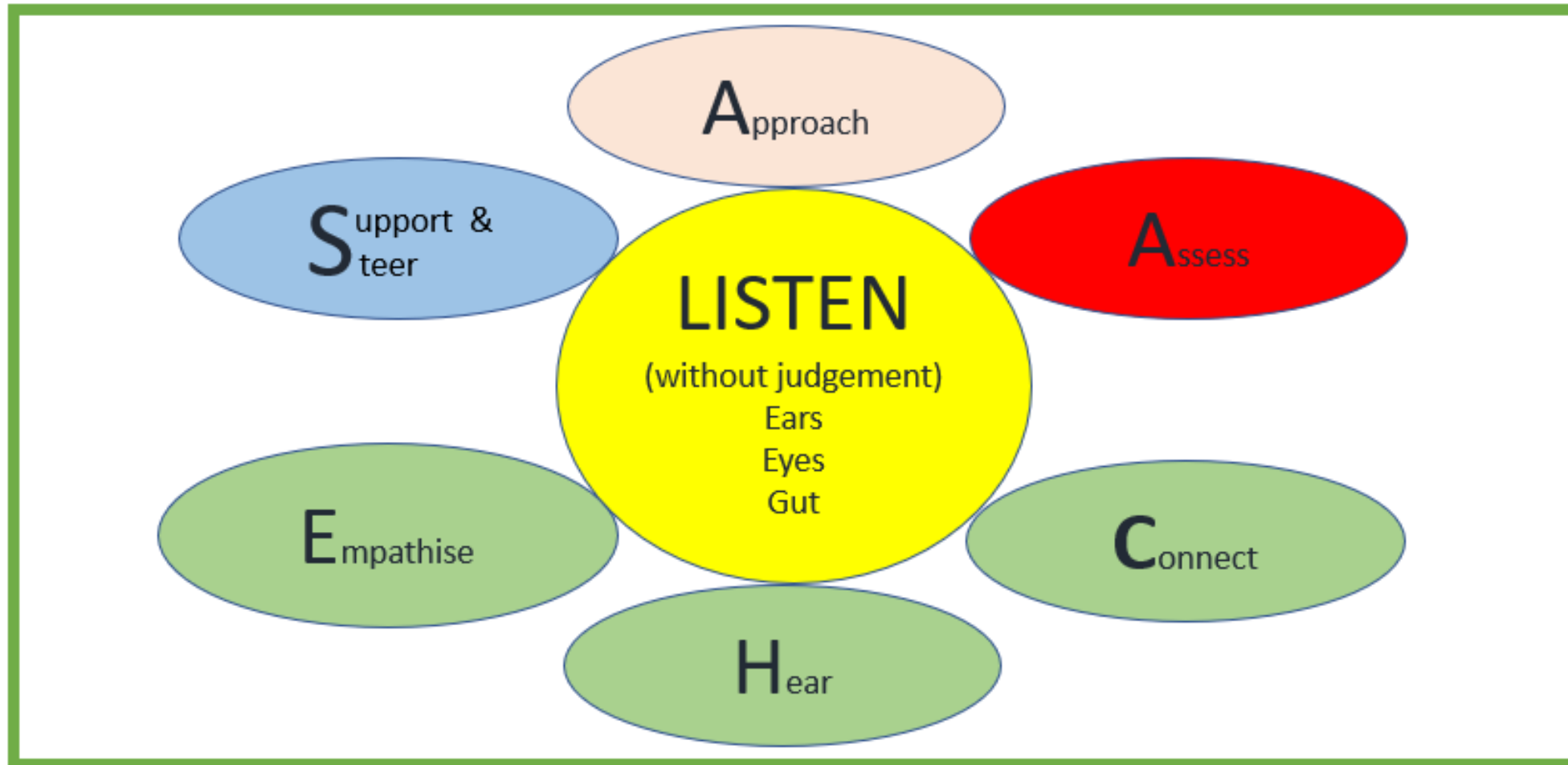


# How to help someone in mental distress

## Key Concepts



# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)



## Do's

Get the setting right – virtual or real life  
Undisturbed by people / calls  
Unrushed  
Prepared - practically & mentally

Leave the communication door open:  
MH support is a marathon not a sprint!

Be honest if (and why) it's a bad time –  
Reschedule ASAP to a time that does work

## Don'ts

“Pour from an empty cup”

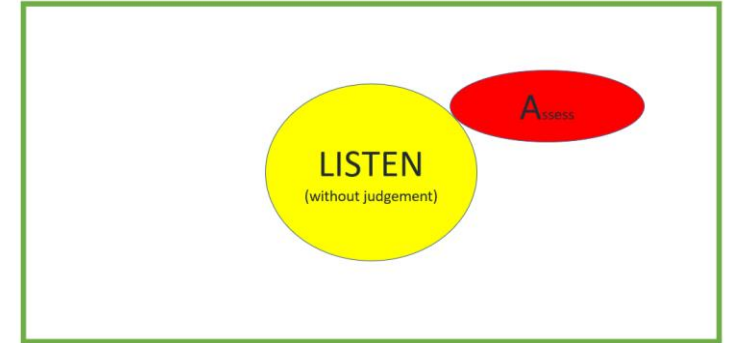
Force the issue: to talk / open up

Squeeze in a quick chat whilst you're focused on  
another task / rushing to get away

## If it's a reactive unplanned approach:

# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)



## Mental Health Emergencies

Suicidal Crisis (definite) & Psychotic Crisis

Panic Attacks (anxiety disorder)  
Fainting (eating disorder)  
Poisoning/stitching (user of self-harm)  
Aggression (drugs/alcohol use)

## Refer to:

HR (daytime working hours)  
Emergency services: Ambulance/police

HR (daytime working hours)  
Crisis helplines – Samaritans – CALM – Papyrus  
Emergency services (A&E)  
Your common sense!

# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)

## JUDGEMENT

Frame of Reference

Body language

Voice tone

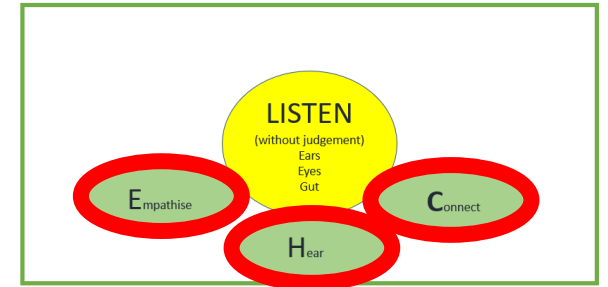
Lack of understanding

Glib comments



# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)



Appropriate body language/voice tone/pace +  
Open questions +  
Paraphrasing +  
Tentafiers +  
Fillers +  
Use of silence +  
Validations +  
Strength ID's

**Powerful great communication**

“I understand that you’re anxious, and I think anyone would be in your situation. You’ve been so strong so far, what else could I (or anyone do) to help?”

### Open Questions

Could you tell me..?

Have you thought about..?

Could you describe that in more detail..

What would you like them to understand when you talk to them?

Could you give me a specific example?

What do you think you could learn from that?

How can I help you? What do you think would help you?

What's your biggest priority right now?

### Paraphrasing

You mentioned that...

I heard you say that...

When you said ... made you feel ....

I'm curious that when you said....

You talked about being....

You commented that....

So unpacking some of what you just said, I'm understanding that...

There's a lot of emotion in what you've just spoken about, so I'm hearing that...

### Tentafiers

It sounds like you feel...

I hear you're feeling...

I get the sense/feeling that you....

Would it be accurate/ fair to say you're feeling....

So if I understand you properly....

My impression is that you feel...

I wonder if you're feeling.....

I can't tell if you're feeling ... or ....

I'm thinking that you....

### Validations

It makes total sense why you did/felt that

Its totally normal to feel...

Anyone would be overwhelmed by....

There's no wonder that...

It can often be confusing when....

It's not abnormal to feel that way

That's a challenging situation for anyone

That's a big deal for anyone to handle

Most people would struggle given that....

That's completely natural to...

### Strength ID's

It's really brave of you to acknowledge...

You're clearly a strong person

The fact that you care so much states volumes about your character

I'm amazed that you can still carry on as normal

I'm inspired/humbled by how well you're coping with such a hard situation

I'm wondering if you know how courageous you are

I can tell you have great insight into..

It's such a brave thing to accept

### Fillers

Tell me more...

...and so.....

Absolutely

That's so stressful

That's horrible

That's remarkable

Goodness!

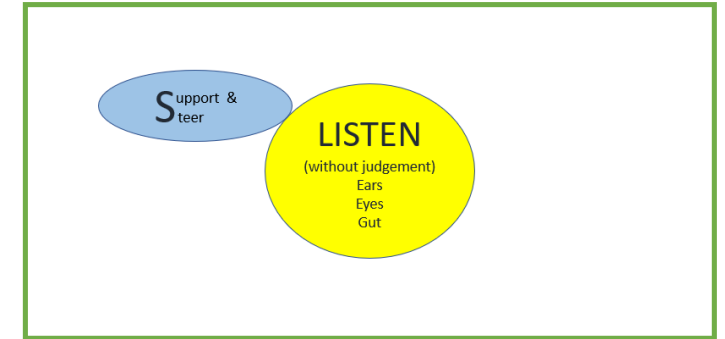
BODY LANGUAGE – nods- aha's and um's

It's often that way

That's really tough

# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)



## Support With

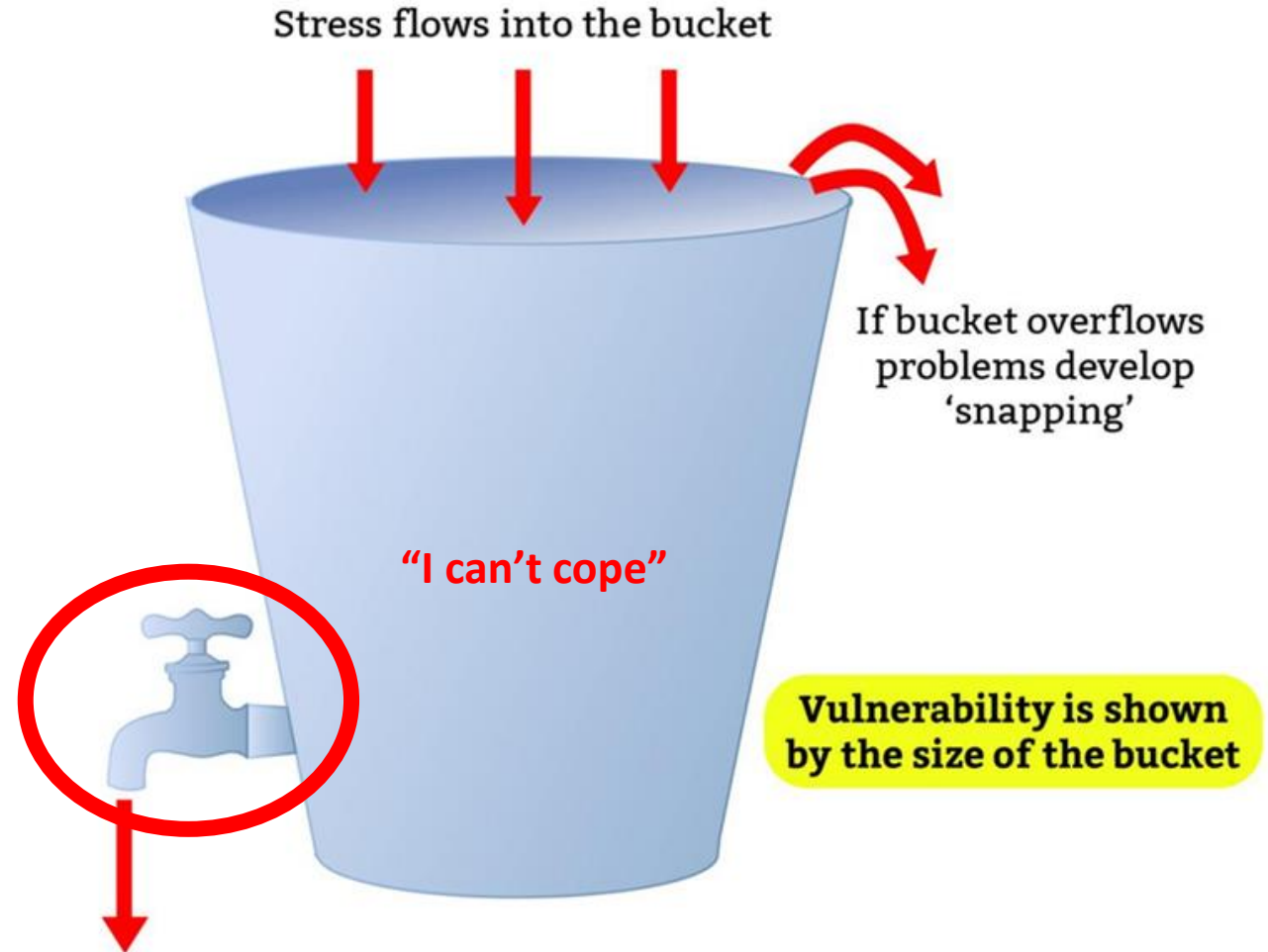
1. Information / practical and pragmatic tips
2. Hope for recovery / improvement
  - The mental health continuum
3. Guiding to expert support (internal & external)

## Your job is not to:

~~ADVISE~~      ~~DIAGNOSE~~  
~~OFFER SOLUTIONS~~

# Coaching support tool – What's in your stress bucket?

- What can't I change and need to accept?
- What can I change?
- What needs my urgent attention?
- Can anyone help me?
- What are some of my unhelpful coping strategies?
- What are some of my helpful coping strategies?
- Do I have any "Thinking Sins"?

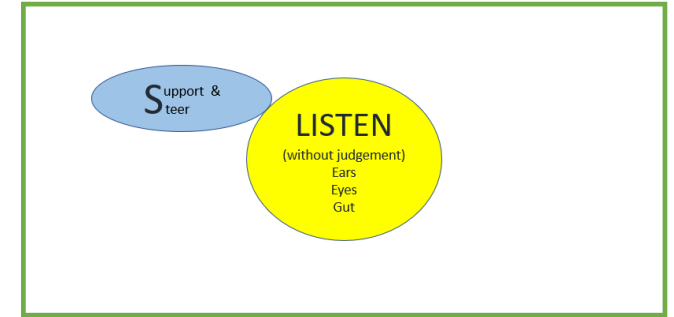


Challenging thoughts and feelings is the basis of CBT



# Mental Health Assistance Framework

Ease the person's **AACHES** (and pain)



## Support With

1. Information / practical tips
2. Hope for recovery / improvement
3. Guiding to expert support (internal & external)

## Your job is not to:

**ADVISE**

**DIAGNOSE**

**OFFER SOLUTIONS**

## Steer to

### Internal Support

- HR
- EAP
- Company specific resources and initiatives

### External support

- Doctor or mental health services
- Local counselling facilities eg IAPT or Hub of Hope
- Private counsellors eg CBT
- Peer support groups – Google search together!
- Local or national charities
- Crisis helplines or citizens advise bureau

# Certificate of attendance



Joe Bloggs

has attended an Online Mental Health First Aid Adult course and is now a Mental Health First Aider. This course teaches in depth skills for providing first aid to people who may be experiencing mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and psychosis.

Date of attendance  
Start date: 28 July 2020  
End date: 7 August 2020

Instructor Member  
Laura Rosenthal

Simon Blake OBE  
Chief Executive  
MHFA England



Your Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England certificate is valid for three years from the date you completed the course. We recommend you keep your skills and knowledge up to date with MHFA Refresher training. For more details visit our website, [mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org).

MHFA England is a social enterprise with a vision to improve the mental health of the nation. Through our training, campaigning, and reinvesting, we equip people with the skills to support their own and others' wellbeing.

We believe in zero stigma around mental health. We want mental health to be openly discussed and supported. Together, let's create a society where everyone can thrive.

[mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org)  
[info@mhfaengland.org](mailto:info@mhfaengland.org)  
0203 928 0760

CIC registration number: 732199  
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To officially learn more about mental health issues and how to support others, why not consider becoming a certified Mental Health First Aider?

Self study and 4 online sessions organised through the HCA

- **Session 1: Tuesday November 30<sup>th</sup> 10.00 – 12.00pm**
- **Session 2: Friday December 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.00 – 12.30pm**
- **Session 3: Tuesday December 7<sup>th</sup> 10.00 – 12.00pm**
- **Session 2: Friday December 10<sup>th</sup> 10.00 – 12.00pm**

Tel: 07760 171750

E-mail: [laura@maps-training.co.uk](mailto:laura@maps-training.co.uk)

