Helpful Responses Questionnaire


The following six paragraphs are things that a person might say to you. With each paragraph, imagine that someone you know is talking to you and explaining a problem that he or she is having. You want to help by saying the right thing. Think about each paragraph. On a separate sheet of paper write, for each paragraph, the next thing you might say if you wanted to be helpful. Write only one or two sentences for each situation.

1. **A forty-one-year-old woman says:**
   "Last night Joe really got high and he came home late and we had a big fight. He yelled at me and I yelled back and then he hit me hard! He broke a window and the TV set, too! It was like he was crazy. I just don't know what to do!"

2. **A thirty-six-year-old man says:**
   "My neighbor really makes me mad. He's always over here bothering us or borrowing things that he never returns. Sometimes he calls us late at night after we've gone to bed and I really feel like telling him to get lost."

3. **A fifteen-year-old girl says:**
   "I'm really mixed up. A lot of my friends, they stay out real late and do things their parents don't know about. They always want me to come along and I don't want them to think I'm weird or something, but I don't know what would happen if I went along either."

4. **A thirty-five-year-old parent says:**
   "My Maria is a good girl. She's never been in trouble, but I worry about her. Lately she wants to stay out later and later and sometimes I don't know where she is. She just had her ears pierced without asking me! And some of the friends she brings home--well, I've told her again and again to stay away from that kind. They're no good for her, but she won't listen."

5. **A forty-three-year-old man says:**
   "I really feel awful. Last night I got drunk and I don't even remember what I did. This morning I found out that the screen of the television is busted and I think I probably did it, but my wife isn't even talking to me. I don't think I'm an alcoholic, you know, 'cause I can go for weeks without drinking. But this has got to change."

6. **A fifty-nine-year-old unemployed teacher says:**
   "My life just doesn't seem worth living any more. I'm a lousy father. I can't get a job. Nothing good ever happens to me. Everything I try to do turns rotten. Sometimes I wonder whether it's worth it."

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**Note:** The above instructions and items are examples only. Both the instructions and the stimulus items should be adapted for the particular group being trained.