

# E.A.R. Statements – Skills Sheet

An E.A.R. (Empathy, Attention, Respect) Statement is a short statement that acknowledges a person's emotions, attempts to connect with them and helps calm them down, keeping them focused on problem-solving.

## E.A.R. Statement (Examples):

- *I can **understand** your frustration – this is a very important decision in your life. Don't worry, I will pay full **attention** to your concerns about this issue and any proposals you want to make. I have a lot of **respect** for your commitment to solving this problem, and I look forward to solving it too.*
- *I **appreciate** this complaint process is very stressful and upsetting. You need a professional who is paying close **attention** to your concerns and really **understands** how difficult this has been. I **will listen** to your concerns today and I will **do my best** to assist you.*
- *I respect your efforts on this. [Respect]*
- *You have put a lot of work into this. [Respect]*
- *I can see how important this is to you. [Empathy]*
- *I can understand how frustrating this is. [Empathy]*
- *I will listen as carefully as I can. [Attention]*
- *I will pay attention to your concerns. [Attention]*

## GENERAL TIPS:

1. It may be counter-intuitive so it will take lots of practice to honestly show Empathy, Attention and Respect when someone is raging or Behaving in other Aggressively Defensive ways.
2. An E.A.R. statement will sometimes take only a minute. It does not have to take much time to unlock The Cycle of High Conflict Thinking. You don't have to listen forever.
3. Your statement of Empathy, Attention and Respect must be honestly felt or the HCP's Cycle of High Conflict Thinking will continue.
4. Avoid volunteering to "fix it" for the person (in an effort to calm them down).
5. Keep an arms-length relationship.
6. Avoid believing or agreeing with the content.
7. Avoid apologizing as this only confirms to the HCP you are to blame. A "social sorry" is fine – "I am sorry this is so difficult."
8. To help you stay calm in the face of the other person's upset, remind yourself "it's not about me!" Don't take it personally. It's about the person's own upset and lack of sufficient skills to manage his or her own emotions.