



TIPS FOR HANDLING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

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1. Stay Calm - Use Grounding techniques to help you react in a calm way. Overreacting does not support our clients
2. Own the Room - Be confident in your office, it is your space so own it.
3. Be confident - Our clients can sense when you are fearful or uneasy so project an air of confidence.
4. Do your own work - See a mental health professional or consult with a mentor to get the support you need. Working with eating disorder clients can be challenging so paying attention to your own needs is essential in helping our clients.
5. Be a partner - Motivational interviewing is about partnering with our clients, not judging them or dragging them along for the ride. By being a partner, you allow them to choose the direction, you just help navigate.
6. Join them in the arena - Part of doing this work with eating disorders is embracing the vulnerable moments, so when a client shares something deeply personal or intense, be open, and appreciative of the moment.
7. Be honest - Don't hide or conceal the facts. If you see eating disorder behaviors, point them out, honestly and respectfully.
8. Never take it personally - When a client gets upset at me about something, I never take it personally. Many times, I attribute it to the "eating disorder voice" unhappy with what I'm saying or doing to expose the behavior.
9. Be yourself - Be authentic in the room. Share the moment with your client or staff. Be honest about your feelings and emotions and never let shame or fear control your emotions.