

Supportive Communication – Quick Reference

It is important to use supportive communication with other people during times of crisis such as disasters or emergencies.

Tips for Supportive Communication:

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| Show empathy and concern | When you communicate try to see and feel from the other person's point of view. Try to be understanding and come across as kind and caring. |
| Use positive comments | Show that you truly care about how the other person is doing and that you think they are worthwhile. Say things like "it's so great you really care for your friends and your family." |
| Be real | Try to tell the truth and earn the other person's trust. Say what you mean and mean what you say. |
| Show respect | Show respect for the other person. |
| Give the other person confidence | Try to help the other person feel more positive and have hope. Say things like "you are a strong person" or "I can see that you are trying really hard." |
| Explain that feelings are normal | Tell the other person that it is normal to feel worried and scared in the first few days, and then even angry or sad. These are NORMAL feelings to have during a disaster or emergency. |
| Focus on solutions | Questions and actions give people a way to focus. These are helpful things to say: "Thank you for reaching out. I can see that you're upset- what do you need right now?" "Who do you want to talk to for support?" "Have you eaten today?" "It is normal to feel numb, worried and upset. It will get better with time." |
| Make sure to... | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Do no harm○ Be trustworthy and follow through on your words with helpful actions○ Respect the other person's right to make their own decisions○ Never exaggerate your skills or abilities○ Be aware of your own feelings |

