

## ATTITUDES REQUIRED TO USE ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a method for putting to work a set of basic attitudes. Without these attitudes, the method seldom will be effective; it will sound false, empty, mechanical, and insincere.

1. **You must want to hear what the parent has to say.** This means you are willing to take the time to listen. If you don't have time, you need to say so.
2. **You must genuinely want to be helpful to the parent** with their particular problem at that time. If you don't want to, wait until you do.
3. **You must genuinely be able to accept their feelings,** whatever they may be or however different they may be from your own feelings you think a parent "should" feel. This attitude takes time to develop.
4. **You must have a feeling of trust in the parent's capacity to handle their feelings,** to work through them, and to find solutions to his or her problems.
5. **You must appreciate that feelings are transitory, not permanent.** Feelings change - hate can turn into love, discouragement may quickly be replaced by hope. Consequently, you need not be afraid of feelings getting expressed; they will not become forever fixed inside the parent. Active listening will demonstrate this to you.
6. **You must be able to see the parent as someone separate from you - a unique person with their own life and their own identity.**