

The Basics of Good Communication

Just as the original Good Samaritan helped the crime victim to a safe place where he could recover, volunteers create an emotional safe haven for crime victims.

It is the experience of helplessness that does the psychological damage. For that reason, counseling for crime victims is about empowerment. Effective Good Samaritans recognize that crime victims must determine for themselves what is best for their lives when offered the proper support, advocacy, resources, and information.

Good Samaritans empower crime victims by listening actively, clarifying options, and supporting victims' decisionmaking. In other words, Good Samaritans offer tools that help empower victims and transform them into victors.

Good communication is ...

- Clear
- Concise
- Complete

Blocks to good listening

- Mind reading
- Rehearsing
- Filtering
- Judging
- Daydreaming
- Advising
- Sparring
- Needing to be right
- Derailing
- Placating

Getting the message across

- Avoid loaded or judgmental terms.
- Avoid generalizations.
- Use "I" statements; avoid the blaming "you."
- Keep it in the present.
- Avoid negative comparisons.
- Avoid threats.
- Describe feelings rather than act them out.
- Use whole messages (facts, thoughts, feelings, and needs).
- Be clear.