

From: Miller, W. R., Hedrick, K. E., & Orlofsky, D. (1991). The Helpful Responses Questionnaire: A procedure for measuring therapeutic empathy. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 47*, 444-448.

Helpful Responses Questionnaire

The following 6 paragraphs are things that a person might say to you. For each paragraph, imagine that someone you know is talking to you and explaining a problem that he or she is having. You want to help by saying the right thing. Think about each paragraph as if you were really in the situation, with that person talking to you. In each case, write the next thing that you would say if you wanted to be helpful. Write only one or two sentences for each situation. Please print or write clearly.

1. A 41-year-old woman says to you:

"Last night, Joe got really drunk and he came home late and we had a big fight. He yelled at me and I yelled back and then he hit me really hard! He broke a window and the TV set, too! It was like he was crazy. I just don't know what to do!"

2. A 36-year-old man tells you:

"My neighbor is really a pain. He's always over here bothering us or borrowing things that he never returns. Sometimes he calls us late at night after we've gone to bed and I really feel like telling him to get lost."

3. A 15-year-old girl tells you:

"I'm really mixed up. A lot of my friends, they stay out real late and do things their parents don't know about. They always want me to come along and I don't want them to think I'm weird or something, but I don't know what would happen if I went along either."

4. A 35-year-old parent tells says:

"My Maria is a good girl. She's never been in trouble, but I worry about her. Lately she wants to stay out later and later and sometimes I don't know where she is. She just had her ears pierced without asking me! And some of the friends she brings home—well I've told her again and again to stay away from that kind. They're no good for her, but she won't listen."

5. A 43-year-old man says:

"I feel really awful. Last night I got drunk again and I don't even remember what I did. This morning I found out that the screen of the television is busted and I think I probably did it, but my wife isn't talking to me. I don't think I'm an alcoholic, you know, because I can go for weeks without drinking. But this has got to change."

6. A 59-year-old unemployed teacher tells you:

"My life just doesn't seem worth living anymore. I'm a lousy father. I can't get a job. Nothing good ever happens to me. Everything I try to do turns rotten. Sometimes I wonder whether it's worth it."