

# Attending Skills

Attending skills involve total presence. To tend to the person before you is to care enough to work at being as present as possible to her or him.

## Posture

- Maintain a state of relaxed alertness.
- Incline your body toward the speaker—"sit on the edge of your seat."
- Face the speaker squarely—don't turn a cold shoulder.
- Keep your arms and legs uncrossed—keep your body open.
- Maintain an appropriate distance from the speaker—not too close or too far.

## Body Movement

- Move your body in response to the speaker—by nodding your head, and so forth.
- Avoid making distracting motions or gestures.
- Do not respond to outside things that could distract you from the speaker.

## Eye Contact

- Maintain fairly constant eye contact with the speaker.
- Allow your eyes to convey emotion to the speaker.

## Facial Gestures

- Use your face to communicate with the speaker—offer smiles, quizzical looks, winks, and so on.
- Avoid "hard" or angry looks.

## Environment

- Reduce environmental distractions to a minimum.