

GIVE (G)

CORE CONCEPT: Focus on others to build and maintain relationships.

GIVE skills focus on others. We build and maintain relationships by balancing our own wants, needs, and desires with those of the people around us. Everyone benefits from healthier relationships grounded in genuine interest and validation. GIVE is also key to resolving conflicts.

Use the acronym GIVE to remember the building blocks of this skill. These building blocks are described in further detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Genuine
Interested
Validate
Easy manner

Genuine

Be honest, sincere, and real with others. Speak and act from your heart with caring and use mindfulness to be with others in the moment. Let others know that you value them and treat them with respect.

Interested

Interest comes from efforts to connect with a person. Let others have the focus. Listen intently to others and pause to make space before responding. Ask questions and listen to the answers.

Be mindful of your nonverbal communication. Our nonverbals communicate a great deal of information to others, both intentionally and unintentionally. Send the nonverbal messages that you want to send to others. Nonverbally, interest is communicated by looking at the person, making appropriate eye contact, and keeping your mannerisms and posture open and relaxed.

Validate

Validation is the nonjudgmental acknowledgment of others' feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and experience. To validate you "walk a mile in someone else's shoes" and see life from his or her perspective. We validate when we find others' truth and how their experiences make sense given their life circumstances and the situation. Remember to validate yourself, too.

Easy manner

Remember the idiom "you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Having an easy manner means treating others with kindness and a relaxed attitude. It also means not being heavy handed with our judgments, opinions, and viewpoints. Allow space for others.

Remember that we can always raise our interpersonal intensity if necessary but that it is often more effective to start out in a relatively relaxed and laid-back manner.

Last, learn and use polite manners. Being easy-going and polite is kind to others, and actually opens a lot of doors for you too!