

Home Health Aide Training

Module 3. Communication Skills

Goal

The purpose of this module is to improve participants' ability to communicate with home care clients by developing active listening skills. These skills include nonverbal communication, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions. In addition, participants will be introduced to the self-management skill of pulling back.

Time

4 hours

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activities	Teaching Methods	Time
1. Listening Skills	Interactive presentation, demonstration role plays, large-group discussion, and pairs work	40 minutes
2. Paraphrasing—Saying It in Your Own Words	Demonstration role play, large-group discussion, and pairs work	40 minutes
3. Asking Open-Ended Questions	Demonstration role plays, large-group discussion, brainstorming, and pairs work	40 minutes
4. Communication Skills Practice	Demonstration, large-group discussion, pairs work, and large-group exercise	1 hour
5. Managing Emotions: Pulling Back	Demonstration role plays, large-group discussions, interactive presentations, individual exercise, pairs work and reporting	1 hour

Supplies

- Flip chart, markers, tape
- Paper and pencils
- **Teaching Tools, Activity 5(a)—Scripted Role Play: *Not Pulling Back***
- **Teaching Tools, Activity 5(b)—Scripted Role Play: *Pulling Back***

Learner's Book

1. Communication
2. Active Listening
3. Nonverbal Communication: Talking with Your Body
4. Paraphrasing: Getting Started
5. How Paraphrasing Helps
6. Asking Closed and Open-Ended Questions

Module 3. Communication Skills

7. Summary: How Communication Skills Help
8. Reacting Emotionally vs. Pulling Back—You Choose
9. Pulling Back: An Overview
10. Pull-Back Strategies

Worksheets

- Worksheet 1. Paraphrasing Practice
- Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice
- Worksheet 3. Trigger Points: When Emotions Get in the Way of Listening...

Handouts

- Handout 1. Key Terms and Key Information

Advance Preparation

Review all training and presentation materials for this module. Note that icons are used to remind the trainer of the following:



When you are *presenting* or covering Key Content *in the discussion*. (Key Content is also addressed in the Learner’s Book and the handouts, but we use the “key” icon only when it is covered elsewhere in the learning process.)



When it is important to ask a particular question to get participants’ input.



When it is time to refer to the Learner’s Book.



When it is time to distribute a worksheet.



When it is time to distribute a handout.

Copy all worksheets and handouts for participants.

Gather all necessary supplies and equipment.

Please note that the Key Content is meant to be background information for the trainer. **DO NOT READ OUT LOUD TO PARTICIPANTS.**

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 1. Listening Skills

This activity begins with demonstration role plays. If you are the only trainer, identify a participant or another staff member to help with the role plays. Prepare the person in advance by describing the purpose of the activity and his or her role. Ask the person to think about something important that happened recently to him or her that can safely be shared with the group. This activity works best if the speaker shares something that is current and important, but the person should also be comfortable sharing this story with the whole group.

Prepare the following flip chart pages:

- “What Is Communication?” (Step 1)
- “Learning Agenda” (Step 3)
- “Listening Well” (Step 9)

Activity 2. Paraphrasing—Saying It in Your Own Words

Prepare a flip chart page for “Paraphrasing” (Step 3).

Like “Listening Well,” this activity begins with a demonstration. If you are the only trainer, identify a participant or another staff member to help you. Prepare the person in advance by describing the purpose of the activity and his or her role. Ask the person to think about a problem that he or she recently resolved that can safely be shared with the group. Be clear that you will keep interrupting to paraphrase, and that he or she should let you know if you have correctly caught the meaning of what has been said.

Activity 3. Asking Open-Ended Questions

Prepare the following flip chart pages:

- “Closed Questions...Open-Ended Questions” (Step 6)
- “Getting to Know Someone: Questions to Ask” (Step 7)

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 4. Communication Skills Practice

No advance preparation needed.

Activity 5. Managing Emotions: Pulling Back

Steps 3 and 9 involve scripted role plays to demonstrate pulling back. This should ideally be done with a co-instructor. However, if there is no co-instructor, ask a colleague or a staff member from your facility to help you (*not* a participant). In the Activity Steps, we refer to this staff person as your “assistant.”

Make two copies of the scripted role plays (see **Teaching Tools, Activity 5(a): Scripted Role Play—Not Pulling Back** and **5(b): Scripted Role Play—Pulling Back**). Use a highlighter to mark all of “Julie’s” parts on one copy; use a different color highlighter to mark all of “Mr. Lopez’s” parts on the other copy. Give “Mr. Lopez’s” script to the person who will be helping you with the role plays. (You will play the role of the HHA, Julie, in order to emphasize the body language and other signs of pulling back—and *not* pulling back.) Rehearse both role plays together a couple of times, to be sure you are each clear about your roles. When *not* pulling back, you should exaggerate the signs of frustration, but never cross the boundary of acting unprofessional. When pulling back, you also need to exaggerate the body language cues so that it’s clear to participants what you’re doing to set aside your frustration.

Be prepared to share personal experiences of situations that have triggered your emotions, choices you’ve made in those situations, and successful pull-back strategies you use.

Prepare the following flip chart pages:

- “Managing Emotions: Pulling Back—Learning Objectives” (Step 1)
- “Steps for Pulling Back” (Step 7)
- “Strategies for Pulling Back” (Step 10)

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 1. Listening Skills

40 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Define “communication.”

Describe active listening.

Describe the nonverbal cues (body language) used in active listening.

Describe how it feels when someone is really listening to us vs. when they are not.

Explain the importance of active listening in direct-care work.



Key Content

- Communication is the activity of sharing information. It requires a sender, a message, and a receiver. The “message” can be facts, feelings, ideas, or opinions. The communication process is complete when the receiver understands the sender’s message.
- Active listening means listening with our full attention. Active listening involves the skills of:
 - Nonverbal communication: body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
 - Paraphrasing: repeating back in your own words what the speaker has said.
 - Asking open-ended questions to clarify or gather more information.
- Active listening is a very important skill in direct care work. When you listen well—to clients or to supervisors and co-workers—you understand more of what they are saying. That makes it easier to remember important information. Also, listening well shows that you care about and respect the person who is speaking.

Module 3. Communication Skills

- Everyone has the capacity to listen effectively and can improve through practice. Unfortunately, the skills for active listening are rarely taught. Therefore, most people are generally not very good listeners and we are not used to being listened to well.
- Body language—or nonverbal communication—can communicate messages just as words can. For example, people indicate with their body language whether they are really listening or not.
- It is important to be aware of and manage one’s body language, because people often respond more to nonverbal communication than to what was said.

Activity Steps

Interactive Presentation—5 minutes

1. Define “communication.” Ask participants:

 *What does communication mean to you?*

After a few responses, post the prepared flip chart page with the definition of communication. Note that the “information” that is shared can be facts, feelings, ideas, or opinions.

Flip Chart

WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

- Sharing information
- Communication involves:
 - Sender
 - Message
 - Receiver


Communication is a success when the receiver understands the sender’s message.

Module 3. Communication Skills

- 2. Lead large-group discussion.** Explain that we are surrounded by “communication” of all kinds, but many times people don’t understand what someone is trying to communicate to them. Ask participants to think about the sender, the message, and the receiver, and to brainstorm:




What can go wrong that can lead to misunderstandings, or barriers to communication?

-  **3. Review key points.** After a few responses, review **1. Communication** in the Learner’s Book. Note that this module is designed to help them develop skills to overcome these barriers to communication.
- 4. Share the learning agenda for this module.** Post the prepared flip chart page with the learning agenda for this module. Note that the goal of this module is to improve participants’ ability to communicate with clients by developing three key skills: listening, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions.

Flip Chart

LEARNING AGENDA
Communication Skills

- Develop active listening skills and an awareness of body language
- Explore and practice paraphrasing
- Practice asking open-ended questions to clarify and learn more from clients

-  **5. Define “active listening.”** Review **2. Active Listening** in the Learner’s Book. Note that the first skill they will work on is the use of nonverbal communication—including body language—to show whether they are listening or not.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Demonstration Role Plays and Large-Group Discussion—10 minutes

- 6. Set up first role play.** Explain that you will begin with a demonstration role play. Ask the volunteer staff person or participant (see **Advance Preparation**) to come forward. Explain that you are going to demonstrate listening while this person tells you about something important that recently happened to him or her. Ask participants to observe what “the listener” is communicating to the speaker and how that is being communicated.

Teaching Tips

One of the challenges of being the only trainer is making it clear to the participants (and to yourself!) the difference between when you are acting as a role player and when you are being the trainer. You may need a few cues or moments of transition between those roles. Some suggestions for transitioning include:

- Stand in different places when you’re facilitating a discussion from when you’re in a role play.
- Use a prop—e.g., a hat or scarf or sweater—to indicate when you’re in the role play.
- Make a comment to the group about the transition—e.g., “Okay, now I’m playing the role of…” And, “Now the role play is over—let’s discuss what you observed.”

- 7. Conduct the role play for 2 minutes.** As the speaker tells his or her story, the “listener” (the trainer) should act increasingly distracted, demonstrating very poor non-verbal listening skills.

Teaching Tips

In this first role play, exaggerate poor listening skills by avoiding eye contact, fidgeting, playing with your papers, or checking your cell phone. In this case, one of your non-listening cues can be watching the time so that you can stop the role play after two minutes.

Module 3. Communication Skills

8. **Debrief role play.** After the role play, ask the following questions:

? *How well do you think the listener was listening?*

? *What was the listener communicating to the speaker?*

? *How did the listener communicate that?*

Ask the speaker:

? *How did you feel during this communication?*

9. **Conduct second role play.** Ask the “speaker” to continue his or her story. This time, demonstrate attentive **nonverbal** listening skills. Ask a participant to watch the time and to say when 2 minutes has passed.

Teaching Tips

Demonstrate **nonverbal** listening skills by keeping eye contact, leaning toward the speaker, nodding, and using appropriate facial expressions. It’s okay to say things like “uh-huh,” “really,” and “okay.”

You may want to ask questions of the person telling the story, but, to fully demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of nonverbal communication, DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS during this role play.

10. **Debrief role play.** Ask participants:

? *How well was the “listener” listening this time?*

? *What was the listener communicating to the speaker?*

? *How was that communicated?*

Ask the speaker:

? *How did you feel this time?*

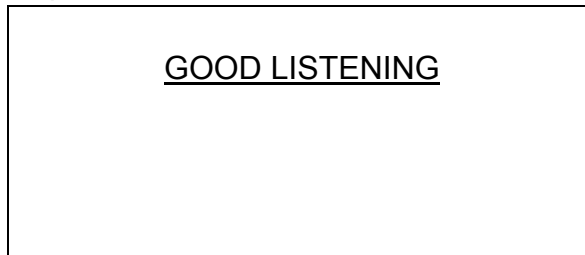
Module 3. Communication Skills

Ask everyone:

? *What do you think shows good listening?*

List the nonverbal cues on a flip chart page labeled “Good Listening.”

Flip Chart



11. Help participants make the connection between body language and active listening. Ask:

? *What have you learned from this activity about the role of body language in letting people know you are listening?*

12. Summarize the two role plays. Explain that these two demonstrations show the impact of “nonverbal communication”—or body language—on listening. The first role play showed poor listening, while the second one showed effective, or good listening.

Pairs Work and Large-Group Discussion—20 minutes

13. Introduce pairs work. Explain that participants will now have an opportunity to become more aware of their own body language and to experience for themselves the impact of poor vs. good listening.

Module 3. Communication Skills

14. Give instructions and then ask participants to role play:

- Quickly form pairs.
- Agree on one partner to be the speaker, the other the listener. (They will switch roles later.)
- Speakers should think of something personally important and safe to share. They will speak for 2 minutes.
- Listeners should use their body language to exaggerate distracted or *poor* listening, remembering what was demonstrated in the first role play.

Teaching Tip

Two minutes feels like a long time when you are only listening. Pairs will want to stop much earlier than two minutes. But ask them to keep going, because it's important to really experience how listening feels (and how it feels to be listened to). And it also teaches them how little real listening most of us do in conversations.

15. Conduct pairs debriefing. After 2 minutes, ask the speakers to stop. Both members of the pair should briefly share with each other how they felt.

16. Lead large-group debriefing. In the large group, ask the following questions:

Ask the speakers:

? *How did it make you feel to not be listened to?*

? *What happened to your story while you were telling it?*

Ask the listeners:

? *How did you feel in your role as “poor listener”?*


? *How much do you remember of what you were told?*

Teaching Tip

Some participants may become angry when they are blatantly not being listened to. Be prepared to acknowledge anger or other emotions, and remind participants that this is an exercise—the poor listeners in this activity are simply playing a role.

Module 3. Communication Skills

- 17. Conduct second role play in pairs.** Repeat the role play and discussion, but, this time, ask the listener to use *effective* nonverbal listening skills (referring to the flip chart page, Step 9) and to pay careful attention. Debrief in the large group as before, asking both “speakers” and “listeners”:


 *How did this role play feel different from the “poor listening” role play?*

- 18. Instruct participants to switch roles and repeat the process.** In order to give everyone the experience, switch roles in each pair and repeat the two role plays. Allow time for brief feedback within the pairs after each role play. At the end, in the large group, ask how it felt to be in the opposite role (i.e., speaker vs. listener), and if anyone has any additional insights they would like to share.

Interactive Presentation—5 minutes

- 19. Summarize participants’ feedback.** Repeat the primary points participants have made (i.e., the negative feelings that came up when not being listened to and the satisfaction of being well listened to). Ask participants:

 *Based on your experience here, why do you think good listening is important in direct-care work?*

- 20.**  **Review key points.** After a few responses, refer to **3. Nonverbal Communication: Talking with Your Body** and note that body language is important with all communication skills—not just listening.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 2. Paraphrasing—Saying It in Your Own Words

40 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Define and demonstrate “paraphrasing.”

Describe how paraphrasing improves communication.



Key Content

- Paraphrasing is a communication skill that focuses on reflecting and clarifying information and/or feelings. Paraphrasing means stating in one’s own words what someone else has just said or expressed. The purposes are to confirm or clarify the message the speaker is trying to communicate and to acknowledge that the listener has heard him or her accurately.
- Paraphrasing improves communication in five important ways:
 1. People deeply appreciate feeling heard.
 2. Paraphrasing prevents miscommunication. False assumptions, errors, and misinterpretations can be corrected on the spot.
 3. Paraphrasing helps the listener to stay focused on clearly understanding what the speaker is saying.
 4. Paraphrasing helps the listener remember better what was said.
 5. Paraphrasing can stop anger and cool down a crisis because the focus is on clarifying information rather than on reacting to the situation.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity Steps

Demonstration Role Play and Large-Group Discussion—15 minutes




- 1. Introduce activity.** Explain that in this activity, participants will further strengthen their communication skills. Ask the participant volunteer for this session to come forward (see **Advance Preparation**). Explain that you and the volunteer are going to have a conversation about a problem the volunteer recently resolved. Ask participants to observe what happens in the conversation.
- 2. Conduct demonstration.** Ask the volunteer to begin talking. After 30 seconds or so, stop the volunteer (the speaker) and repeat back in your own words what you heard the speaker say. The speaker should say if you understood correctly, and then either clarify or continue the story. Repeat this sequence two or three times. End the demonstration after about 3 minutes.

Teaching Tips

Don't use the word "paraphrasing" in these initial steps. The idea is to show participants that paraphrasing is something they may already routinely do in a conversation. If the word is new to participants, they may feel intimidated by it and not realize this is something they already do.

You should intentionally paraphrase incorrectly one time, to demonstrate how paraphrasing can help to clear up confusion.

Invite participants to share their observations. Ask:

-  *What did I do after listening to parts of the speaker's story?*
-  *What did the speaker do when I did not get the story exactly right?*
-  *What effect do you think this repeating and clarifying had on the conversation?*

- 3. Define "paraphrasing."** Explain that "paraphrasing" is repeating in one's own words what a person has said. Post the flip chart page with the definition and purposes of paraphrasing.

Module 3. Communication Skills


Flip Chart

PARAPHRASING


Definition:
Saying in your own words
what you heard someone say
or express

Purposes:
To confirm or clarify what the
other person means

To show that you have heard
the other person

-  **Facilitate discussion.** Ask participants to name some of the words and phrases they heard you use during the role play that initiated paraphrasing. Ask for ideas about other phrases that could be used. Refer to **4. Paraphrasing: Getting Started** in the Learner's Book and note any phrases that are not on the list.

Large-Group Discussion and Pairs Work—10 minutes

-  **Have participants practice paraphrasing.** Explain that participants will now try paraphrasing in a work situation. Distribute **Worksheet 1. Paraphrasing Practice** and read the instructions aloud. Read the first client's statement, and ask for volunteers to try paraphrasing.

Teaching Tip

If a participant does not accurately paraphrase what you said, give feedback and encourage him or her to try again. If he or she seems really stuck, ask if another participant can help out.

Module 3. Communication Skills

- 6. Set up pairs work.** After demonstrating with two quotes, ask participants to form pairs. Ask them to work together to write a paraphrase statement for each of the remaining quotes.

Teaching Tip

If participants are struggling with the concept, continue this activity in the large group. If you need more quotes for demonstration purposes, use some from **Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice**.


Large-Group Discussion—15 minutes


- 7. Facilitate reporting back to large group.** When the pairs have finished working, ask them to share their work. Read one statement aloud and ask one pair to read their paraphrase statement. Give feedback and ask for other ideas for how to paraphrase. Encourage their efforts, while making sure that the paraphrasing is effective (i.e., not simply repeating). If necessary, help modify the paraphrases.

- 8. Lead debriefing.** Ask participants:


 *How did it feel to paraphrase?*

 *Did anything feel hard to do?*

 *If so, what felt hard?*

 *How do you think paraphrasing could improve communication between home health aides and clients?*

- 9. Summarize activity.** Emphasize that, as with any skill, paraphrasing may seem awkward at first, but participants can gain confidence in paraphrasing through practice, both on the job and elsewhere. Note that there will be more chances to practice later on.

-  **10. Refer to Learner's Book.** Refer to **5. How Paraphrasing Helps** in the Learner's Book.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 3. Asking Open-Ended Questions

40 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Explain the difference between closed and open-ended questions.

Explain the importance of using open-ended questions to communicate with clients.

Create open-ended questions that will be useful in direct-care work.



Key Content

- Closed questions usually generate short facts or yes/no answers. Open-ended questions encourage responses that include feelings, opinions, descriptions, or explanations. Open-ended questions usually begin with “how,” “what,” or “why?”
- In direct-care work, sometimes workers need to ask closed questions to get specific information from clients. However, open-ended questions are much more effective when the worker needs to know about the client’s thoughts, feelings, or experiences. Such information may be difficult to obtain using closed questions, especially if the client is having problems and is hesitant to talk about the situation.

Activity Steps

Demonstration Role Plays and Large-Group Discussion—15 minutes

- 1. Set up demonstration.** Ask for a volunteer to help with this activity. Begin by explaining that you are going to ask the volunteer some questions. The content of the answers doesn’t matter, but participants should observe the style of the questions and the types of answers such questions generate.

Module 3. Communication Skills

2. **Conduct demonstration.** For about 30 seconds, ask your volunteer a series of closed questions—e.g.:

? *Are you enjoying the workshop?*

? *Are you nervous right now?*

? *Is it too hot in the room?*

3. **Lead large-group discussion.** After the questions and answers, ask the other participants what they observed about the kinds of questions you were asking and the kind of answers you got. After a few responses, move on to the next step, explaining that you will repeat the exercise but with a difference. Ask participants to observe how it is different.

4. **Conduct next demonstration.** Ask the volunteer similar questions, but make them all open-ended, e.g.:

? *How do you think the workshop is going so far?*

? *How do you feel about the temperature in the room right now?*

? *What are your feelings about doing this role play with me?*

5. **Lead large-group debriefing.** Thank the volunteer for helping you with this exercise. Then ask the other participants: “What do you think is different about the questions I asked this time and the ones I asked before?” Follow up by asking, “How were the answers different?”
6. **Define the two types of questions.** Display the prepared flip chart page. Discuss the points, referring to the demonstration for examples.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Flip Chart

CLOSED QUESTIONS:

- Begin with *did, do, are, is, when*
- Answered by “yes” or “no” or simple facts
- Stop the conversation
- Require many questions to get the full story

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:

- Usually begin with *how, what, or why* (or you might say, “*tell me more about...*”)
- Clarify information
- Keep the conversation open
- Allow people to tell their story

Teaching Tip

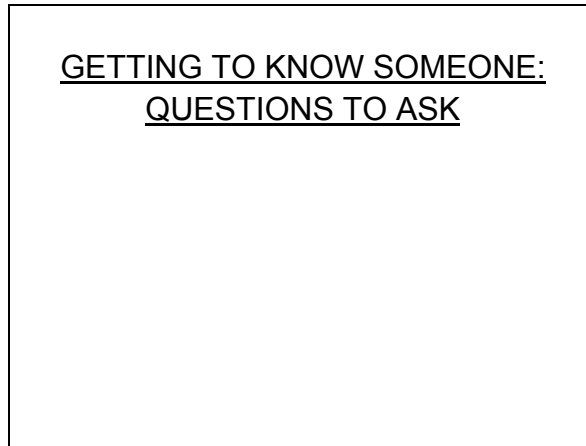
These guidelines are not perfect! Note that, in the Learner’s Book, one example of a closed question begins with “how”—“How many cookies would you like?” Also, “What is your name?” is a closed question, beginning with “what.” Point this out to participants, and note that the real test of an open-ended question is the kind of answer you get.

Brainstorming and Large-Group Discussion—15 minutes

- 7. Set up and conduct brainstorming.** Explain that asking questions—showing curiosity and concern about someone—is important in building any new relationship. In later modules, participants will learn more about the importance of building a relationship with the client. For now, ask them to think about meeting someone—anyone—for the first time. Ask them to brainstorm the kinds of questions they would ask to get to know more about that person. Write the questions on several flip chart pages, *with the exact wording* that participants use.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Flip Chart



Teaching Tips

It is important to write the exact wording that participants use because the questions will be rewritten to make them more open.

Leave several lines blank under each question to have enough room for re-writing.

If participants have trouble thinking of questions, suggest topics like family, hobbies, favorite foods, and routines.

8. Demonstrate how to categorize questions and rephrase the closed questions.

Looking at the first question you recorded on the flip chart, ask participants if it is open-ended or closed. Refer back to the flip chart with guidelines for open-ended and closed questions. If it is closed, ask participants to reword it as an open-ended question. Write the new open-ended question beneath the closed one.

Teaching Tip

If participants are confused, ask the question of one of the participants and see what kind of an answer they give (either long or short). If it is a closed question, help them to turn it into an open-ended question.

Some closed questions—e.g., “Where do you live?”—do not make sense as an open-ended question. In that case, encourage participants to follow up with an open-ended question—e.g., “How do you like living there?”

Module 3. Communication Skills


- 9. Practice with one or two more questions.** Continue with the next question, asking participants if it is open-ended or closed. If it is a closed question, ask participants to reword it as an open-ended question; then write the new open-ended question beneath the closed one. Do this only until it seems that participants understand the task, and have practiced with at least one closed question.

Pairs Work and Large-Group Discussion—10 minutes

- 10. Set up and conduct pairs work.** Have participants form new pairs. Assign one or two of the remaining closed questions on the flip chart page to each pair, asking them to make each one open-ended.

Teaching Tip

If most of the participants are struggling to understand the concept of open-ended questions, you can continue doing this in the large group.

- 11. Facilitate reporting back to the large group.** After a few minutes, ask them to share their open-ended questions. Correct or revise as necessary, and write the open-ended version under the closed question.
-  **12. Wrap up the activity.** Refer to **6. Asking Closed and Open-Ended Questions** and **7. Summary: How Communication Skills Help** in the Learner's Book.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 4. Communication Skills Practice

1 hour

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Demonstrate paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions in order to more effectively manage challenging situations.



Key Content



- The communication skills that have been discussed in this module are keys to setting the stage for effectively handling challenging situations:
 - Listening well helps workers to hear better what clients are trying to say and reassures clients that they are getting their workers' full attention.
 - Paraphrasing shows that the worker understands and allows the worker to clarify the client's meaning.
 - Asking open-ended questions helps the worker to get sufficient information to accurately describe a challenging situation and to explore possible ways of addressing it.

- While these skills may seem awkward now, after practice they will become second nature. Practice helps participants to learn. Using these skills in the classroom, with co-workers, and at home will help participants to apply the skills better when working with clients.

Module 3. Communication Skills


Activity Steps

Demonstration and Large-Group Discussion—15 minutes

-  **Review skills taught in this module.** List the communication skills that have been discussed so far and ask participants how each one would help in understanding a challenging situation or solving a problem with a client. (See **Key Content**.)
- Introduce activity.** Explain that the purpose of this activity is to focus on the skills of paraphrasing and asking open-ended questions to respond to a challenging statement from a client. Note that some of these statements could trigger a strong emotion, if someone were saying them to you personally. Pulling back from an emotional reaction is a skill that they will learn later; but for now, they should do their best to move past their first emotional reaction and try to focus on using their talking skills.
-  **Demonstrate how to apply the skills on the worksheet.** Distribute **Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice**. Note that you will demonstrate how to do this task with the first statement on the worksheet. Ask participants to imagine that you're the client; then say the statement with emotion (for example, anger)—“I'm not hungry. I just want to sleep! Why do you keep bugging me?”
- Brainstorm how to paraphrase.** Ask participants for ideas for how they might paraphrase that statement. Work with them to get a good paraphrase and say, “That’s what you will write on the lines after the word “Paraphrase.”
- Brainstorm how to ask an open-ended question.** Ask participants for how they might follow up with an open-ended question that would help them be clear about the client’s meaning. Work with them to get a good question and say, “That’s what you will write on the lines after the words “Open-ended question.”
- Give instructions.** Explain that they will work in pairs, and they will have 10 minutes to work on two statements. After that, you will ask each pair to share their work with the large group. You will read the statement to one of them, as if you were the client and they were the HHA. Then they will read their paraphrase and ask their open-ended question. You will answer the question. After that, they will get feedback from the large group on the paraphrase and on whether the question was open-ended.


Module 3. Communication Skills


Pairs Work—10 minutes

7.  **Set up pairs work.** Divide participants into pairs. Assign two statements from **Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice** to each pair. Explain that they will have 10 minutes to discuss and fill in the worksheet for their two statements. They should identify which one will read their paraphrase and open-ended questions in the large group, with the trainer acting as the client.

Large-Group Exercise—30 minutes

8. **Work with the second statement.** Ask for one pair who worked on this statement to volunteer to go first. Ask which participant will read their paraphrase and question. Read the “client’s” statement to that participant (with emotion, as if you were the client). The participant will read their paraphrase, and then ask you their question. Answer the question (as if you were the client).
9. **Debrief the interaction.** Come out of your “client” role. Ask the rest of the participants for feedback. Then sum up with your own feedback. Spend about 5 minutes for each statement, including discussion.

 *How was the paraphrase statement? Did it restate what the client said in their own words? Did it reflect the client’s meaning or feeling?*

 *Was the question open-ended? What kind of answer did it lead to? Did it help you understand better what the client meant?*

Teaching Tips

Do not overwhelm participants with negative feedback. Emphasize what they have done well. Note that there’s no one “right” way to use these skills, and that everyone will improve with practice.

If you have time, you can ask for the paraphrase and open-ended question from any other pairs that worked on this statement.

10. **Repeat the process for each statement.** Ask for another pair to share their work on the next statement. Follow the same procedure, acting out the interaction and then debriefing.

Module 3. Communication Skills

11. Debrief with large group. Ask participants:

- ?** *How did it feel to work on these statements?*
- ?** *What was difficult, if anything?*
- ?** *Were any of the clients' statements a surprise to you?*

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 5. Managing Emotions: Pulling Back

1 hour

Learning Objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Describe how responding emotionally in stressful situations can make it hard to listen well.

Define “pulling back” and list the steps.

Explain how pulling back from emotional responses can lead to more respectful communication and more effective problem solving.

Identify situations that make them respond emotionally.

Identify strategies they can use for pulling back in those situations.



Key Content

- Responding emotionally in stressful situations can make it hard to listen well.
- While people rarely have control over the words or behavior of another person, each person can control *his or her own* emotional responses and reactions. This can lead to more effective communication and more effective problem-solving. The first step in shifting how one responds to another person’s words, tone of voice, or behavior is to become *consciously aware* of one’s internal thoughts and external reactions.
- Once aware of one’s internal responses, it is possible to make a *conscious choice* to set aside one’s emotions and remain attentive to the other person and his or her position. This process is called *pulling back*.
- Pulling back means being able to pause, become aware of one’s emotions, and keep them under control. It prepares a person to actively listen and thus results in more positive communication and outcomes.

Module 3. Communication Skills

- Managing emotions is essential to active listening. It is also important for establishing and maintaining good relationships with co-workers and with residents. This contributes to the HHA's ability to provide resident-centered care.
- Practical pull-back strategies can help both in the moment and when preparing for potentially stressful situations.

Activity Steps

First Demonstration Role Play and Large-Group Discussion—10 minutes

- 1. Welcome participants and introduce the topic.** Note that they have already learned important skills for active listening—using body language effectively, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions. Even with the best skills, however, there are times in our work when something happens that brings up a lot of emotions for us, and it becomes hard to even remember to listen. Ask participants:

 *Does this sound familiar to anyone?*

After seeing heads nod, note that this activity is about developing an important skills for dealing with those situations—pulling back.

- 2. Introduce the role play.** Explain that you will conduct a brief role play to demonstrate one such situation. Ask your “assistant” to come forward (see Advance Preparation). Describe the setting and explain your roles (see **Teaching Tools, Activity 5(a): Scripted Role Play—Not Pulling Back**). Ask participants to focus on the actions and words of the HHA, Julie.

Teaching Tip

As the lead instructor, you will play the HHA, “Julie,” and you will emphasize *not* pulling back.


- 3. Conduct the demonstration role play for NOT pulling back.**


Teaching Tip

Follow the script on pages 10-11. Be as realistic as possible while demonstrating *not* pulling back, but do not over-play the character; do not act unprofessional.


Module 3. Communication Skills


4. **Debrief the first role play.** Ask the following questions and facilitate a discussion.


 What did you observe about “Julie’s” response to “Mr. Lopez”?

 How do you think “Mr. Lopez” felt?

Interactive Presentation—10 minutes

5.  **Summarize the impact of responding emotionally.** Thank participants for their observations. Note that “Julie” responded out of an emotional place. Review the first two bullets in Key Content.

6.  **Review 8. Reacting Emotionally vs. Pulling Back—You Choose** in their Learner’s Book. Emphasize that pulling back is a conscious *choice*.

7.  **Review 9. Pulling Back: An Overview** in their Learner’s Book. Define “pulling back” and discuss the bullets that follow. Post the prepared flip chart page to emphasize the “Steps for Pulling Back.”

Flip Chart

STEPS FOR PULLING BACK

1. Notice your emotional reactions and judgments.
2. “Freeze” your reaction—put it aside.
3. Put your attention back on the other person.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Second Demonstration Role Play and Large-Group Discussion—10 minutes

8. **Set up the second role play.** Note that the scenario will be the same as in the first role play. Explain that, this time, “Julie” has gone through this training and will try to pull back. The same people will play the same roles in order to clearly show the difference in the behaviors. Ask participants to observe what is different about this role play, looking for verbal and non-verbal signs of pulling back.
9. **Conduct the demonstration role play for pulling back.**

Teaching Tips

Use the **Teaching Tools, Activity 5(b): Scripted Role Play—Pulling Back**. When playing “Julie,” the HHA, be sure to exaggerate the pull-back strategies—for example, taking a deep breath and waiting a few seconds before responding—so they are visible for the audience. The other role player should show a positive response when Julie pulls back, but not overdo it.

10. **Debrief the second role play.** Ask participants:

? *What did you observe this time about “Julie’s” response to “Mr. Lopez”? Specifically, what signs of pulling back did you see?*

Note participants’ observations on a flip chart page, “Strategies for Pulling Back.”

Flip Chart


<u>STRATEGIES FOR PULLING BACK</u>


Then ask:

? *How do you think “Mr. Lopez” was feeling by the end of the role play?*


Module 3. Communication Skills

Individual Exercise—5 minutes

11.  **Explain the purpose of this exercise.** Remind participants that pulling back is a *conscious* choice. The first step of pulling back is to “notice their emotional reactions and judgments.” Thus, it is important to become aware of what kind of situations lead to an emotional reaction for them as individuals—that is, situations where they need to pull back.

12.  **Distribute Worksheet 3. Trigger Points—When Emotions Get in the Way of Listening...** Ask participants to close their Learner’s Books. Explain that they will have five minutes to read the list of situations and put a check mark next to each situation that leads to an emotional response for them. Explain that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to this—the goal is just to increase their awareness of the kinds of situations in which they respond emotionally. If they think of any other situations that affect them emotionally, they can add them to the list. *Note that these worksheets will not be collected.*

Pairs Work and Reporting—15 minutes

13.  **Shift focus to pull-back strategies.** Acknowledge the difficulty of staying calm and thinking clearly when under stress. Reiterate that pulling back is not about changing another person—it’s about changing *our own reaction*, so that we can listen attentively and have a more positive outcome. Note that everyone uses one or more strategies to pull back in stressful situations. The goal of this activity is for participants to become aware of their own pull-back strategies, strengthen them, and learn new ones.
14. **Form pairs and give instructions.** To save time, ask participants to pair up with someone sitting close to them. In their pairs, they will share the “trigger points” that they checked on **Worksheet 3**, and then discuss pull-back strategies that they have used successfully in the past. Ask them to try to think of one “in the moment” strategy and one that they use when they plan ahead for dealing with situations that may be emotionally challenging. Ask them to write those two pull-back strategies at the bottom of **Worksheet 3**.

Module 3. Communication Skills



15. **Monitor time.** Note that they will have 5 minutes for sharing and discussing pull-back strategies in their pairs. Give a “time-check” after 3 minutes, to make sure both members of the pair get a chance to talk.
16. **Facilitate pairs reporting.** Ask one pair to volunteer to begin, by sharing two of their pull-back strategies. Add any new strategies to the flip chart page that you started in Step 10. Note which strategies are used in the moment and which ones are used ahead of time.

Teaching Tip

For examples of pull-back strategies, see **10. Pull-Back Strategies** in the Learner’s Book. Distribute the handout to participants AFTER this discussion, so that participants will come up with their own ideas about pull-back strategies.

Some strategies that are identified may avoid conflict but do not contribute to effective listening (for example: just leaving the room to avoid yelling at the person). Redirect or reframe such responses before writing them on the flip chart page. For example, ask the group: “How might you use this strategy (leaving the room) and do it respectfully?” (For example, you could explain to the person that you need to walk away at this point, but will come back later when you can listen better).


Interactive Presentation—5 minutes

17.  **Summarize pull-back strategies.** Review **10. Pull-Back Strategies** in their Learner’s Book. Highlight any strategies that were not mentioned in the discussion.
18.  **Wrap up the discussion.** To close, remind participants that managing emotions is essential to active listening. It is also important for establishing and maintaining good relationships with co-workers and with residents. This contributes to the HHA’s ability to provide resident-centered care.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Large-Group Exercise—5 minutes


19. **Conduct a closing go-round.** Wrap up the module by asking participants:

 *How can you use these communication skills in your life and your work?*

Teaching Tips

Conducting this as a “go-round” means that **each person** gets a chance to answer, without anyone interrupting or asking questions. Usually, you ask for a volunteer to start and then you move to the next person, and the next, until everyone has answered. Participants can “pass” if they wish, but you always come back to them at the end to give them another chance to answer.

It’s important for every person to say something about what they learned and how they can apply it. It not only shows what they are thinking, but, in some cases, it may trigger their thinking in a way that did not happen earlier in the session.

20.  **Summarize the module.** Distribute **Handout 1. Key Terms and Key Information**. Note that it has all the key points that they covered in this module. Ask participants if they have any questions.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Teaching Tools, Activity 5(a) Scripted Role Play: *Not Pulling Back*

Setting [read aloud before starting the role play]: *The HHA (Julie) has just finished helping her client, Mr. Lopez, to get ready to catch a ride to the mall with his church group. They have hired a special bus for this event and gave clear instructions about being ready when the bus stopped at each person's house. Mr. Lopez has some problems with walking and it takes him quite a while to walk down his front steps to the sidewalk. Sometimes he uses a wheelchair and a ramp at the back of his house.*

Julie: There, Mr. Lopez, you're finally ready to go to the mall. I'm nervous about you missing the bus, because it took so long for you to decide what to wear! We should head out the door right now.

Mr. Lopez: You know, I really don't want to wear these shoes. They're already hurting my feet. Get me my brown shoes—like I told you in the first place.

Julie (*extremely frustrated*): Mr. Lopez! We don't have time to change your shoes **AGAIN!** The bus will be here any minute it's going to take too long to help you put on another pair of shoes. Let's not bother walking down the steps—I'll push you to the street in the wheelchair.

Mr. Lopez: I don't want **NO** wheelchair! I can walk there myself—AND QUITE COMFORTABLY, TOO—if you'd just stop wasting time and help me get my brown shoes on!

Julie: (*very frustrated tone—without raising voice*) Mr. Lopez, we just took almost 20 minutes getting you ready to go. That bus will be here any minute, and honestly I am scheduled to help another client when I leave you this morning. If I'm late getting there, I'll be hearing it from my supervisor!

Module 3. Communication Skills

Teaching Tool, Activity 5(a): Scripted Role Play—Not Pulling Back (page 2)

Mr. Lopez: You aides are all alike—always racing off to help someone else when you haven't finished helping the first person! All you care about is pushing and shoving us around to get your jobs done fast, so you can make more money. That's all I am to you—a paycheck!

End of First Role Play

Module 3. Communication Skills

Teaching Tools, Activity 5(b) Scripted Role Play: Pulling Back

Setting [same as the first role play]...

Julie: There, Mr. Lopez, you're finally ready to go to the mall. I'm nervous about you missing the bus, because it took so long for you to decide what to wear! We should head out the door right now.

Mr. Lopez: You know, I really don't want to wear these shoes. They're already hurting my feet. Get me my brown shoes—like I told you in the first place.

Julie (taking a deep breath and closing her eyes for a moment):

Mr. Lopez, I'm really sorry but I'm worried about you missing the bus to the mall. I know you've been looking forward to this outing with your church group.

Mr. Lopez: Oh, I don't know—maybe it's too much bother. Maybe I'll stay home and we can do something else. But, either way, these shoes are hurting my feet! I'm not going anywhere in these shoes!

Julie: Mr. Lopez, I don't know if you remember, but I have been scheduled to see another client after you leave for the mall today. You don't have to go the mall, of course, but I won't be able to stay with you today.

Mr. Lopez: You aides are all alike—always racing off to help someone else when you haven't finished helping the first person! All you care about is pushing and shoving us around to get your jobs done fast, so you can make more money. That's all I am to you—a paycheck!

Module 3. Communication Skills

Teaching Tool, Activity 5(b): Scripted Role Play—Pulling Back (page 2)

Julie (visibly pausing and taking another deep breath, then speaking softly): Mr. Lopez, I'm sorry these shoes hurt your feet and I'm sorry that I got scheduled to work with someone else this morning. But you have been excited about this trip to the mall for a long time. I'd hate to see you miss it. If we use the wheelchair and the ramp, I can run and get your brown shoes and meet you at the back door. The wheelchair will get you to the sidewalk in no time. Then we can change your shoes just before you get on the bus.

Mr. Lopez: Well, I guess that would work. And I was looking forward to sitting with a certain lady on the bus. Let's give it a try.

Julie: That's great, Mr. Lopez. I think we've got just enough time!

End of Second Role Play

Activity 1. Listening Well

- 1. Communication**
- 2. Active Listening**
- 3. Nonverbal Communication: Talking With Your Body**

Activity 2. Paraphrasing—Saying It in Your Own Words

- 4. Paraphrasing: Getting Started**
- 5. How Paraphrasing Helps**

Activity 3. Asking Open-Ended Questions

- 6. Asking Closed and Open-Ended Questions**
- 7. Summary: How Communication Skills Help**

Module 3. Communication Skills

Activity 5. Managing Emotions: Pulling Back

8. Reacting Emotionally vs. Pulling Back—You Choose

9. Pulling Back: An Overview

10. Pull-Back Strategies

Module 3. Communication Skills

1. Communication

Communication is the activity of sharing information. It requires:

- a sender
- a message
- a receiver

The communication process is complete when the receiver understands the sender's message.

The “information” shared in communication can be:

- Facts
- Feelings
- Ideas
- Opinions

Barriers to communication

- **Using medical terms:** If you use medical terms when you talk with clients, they may not understand what you mean. Use simple language, if possible. Or, if you have to use medical terms, find out if the client knows what they mean.
- **Not listening well:** We can't understand what someone is saying if we don't listen to them. This may seem obvious, but most of the time we're not listening very well when people are talking to us.

Module 3. Communication Skills

2. Active Listening

Active listening means listening with our full attention. Active listening involves the skills of:

- Nonverbal communication: body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
- Paraphrasing: repeating back in your own words what the speaker has said.
- Asking open-ended questions to clarify or gather more information.

Active listening is very important for good communication in any situation. But it's especially important in direct care work..

- When we listen with our full attention, we remember and understand better what is being communicated.
- When we listen with our full attention, it feels caring, helpful, and respectful for the person who is speaking.

Module 3. Communication Skills

3. Nonverbal Communication: Talking with Your Body

Body language is the way you move when you're communicating. It includes facial expressions and your tone of voice. It can tell clients that you care about and respect them. It can also let them know that you are paying attention. Sometimes body language is more powerful than words.

Read how these workers manage their body language.

Lonnie's tip—Smile.

“Clients can often tell how I feel by the look on my face. So I try to smile.”

Donna's tip—Position yourself at eye level with the client.

“So many of my clients are sitting or in bed when I'm working with them. When we're talking, I try to sit or otherwise get down to their eye level, so they don't have to look up at me all the time.”

Drew's tip— Ask before you touch someone. Then touch them gently.

“I try to touch clients as gently as possible. But before I touch someone, I always ask if it's OK. Some clients don't mind being touched. Some clients really like it. And then others don't like it at all. So it's important to ask.”

Mandy's tip—Use a friendly voice.

“People really pay attention to the sound of my voice. So I try to make my voice sound warm and caring. That's a kind of body language because it doesn't really matter what I'm saying.”

Module 3. Communication Skills

4. Paraphrasing: Getting Started

Part of being a good listener is paraphrasing. Paraphrasing means reflecting back, in your own words, what someone else said.

Here are some ways to get started:

“Did I hear you say ...”

“So what you’re saying is ...”

“Am I hearing you right that ...”

“Are you saying that ...”

“I believe that you are saying ...”

Module 3. Communication Skills

5. How Paraphrasing Helps

Paraphrasing—saying in your own words what someone else said—may seem difficult at first. With time and practice, it gets easier. Read how paraphrasing helps these workers to communicate better at work.

Lily’s tip—It shows you are listening.

“I like to say in my own words what someone else said. It lets them know I am listening.”

Mandy’s tip—It helps avoid confusion.

“Sometimes, when I say things back in my own words, I find out that I didn’t understand what the person was trying to say. With paraphrasing, if I don’t understand, they can tell me right away and we don’t get all confused.”

Jon’s tip—It helps keep you focused on the client.

“Sometimes people say things that make me feel really emotional. Paraphrasing helps me focus and brings me back to what the other person is really saying. That makes it easier for me to stay calm.”

Review—Paraphrasing:

- Shows you are listening.
- Helps avoid confusion.
- Helps keep you focused on the client.

Module 3. Communication Skills

6. Asking Closed and Open-Ended Questions

It's important to know the difference between closed and open-ended questions. Both kinds of questions are useful for different situations.

Closed questions:

- Can be answered in a few words
- Help you get information
- Stop the conversation

Examples:

“Do you want me to get your sweater now?”

“How many cookies do you want?”

“When did you see the doctor?”

Open-ended questions:

- Encourage a longer answer
- Help you find out thoughts and feelings
- Keep the conversation going

Examples:

“Why are you sitting by yourself?”

“How did you make that blanket?”

“What kind of jobs have you had?”

Module 3. Communication Skills

7. Summary: How Communication Skills Help

Good communication means using the talking and listening skills you have just learned. Here's how listening, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions can help you do your job well.

Review—Good Communication Skills:

- Help you understand what the client is thinking and feeling.
- Help build good feelings between you and the client.
- Make it easier for you and the client to solve problems together.

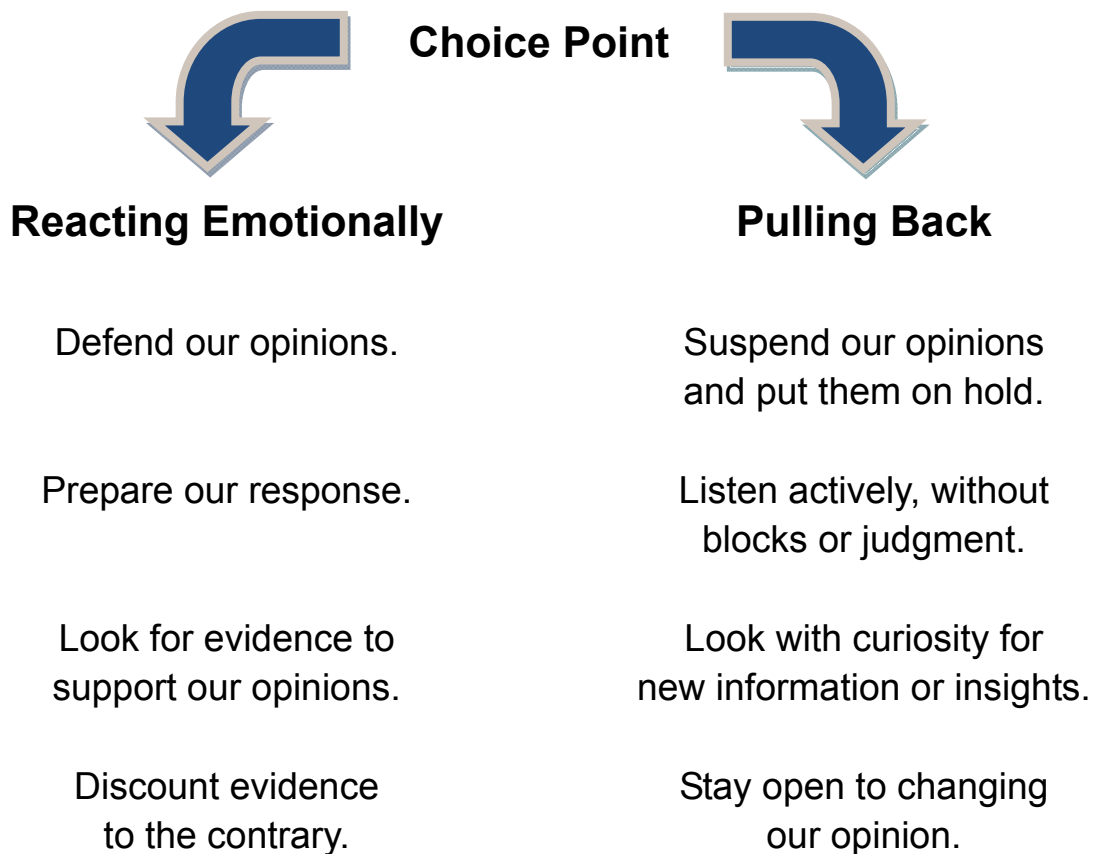
Module 3. Communication Skills

8. Reacting Emotionally vs. Pulling Back—You Choose

Often we are faced with situations and people who provoke a strong response in us. These responses can be:

- **Emotions**—anxiety, anger, hurt, frustration, hopelessness, or sadness.
- **Prejudices and Assumptions**—feeling like we already know the other person’s reasons, motivations, or ways of thinking.

When we are in an emotional state, listening becomes difficult and communication often becomes charged. Whatever our reaction, we always have a **CHOICE** in how to respond:



Module 3. Communication Skills

9. Pulling Back: An Overview

“Pulling Back” is the ability to keep emotional control in a stressful situation.

- Your ability to handle a challenging situation will be determined by your ability to stay calm and think clearly.
- To “pull back” is to be able to pause, become aware of your emotions, get them under control, and clearly observe and assess the situation.
- After pulling back, you are better able to understand what is happening and ask for additional information (if necessary).

Steps for Pulling Back

1. Notice your emotional reactions and judgments.
2. Freeze your reaction—put it aside.
3. Put your attention back on the other person.

Module 3. Communication Skills

10. Pull-Back Strategies

Pull-back strategies in the moment:

- Take a deep breath.
- Silently count to five.
- Silently say a personal affirmation such as “I have the strength to deal with what’s happening here.”

Strategies to prepare for a stressful situation:

- Talk to someone else about the situation.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Rehearse what you plan to say.
- Plan a time to talk when there will not be any interruptions or distractions.
- Imagine yourself staying calm and collected during the situation.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Handout 1. Key Terms and Key Information

Page 1 of 3

Communication is the activity of sharing information. It requires a sender, a message, and a receiver. The “message” can be facts, feelings, ideas, or opinions. The communication process is complete when the receiver understands the sender’s message.

Active listening means listening with our full attention. Active listening involves the skills of:

- Nonverbal communication: body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
- Paraphrasing: repeating back in your own words what the speaker has said.
- Asking open-ended questions to clarify or gather more information.

Active listening is a very important skill in direct care work. When you listen well—to clients or to supervisors and co-workers—you understand more of what they are saying. That makes it easier to remember important information. Also, listening well shows that you care about and respect the person who is speaking.

Body language is the way you move when you’re communicating. It also includes your facial expressions and tone of voice. Body language can tell clients that you care about and respect them, without words. It can also let them know that you are paying attention. Sometimes body language is more powerful than words. Tips for good body language:

- Smile.
- Look clients in the eye (if that’s okay in their culture).
- Position yourself at eye level with the client.
- Touch people gently. Ask first if it’s okay.
- Use a friendly voice.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Handout 1. Key Terms and Key Information

Page 2 of 3

Paraphrasing means reflecting back, in your own words, what someone else said. This may seem difficult at first. With time and practice, it gets easier.

When you use paraphrasing, you:

- Show you are listening.
- Help avoid confusion.
- Keep focused on the client, or the person who is speaking.

Asking questions: It's important to know the difference between closed and open-ended questions. Both kinds of questions are useful for different situations.

Closed questions:

- Can be answered in a few words
- Help you get information
- Are not helpful for starting a conversation

Open-ended questions:

- Encourage a longer answer
- Help you find out thoughts and feelings
- Keep the conversation going

Good communication includes listening, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions. It can help you do your job better because it can:

- Help you understand better what the client is thinking and feeling.
- Help build a good relationship between you and the client.
- Make it easier for you and the client to solve problems together.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Handout 1. Key Terms and Key Information

Page 3 of 3

Often we are faced with situations and people who bring out a strong emotional response in us. When we are in an emotional state, listening and communicating can become difficult. If you can stay calm and think clearly, you will be able to handle a challenging situation better.

Pulling back is the ability to keep emotional control in a stressful situation. To “pull back” is to be able to pause, become aware of your emotions, get them under control, and clearly observe and assess the situation.

- **Steps for Pulling Back**
 1. Notice your emotional reactions and judgments.
 2. Freeze your reaction—put it aside.
 3. Put your attention back on the other person.

- **Pull-back strategies in the moment:**
 - Take a deep breath.
 - Silently count to five.
 - Silently say a personal affirmation such as “I have the strength to deal with what’s happening here.”

- **Strategies to prepare for a stressful situation:**
 - Talk to someone else about the situation.
 - Listen to soothing music.
 - Rehearse what you plan to say.
 - Plan a time to talk when there will not be any interruptions or distractions.
 - Imagine yourself staying calm and collected during the situation.

Module 3. Communication Skills

Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice

Page 1 of 2

Instructions: Imagine that your client has just said each statement to you. Decide how you would paraphrase the statement. Write your paraphrase on the lines below the statement. Then decide on an open-ended question that would help you understand better what the client means. Write your question below the paraphrase.

1. "I'm not hungry. I just want to sleep! Why do you keep bugging me?"

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

2. "I don't want your kind here! I keep telling them not to send you people!"

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

3. "The last person who took care of me didn't like me. She kept poking and hitting me, and sometimes she swore at me!"

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

Module 3. Communication Skills

Worksheet 2. Communication Skills Practice

4. “My daughter just left. She is so mean. She only visits to ask for money.”

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

5. “You're always late! I'm going to ask for another worker who can be on time.”

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

6. “Ouch—you're too rough with me! I've never had so many bruises.”

Paraphrase: _____

Open-ended question: _____

Module 3. Communication Skills

Worksheet 3. Trigger Points—When Emotions Get in the Way of Listening...

What behaviors, people, or situations trigger your emotions?

- ___ 1. When I hear the same complaint over and over again...
 - ___ 2. When someone refuses to take responsibility for a problem...
 - ___ 3. When I feel personally blamed or attacked...
 - ___ 4. When I'm expected to do two different things at the same time...
 - ___ 5. When I'm blamed for something that isn't my fault...
 - ___ 6. When I'm tired, stressed, or just in a bad mood...
 - ___ 7. Others: _____
- _____
- _____

What is your usual pull-back strategy? Identify at least one method you use *in the moment* and one you use to help you *prepare for stressful situations*.

In the moment: _____

When preparing for stressful situations: _____
