

## Emotion Sheet: Six Steps to Help People Who Are Upset

from: *TheHappyMD.com*

What to say. . .

- 1) "You look (sound) really \_\_\_\_\_ (feeling)."
- 2) "Tell me about it."
- 3) "I'm so sorry this is happening to you" or "I'm so excited..."
- 4) "What would you like me to do to help you?" or "How can we celebrate..."
- 5) "Here's what I'd like us to do next," or "May I give you some counsel on this matter?"
- 6) "Thank you so much for sharing your feelings with me..."

### Upset campers come in two flavors, usually.

1. They're obvious and they're verbal. You can hear them in their interactions with fellow campers.
2. The second type are quiet and seething. They don't speak but everybody knows they're upset. Either way, if you notice this, you're not going anywhere until they clear these emotions.

#### Step 1: Say: **"You look really upset."**

You'll typically get one of two responses. "You bet I am," is one and the second is, "I'm not upset. I'm frustrated," or they may name some other emotion. Now there's a piece inside of you that may feel bad. You may feel like you've got it wrong, but you can let that go. Your observation has caused them to look inside and get clear on what they're really feeling. That's the first thing they have to do. So, great job! This ability to point out the camper's feelings in a non-judgmental way is a major breakthrough in the typical counselor-camper communication process.

#### Step 2: Say **"Please tell me about it."**

What you've done here is given them a green light to tell you their experience. Your job is to listen, to understand what they're going through, and make sure they notice that you're listening, that they feel heard. It is at this point that authentic counselor-camper communication can actually begin.

#### Step 3: No matter what's happened, you can apologize. Say: **"I'm so sorry that you're feeling this way. I'm so sorry this is happening to you."**

Let them know that you have sympathy for their situation. This is critically important to maintaining your bond with this patient.

#### Step 4: Say **"What would you like me to do to help you?"**

Here again, you've got to listen, and as you're listening this time, notice your boundaries, notice things that the patient may request that you're not comfortable with.

#### Step 5: When they're done, take a pause, think about what you're willing to do, and tell them **"Here's what I'm willing to do going forward or Here's what I suggest or Here's a plan I recommend."**

Any time that you are not giving them something they've requested, tell them what you are going to do instead.

Last, to wrap this difficult counselor-camper communication up in a way that builds your relationship for the long term, thank them for being willing to share their feelings with you. Let them know how important it is that you each understand each other clearly.