

Expanding the V in GIVE: Levels of Validation

1. **Pay Attention:** Look interested in the other person instead of bored (no multitasking).
2. **Reflect Back:** Say back what you heard the other person say or do, to be sure you understand exactly what the person is saying. No judgmental language or tone of voice!
3. **“Read Minds”:** Be sensitive to what is *not* being said by the other person. Pay attention to facial expressions, body language, what is happening, and what you know about the person already. Show you understand in words or by your actions. Check it out and make sure you are right. Let go if you are not.
4. **Understand:** Look for how what the other person is feeling, thinking, or doing makes sense, based on the person’s past experiences, present situation, and/or current state of mind or physical condition (i.e., the causes).
5. **Acknowledge the Valid:** Look for how the person’s feelings, thinking, or actions are valid responses because they fit current facts, or are understandable because they are a logical response to current facts.
6. **Show Equality:** Be yourself! Don’t “one-up” or “one-down” the other person. Treat the other as an equal, not as fragile or incompetent.