ACTIVE LISTENING GUIDE

Observing
• What do you notice about your friend or the student with whom you’re meeting?
  • Does their physical appearance look different from usual?
  • How do you interpret their mood? Is it different from how they normally show up?
  • Take note of what is said, how it is said, and the language used.

Active Listening
• Encouragers
  • Minimal responses, or encouragers, like “mm-hmm”, “yes”, “ok”, “uh-huh” can be a way to signal to your conversation partner that you’re listening and paying attention to them.
• Reflection of content or feelings
  • Reflecting back a short phrase or sentence to let your conversation partner know that you heard what they were feeling, helps them know you’re listening. A phrase like, “you felt upset” is an example of a reflection of feelings.

Giving Affirmations
• Giving compliments and cheerleading can be ways to help your conversation partner know that you support them and recognize the strengths or positive aspects of how they’ve shown up. Sometimes a small compliment can feel like meaningful recognition to a person going through a difficult time.

Asking questions
• Asking an open question like, “what are you feeling right now?” or “what’s happening inside you right now?” can be a good way to encourage someone to open up if your conversation partner appears upset but hasn’t yet talked about what they’re feeling.