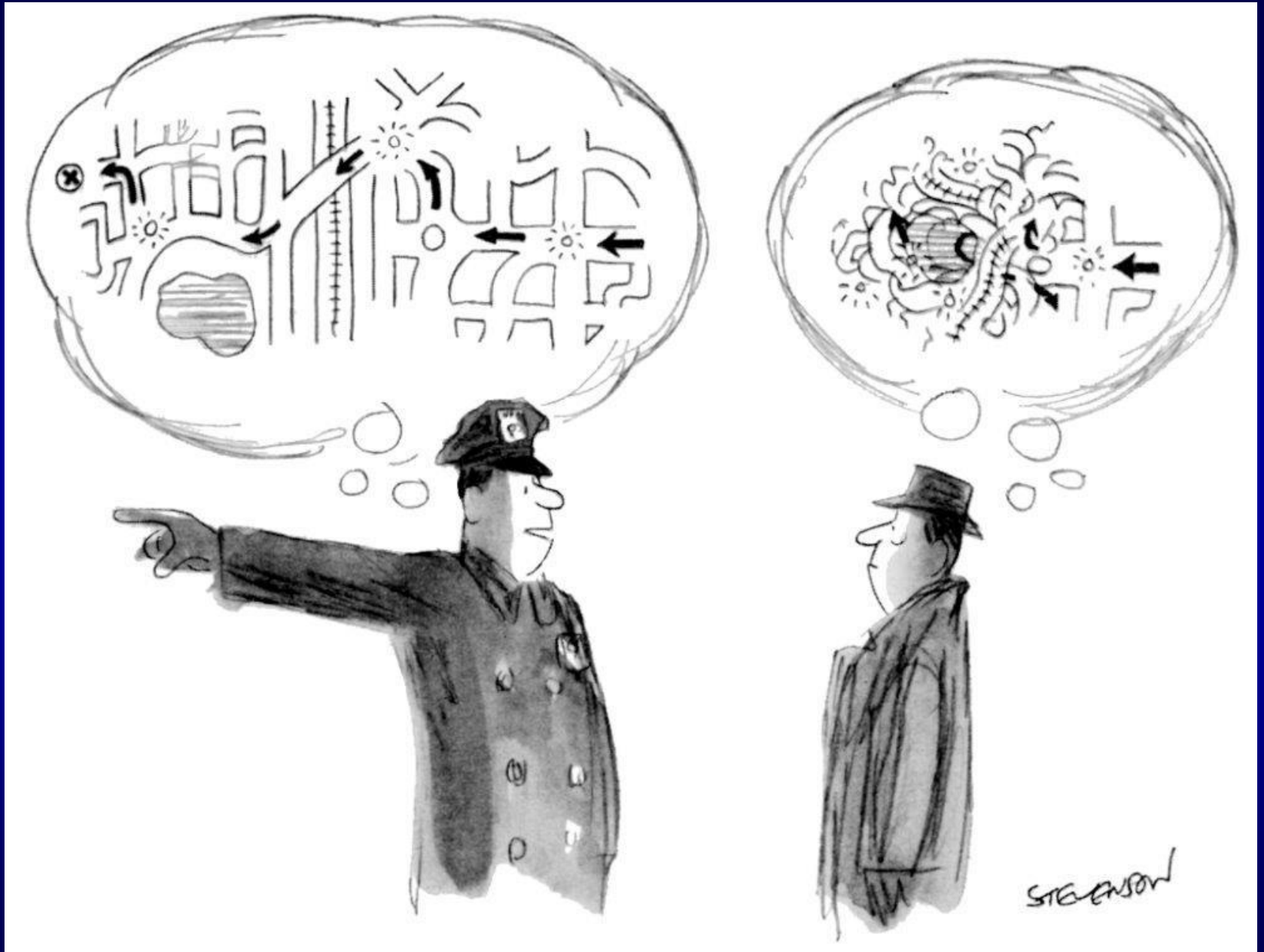


Active Listening



Active Listening





Licensed for use by Condenast

Filter

- Life event
- Self Concerns
- Emotions
 - Disgust
 - Anger
 - Contempt
 - Shame
 - Fear

Back pain...

Money worries...

Argument with significant other...

“Damn, Lieu is on me about ...”

“I just don’t measure up...”

“I know what these people are thinking”

“Alcoholics make me sick...”

“Here we go again...”



Filter

- Thinking about my stuff
- Giving advice
- Getting off the topic

“I know how that is...”

“You know what I would do if I were you...”

“You shouldn’t think that way...”

“You’ll find another job..”

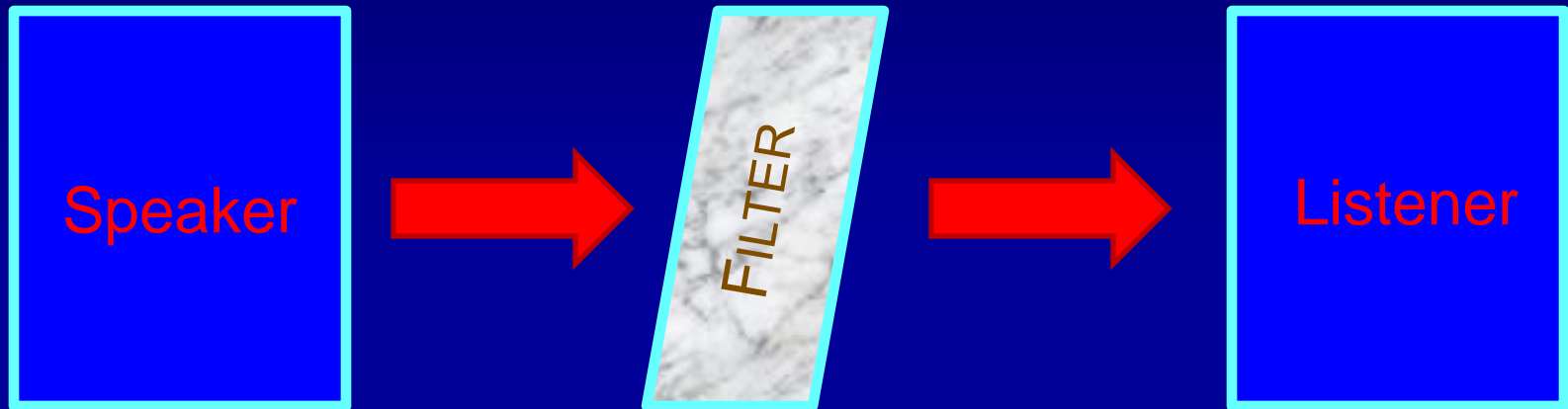
“God loves you...”



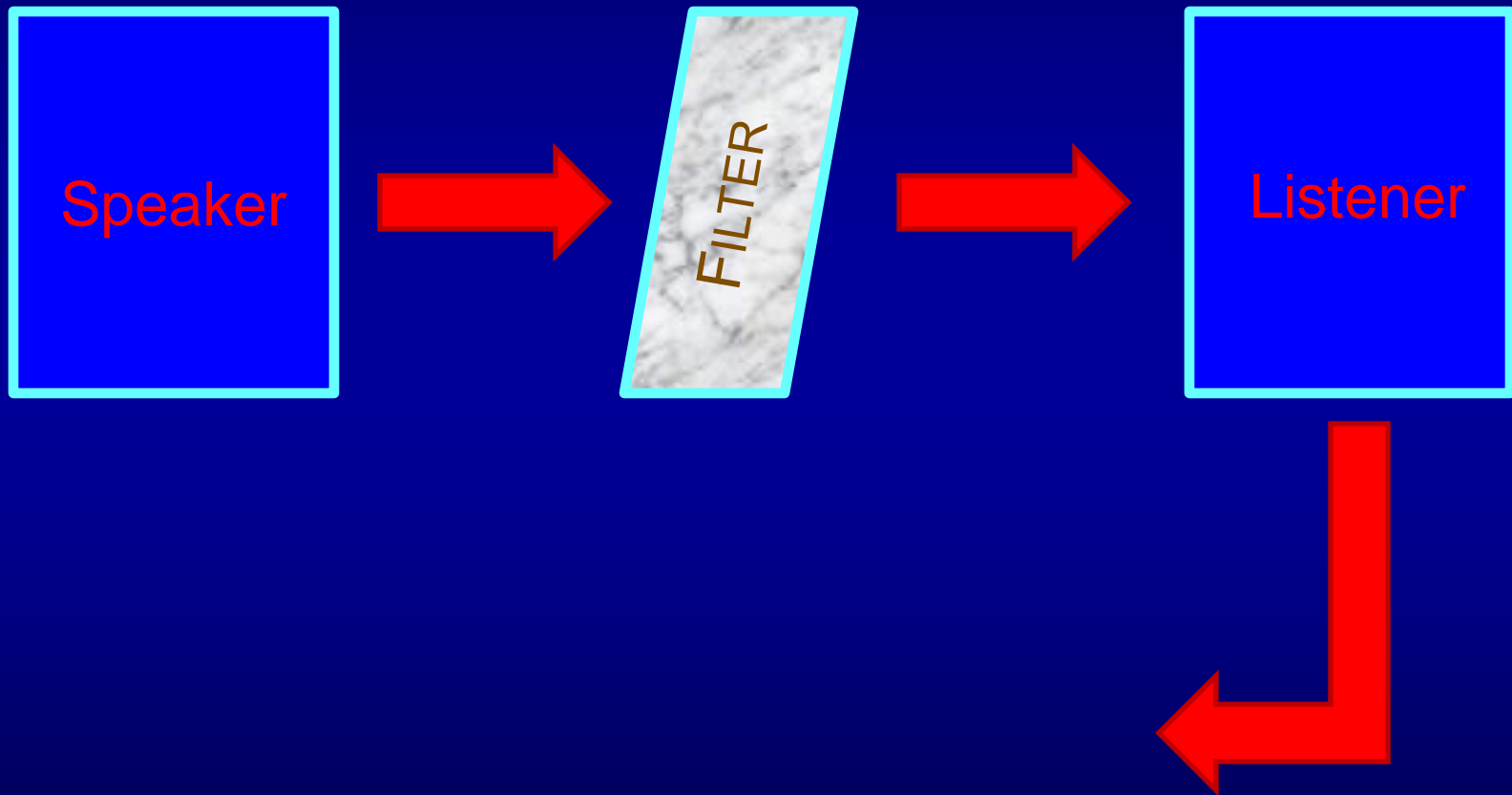
Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

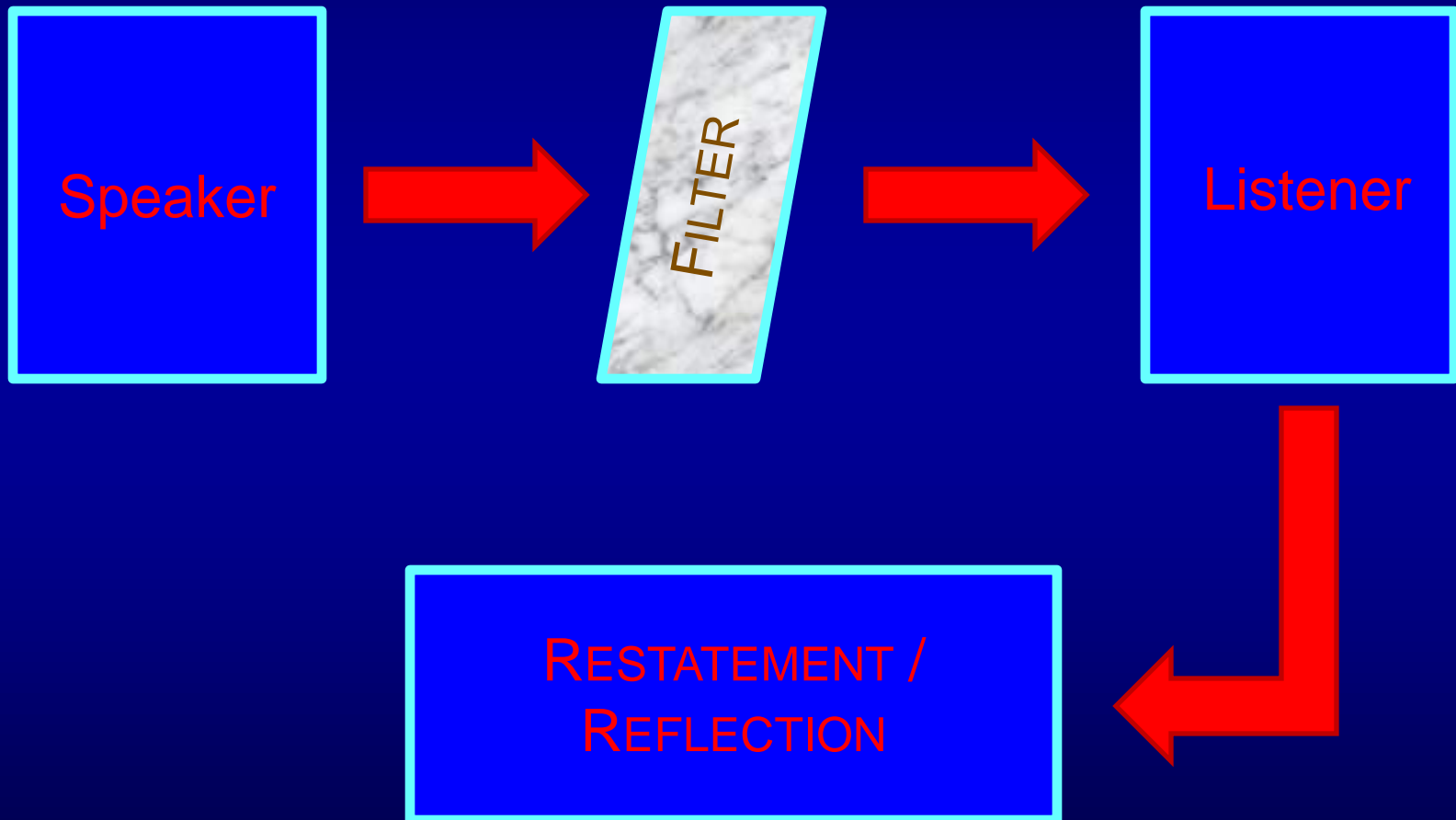
Active Listening requires: Checking out what I think I heard



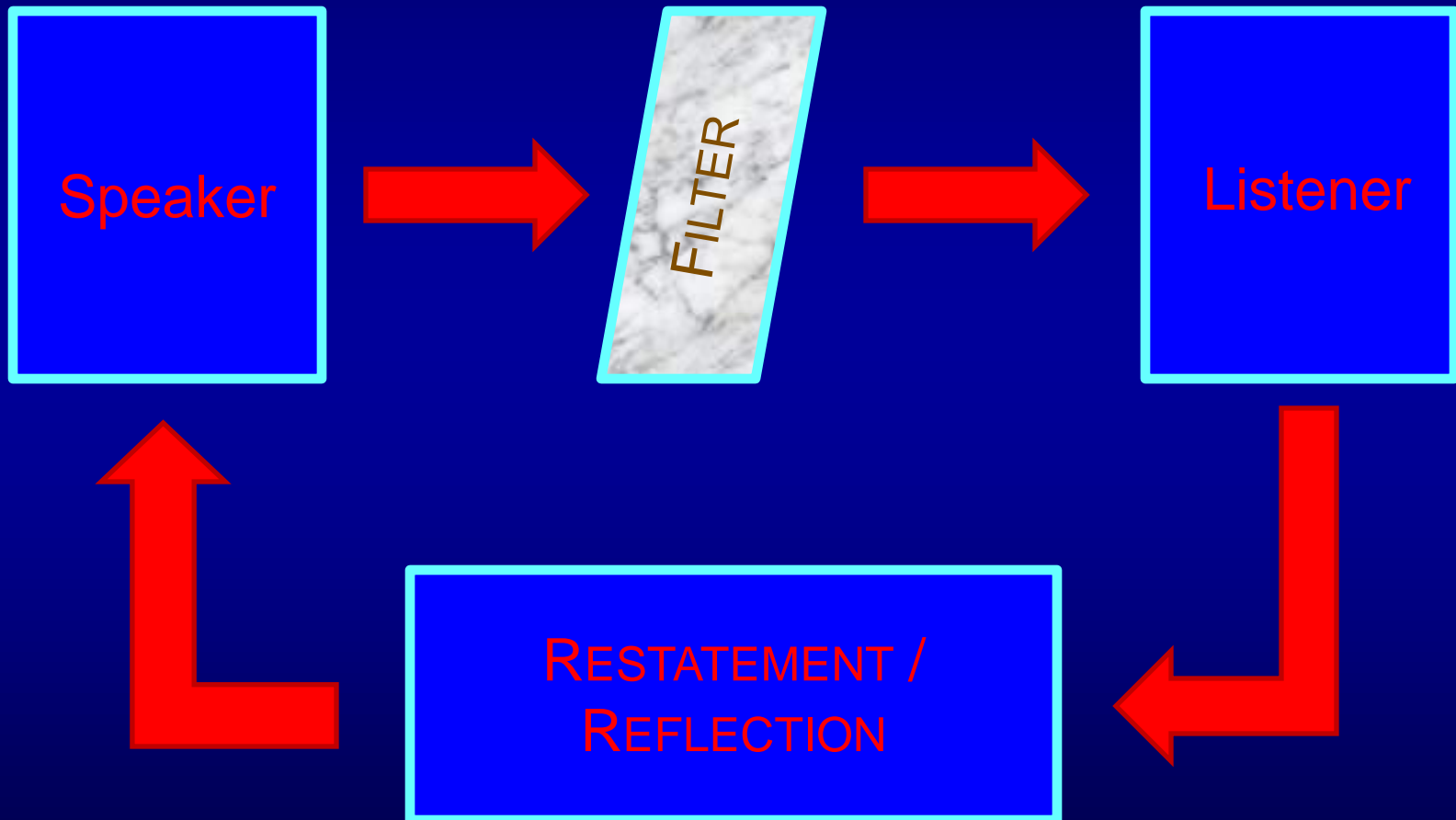
Active Listening requires: Accurate Restatement / Reflection



Active Listening requires: Accurate Restatement / Reflection



Active Listening requires: Accurate Restatement / Reflection



Accurate Restatement

- Restating what the consumer is saying about the crisis—the “facts” as he or she sees them

Consumer: *“I don’t know what to do. My family doesn’t want me back home.”*

CIT Officer: *“Let me see if I understand you. You’re not sure where you can go when you get out of here. Your family doesn’t seem to want you back home.”*

Accurate Reflection

- Reflecting what the consumer is feeling about the crisis—the emotional state or emotional reaction to the situation

Consumer: *“I’m sick and tired of them screwing with me.”*

CIT Officer: *“Let me make sure I hear what you are saying. You’re sick and tired of people harassing you.”*

Restatement & Reflection

- **Restatement**

Consumer:

“I don’t know what to do. My family doesn’t want me back home.”

CIT Officer:

“Let me see if I understand you. You’re not sure where you can go when you get out of here. Your family doesn’t seem to want you back home.”

- **Reflection**

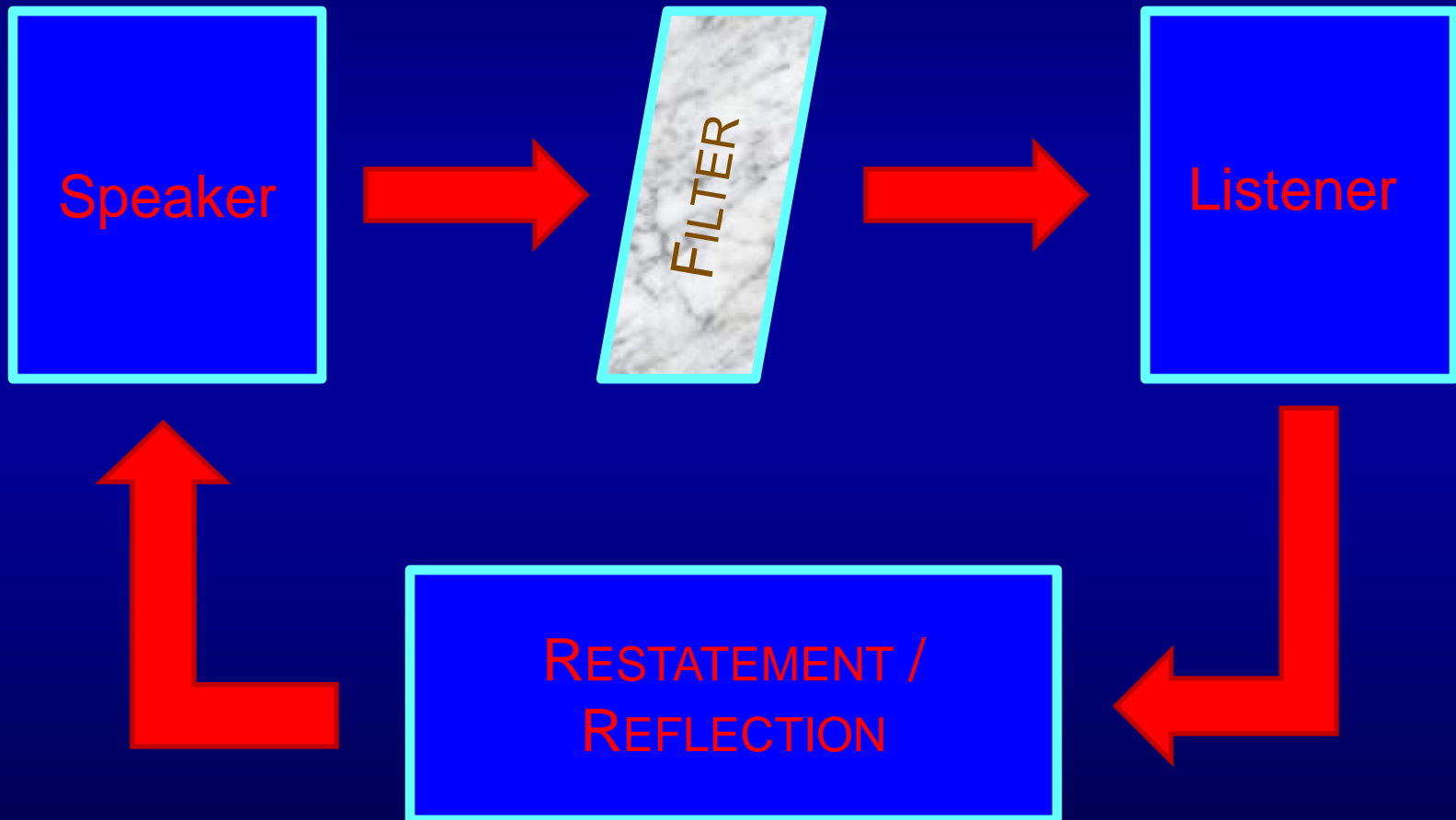
Consumer:

“I’m sick and tired of them screwing with me.”

CIT Officer:

“Let me make sure I hear what you are saying. You’re sick and tired of people harassing you.”

Accurate Restatement / Reflection



The Benefits of Restatement and Reflection

- 1. I am making sure that I correctly hear what the consumer / patient is saying.**
- 2. The consumer recognizes that I am trying to understand their situation—building trust.**
- 3. The consumer recognizes that I am affirming their feelings as real and legitimate—respect.**
- 4. If I am mistaken, the consumer can correct my understanding.**
- 5. The consumer is listening to me.**

Empathic Understanding requires close attention to the complete message

When you observe something nonverbal that doesn't fit—**red flag**—you have choices:

1. You can take note of a **discrepancy** and not engage.

OR

2. You can respond in a non-threatening way.

- *“You seem uncomfortable.”*

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Empathic Understanding...continued

- Open ended questions:
 1. Start with: What, How or When and encourage the consumer to tell us more
 - *“When did you get here?”*

If you observe a nonverbal **red flag**, you might ask,

- *“What more can you tell me about that?”*

2. Request a description:
 - *“Would you tell me about...?”*
 - *“Could you please tell me what is happening...?”*

3. Avoid *Why* questions:
 - *Why* questions lead to defensiveness

The Benefits of Open Ended Questions

1. I am able to get more information.
2. I can check out **red flag** nonverbals.
3. I can assess the person's level of dangerousness.
4. I can assess whether the consumer is in touch with reality.

Empathic Understanding...continued

- Closed ended questions:

1. Start with:

“Are you...” “Do you...” “Will you...”

2. Request specific information:

“Are you thinking of harming yourself?”

“Are you hearing voices?”

3. Obtain a commitment:

“May I call the nurse...?”

“Will you agree to come with me?”

The Benefits of Closed Ended Questions

- 1. I am able to get critical information quickly.**
- 2. I am able to begin formulating a plan of action immediately.**

Owning or “I” Statements

- “Owning” means taking responsibility for what I am thinking, feeling and saying.
- “I” statements are used sparingly since the focus is on the consumer.
- “I” statements are essential for communicating what the CIT Officer needs.
- “I” statements are essential for assisting consumers who need direction.

Owning or “I” Statements

- **CIT:** *“I want you to tell me how many pills you have taken...”*
- **CIT:** *“I don’t get it...can you tell me again?”*
- **CIT:** *“I’m feeling confused...you look sad.”*
- **CIT:** *“I disagree...I think you can do this.”*
- **CIT:** *“Yes, I understand you are angry and upset but I want you to slow down so I can understand you...”*

Owning or “I” Statements...continued

- **Broken Record**

Using a clear and calm voice, the CIT Officer repeats a request for compliance.

- **CIT:** *“Yes, I understand you are angry and upset, but I want you to slow down so I can understand you... Yes, I understand how upset you are about someone messing with you, but right now, I need you to slow down and talk with me about getting things right for you... Yes, I see how irritated you are, but right now, I want.....”*

Empathic Understanding



“To my mind, empathy is in itself a healing agent ... because it releases, it confirms, it brings even the most frightened person into the human race. If a person is understood, he or she belongs.”

Carl Rogers

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement & Reflection
 - 3) Exercise
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Genuineness

- A CIT Officer is role free
 - not Dr. Phil, not Judge Judy, not Detective Goren, not a preacher...
- A CIT Officer is real
- A CIT Officer is sincere

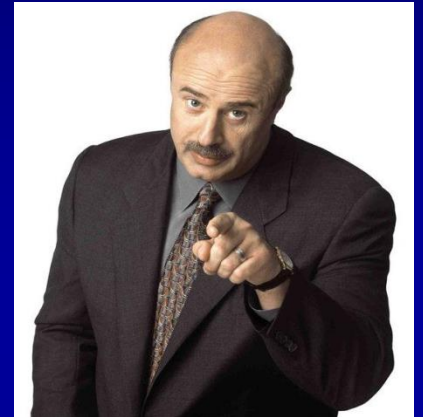




Photo: Thomas M. Kirchberg



Photos: Thomas M. Kirchberg

Sincere



Photo: Thomas M. Kirchberg

Genuineness...continued

- The CIT Officer is spontaneous and adaptable to changing situation.
 - not confined to rule book but able to think outside the box

CIT Officer: *“I’m not sure what we can do. But I’m willing to work with you to figure something out.”*

Genuineness...continued

- **Congruence—The CIT Officer's words and gestures are consistent and instill confidence in the consumer, family members,**
 - ✓ **Officer and consumer are on the same side**
 - ✓ **Officer and consumer are on the same wavelength**

Corey, G. (1977). Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole;
Krumboltz, J.D., & Thoresen, C.E. (1976). Counseling methods. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston;
Orlinsky, D.E., & Howard, K.I. (1986). Process and outcome in psychotherapy. In Garfield & Bergin,
Handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change (3rd ed.) (pp.311-381). New York: Wiley.

Genuineness...continued

- **Immediacy or staying in the “here and now”**

CIT Officer: *“Stay with me now. Let’s work on this together. I want you to stop for minute and take a deep breath... That’s good...Thank you.”*

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement
 - 3) Reflection
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Stigma

- **68 % of Americans do not want someone with a mental illness marrying into their family.**
- **58 % of Americans do not want people with mental illness in their workplaces.**

Pescosolido, B. (2009). *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, Vol. 41, No. 2.

Stigma

- Americans are twice more likely today than in 1950 to believe people with mental illness tend to be violent.
- The vast majority of people with mental illness are not violent.
- A small subset—people experiencing serious psychotic symptoms—are more violent than the general population.
- People with mental illness are actually 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence.
- Mental illness alone does not increase chances of violence—**add** alcohol / drugs / noncompliance with meds / biological or biochemical disorders.

The Two Faces of Stigma

Public Stigma

Stereotype:

“All people with mental illness are dangerous.”

Prejudice:

“I agree, people with mental illness are dangerous and I’m afraid of them.”

Discrimination:

“I don’t want to be near them and won’t hire one at my job.”

Self Stigma

Stereotype:

“People with mental illness are incompetent.”

Prejudice:

“I have a mental illness, so I must be incompetent.”

Discrimination:

“Why should I even try to get a job? I’m an incompetent mental patient.”

Public Stigma and Self Stigma



“We put down briefly in Khartoum, where we changed to an Ethiopian Airways flight to Addis. Here I experienced a rather strange sensation. As I was boarding the plane I saw the pilot was black. I had never seen a black pilot before, and the instant I did I had to quell my panic.

How could a black man fly an airplane?

But a moment later I caught myself: I had fallen into the **apartheid mind-set**, thinking Africans were inferior and that flying was a white man’s job. I sat back in my seat and chided myself for such thoughts. Once we were in the air, I lost my nervousness and studied the geography of Ethiopia.....”

Acceptance

- **The consumer has a right to have his or her own feelings, thoughts, or behaviors.**
- **The CIT Officer respects the dignity of each person without regard to sex, race, age, sexual orientation, cleanliness, etc.**
- **Acceptance is not easy when consumer is behaving in bizarre or hostile manner.**

Communicating Acceptance

Person in Crisis

- Fearful
- Anxious
- Angry / hostile
- Insecure
- Paranoid
- Acting strangely
- Speaking bizarrely
- Poor personal hygiene

CIT Officer

- Respectful Introduction
- “Please”
- “Thank you”
- “Smiling when appropriate”
- Considers: *“What if this person were a member of my family, a friend, a co-worker?”*
- Demonstrates **courage**

Plan of Learning

1. Crisis, Intervention, Team
2. Emotional Crises impose suffering
3. Empathic understanding
 - A. Active listening & Active observing
 - 1) Filter or “noise”
 - 2) Restatement
 - 3) Reflection
 - 4) Questions
 - 5) “I” statements
4. Genuineness
5. Acceptance
6. Skills practice

Skills Training

- **Skills Training uses real situations with experienced CIT Officers as consumers.**
- **We all feel uncomfortable in Skills Training.**
- **We all make mistakes in Skills Training.**
- **Skills Training is a learning experience.**
- **Feedback will be constructive.**
- **We will be working as a team to assist one another in skills development.**

Skills Training

1. Introduce yourself:

CIT: *“Hi. My name is _____.*

I’m a Crisis Intervention Team

Officer with the _____

Police/Sheriff’s Department.

Can you tell me your name?”

2. Ask Open-Ended Questions:

What—How—When ?

3. Use Positive Reinforcement:

CIT: *“I appreciate...Thank
you...That’s helpful.”*

4. Use Restatement:

Consumer: *“I don’t know what
to do. My family doesn’t want
me here.”*

CIT: *“You’re not sure where
you can go tonight. Home
doesn’t seem like the best place
right now.”*

5. Use Reflection:

Consumer: *“I’m sick and tired
of them taking my check.”*

CIT: *“You’re fed up with
people taking advantage of
you.”*