



VALIDATING FEELINGS

WHAT IS VALIDATION?

Validation is the act of acknowledging a person's thoughts and feelings and communicating to them that they are being heard and that their feelings are understandable given the situation.

WHY IS VALIDATION IMPORTANT?

Validation is important as it shows someone you are listening, understanding and being non-judgmental-which can help build a stronger relationship.

WAYS TO VALIDATE FEELINGS:

Pay Attention - One of the simplest ways to validate feelings is to give the person your undivided attention. Remove distractions and actively listen using attentive body language (eye contact, nodding etc).

Reflecting - Reflecting back the persons' thoughts and feelings will help them to feel heard. It also prevents miscommunication because the person can correct any information, they feel you did not hear correctly. It might sound like "I'm hearing that this made you feel...".

Empathise – Recognise the person's feelings by putting yourself in their shoes e.g. "I understand why that would be difficult for you".

Offer reassurance – Using supportive language demonstrates that you believe their feelings are appropriate and understandable e.g. "I am here to support you".

Normalise - Communicate that what the other person is feeling makes sense based on their experience - "I understand why you would feel this way". Validating someone's feelings does not necessarily mean you agree with them, but it shows you are acknowledging their feelings.

