

Handout 4.2

Active Listening and Attending.

In active listening, the Pastoral Assistant CONCENTRATES on the visitee's story and actively encourages communication of their thoughts, feelings and needs by their responses.

Prompts: A prompt may be **verbal**:- "ummm".
"go on".
"can you tell me some more"
"...and then".

or **non-verbal** through body language. But remember the four Cs from last time.

Using Silence:

Using silence effectively is a skill. It can help the visitee reflect, have some space and enhance listening.

Many people are uncomfortable with silence. This can lead the visitor to ask questions or make comments rather than use the silence constructively. Sometimes distressed or lonely person may be reminiscing in their own mind.- so be quiet and let them.

Prolonged silence may create barriers. A gentle acknowledgement of the problems, "you seem to be having problems talking about...", can sometimes help.