

Acknowledge & Validate

Both play important parts in communication yet serve different purposes.

Possible Approaches for Acknowledging

What you're saying is...

Let me see if I got this...

I'm hearing you say...

In other words...

One of the most powerful parts of communicating we can offer someone is when we let them know we *really* heard and care about what they are saying. Acknowledging is a deep level of mirroring back, or paraphrasing, what they just said.

Person 1: "I've been really stressed out with all the deadlines at work."

Person 2: "I hear you. You've got a lot on your plate right now."



Possible Approaches for Validating

You have every right to feel [feeling/emotion] because...

That's perfectly normal to feel [feeling/emotion]...

It's understandable that you feel [feeling/emotion] because/given...

Validating someone's feelings means acknowledging their right to feel as they do, without judgment or agreement. This helps them feel understood and "normalizes" how they feel in their situation.

When you Validate, you want to avoid saying, "I know how you feel," because you don't. You can say, "It is understandable that you feel that way because..." and tell them why.

Person 1: "I've been really stressed out with all the deadlines at work."

Person 2: "It's totally normal to feel stressed with so many deadline. Anyone would feel overwhelmed in your situation"



Putting it All Together:

I hear you. You've got a lot on your plate right now. (Acknowledgement)
It's totally normal to feel stressed with so many deadlines. Anyone would feel overwhelmed in your situation." (Validation)

