

Steps of the SAFER Model

Stabilization:

introduction, establish rapport,
describe limitations

Acknowledge:

let people tell their story (provide
description of the event and
description of personal reactions)

Facilitation of understanding:

provide normalization and
reassurance as appropriate

Encourage effective coping:

mechanisms of action are meeting
basic needs, liaison or advocacy,
cathartic ventilation, social
support, information, stress
management, problem-solving,
conflict resolution, cognitive
reframing, spiritual, financial,
reassurance, hope

Referral:

when there is sufficient
evidence that the person is unable
to successfully attend to essential
daily activities, refer to the next
level of care.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information
on police response to
behavioral health
crises, please visit my
website:

<https://www.policeresponsebehavioralhealthcrisis.com>

Information Sources

International Critical Stress Foundation

<https://icisf.org>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

<https://store.samhsa.gov>

information for police officers

Communicating to Persons with Mental Illness



Basic Communication Techniques

interacting with mentally ill persons

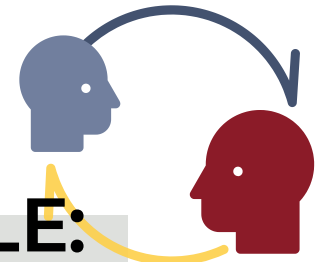
Technique	Purpose	Comments
Silence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote speech Encourage continued, uninterrupted speech 	May inadvertently communicate lack of interest or caring
Non-verbal attending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show interest Encourage continued, uninterrupted speech 	Examples: nodding of head, facial expressions
Restatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check for accuracy Show you are listening Clarify semantics Probe 	Good to clarify ambiguities, but using too frequently may seem ingenuine or unnatural.
Paraphrasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate interest, understanding, and empathy Check for listening accuracy Probe for further content 	Use more frequently than restatement as it is easier and more natural.

Technique	Purpose	Comments
Reflection of Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the speaker's feelings based on verbal and/or nonverbal cues Encourage discussion of feelings 	Important to allow expression of feelings since they can otherwise escalate and thwart problem solving, but do not overuse.
Open-ended Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide maximum response options 	Useful in early phases or when you get stuck. Allows questioning without restricting answers.
Close-ended questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct or focus response Provide structure 	Useful when pursuing a specific target: you only learn what you know to ask.

S.A.F.E.R. Model

Everly, 1995

The SAFER model of crisis intervention is a step-by-step model that "may be considered psychological first aid."



EXAMPLE:

Following the SAFER Model

1. Introduce yourself
2. Meet basic needs and stabilize the situation
3. Listen to the story
4. Reflect emotion, paraphrase, or normalize as appropriate
5. Attribute reactions to the situation, not personal weakness
6. Identify personal stress management tools
7. Identify external support or resources
8. If applicable, use problem solving or cognitive reframing
9. Assess person's ability to safely function

