

# Basic Coaching Communication Skills and Tools

## Skills:

1. Mindful/Active listening
2. Open-ended questions
3. Reflections
4. Summarizing – to verify agreement on what is heard
5. Silence – to allow thinking time
6. Insight – seeing the bigger picture from a different vantage point
7. Support – being there and available

## Tools:

1. Explore strengths, current or from past, to build confidence.
2. Be totally non-judgmental in responses, regardless of what is heard.
3. Change negative talk, from “I have to” or “need to” to: “I want to.”
4. Accept fully & pleasantly any resistance; accept them where they are!
5. Assist with realistic small steps in setting goals to build confidence.
6. Explore strategies to overcome obstacles; brainstorm if needed.
7. Use the scale 0-10 to determine their confidence &/or commitment.
8. Always request permission for prayer, or when offering suggestions.
9. Refuse to jump in with advice or personal experience.
10. Recognize and agree with to refer to specialists.
11. Affirm their good work and your desire to accompany them in their journey.
12. Remind them all conversations and records are confidential.

## Examples of some of these skills and tools:

1. **Listening:** The most important of all communication skills! It is nonjudgmental awareness of what someone is saying. There may be no other relationship in your friend’s life where they are heard in the way you hear them. As you pray with them you become closer. They feel vulnerable; so assure them of confidentiality. As you set aside your own agenda to listen closely, it is transformational for you both. “Listen until you no longer exist.” (Not I, but Christ!)
2. **Silence:** Give them thinking time. Don’t interrupt unless they are off track.
3. **Change Talk:** Encourage changes, without giving advice.  
*Tell me the best thing you did for yourself, no matter how small...*  
*Tell me what you enjoyed most the past week, best meal, best day, or...*  
*Tell me how you would go about making changes in order to succeed.*  
*How important is it for you to make changes?*  
*So what do you think you will do?... What else?*
4. **Affirmations:** This gives needed confidence.  
*You sound serious about making this change...*  
*It appears that you are really trying to...*  
*That takes a lot of...(courage, hard work, patience)*
5. **Summarizing:** This helps them know they were heard – vital!  
*Okay, let’s see if I heard you right...*  
*At this point, you’ve stated...*  
**(They can trust you if they know you are accepting them where they are.)**