**RESTATEMENT**

**EXPLORATION STAGE**

**Suggested assignment:** Before completing the exercises, read chapter 8 ("Restatement") in *Helping Skills*.

**Definition:** Restatement is a repeating or rephrasing of the content or meaning of the client’s statement(s) that typically contains fewer but similar words and is usually clearer and more concrete than the client’s statement.

**Intensions:** To clarify, to focus, to support, to encourage catharsis

**Helpful hints:**
- Do not try to paraphrase everything the client says. As only one issue can be effectively addressed at a time, choose to restate what seems most important to the client.
- Keep restatements as short as possible. The goal is to turn the attention back to the client right away so he or she can continue exploring.
- Focus on the client rather than on another person, even when the client’s focus is on another person.
- Vary the format, alternating phrases such as “You’re saying that…”, “It sounds like…”, and “I wonder if….”
- Be tentative in the tone of restatements so that clients feel free to say whether the restatement actually fits or to modify it to better represent their meaning.

**Difficulties helpers may experience:**
- Parroting or restating only surface thoughts
- Feeling frustrated because of not “doing” enough for the client
- Focusing on someone other than the client
- Providing comprehensive and lengthy restatements

**For class discussion:** How do you decide what part of the client’s message to restate?

**Practice Exercises for Restatement**

1. CLIENT: I’ve been having a lot of difficulty getting my studying done. Exams are coming up, and I’m not ready for them. I sit down to study, but I can’t seem to focus. I start thinking about everything else and the time is gone before I realize that I haven’t gotten anything done.

   Helper response:

2. CLIENT: I don’t think my parents ever really listened to me. My father was always gone because he worked all the time, and my mother was always busy with her activities. I was the middle of seven children, and I think they just kind of overlooked me. I was quiet and well-behaved, so they never really needed to pay attention to me, I guess.

   Helper response:

3. CLIENT: I am so eager to begin learning helping skills. I have always wanted to be a therapist in a formal setting. All my friends have always come to me with their problems and I feel like I’ve been helpful. But I want to learn to be even more helpful.

   Helper response:

4. CLIENT: My 10-year-old son saw me come in the other night when I was drunk. He heard my wife threaten to leave me. He came up to me the next day and asked me not to drink anymore. It was one of the worst moments in my life.

   Helper response: