

Supportive communication and active listening

**In this dialogue, V, a volunteer, talks to A, a distressed woman. The woman witnessed a car accident outside her home in which the driver was badly hurt.**

A: Oh, why did it happen? It was so terrible.

*V: From what you say it sounds like it must have been terrible. Am I right?*

A: Yes, it was awful... (begins to cry uncontrollably)…

*V: I see… (V moves a little closer) Would you like to tell me what happened?*

A: I heard the car outside, I ran to the door, and saw what had happened.

Oh, it was really horrible... (cries more quietly now)... There was blood all over….

*V: I would like to hear more about what you did.*

A: I ran to the car, made sure the driver was conscious and then I rushed to call an ambulance. I talked to the driver till the ambulance came.

*V: So first you made sure the driver was alright, then you called for help and finally you stayed with the driver?*

A: Yes, that is what I did.

*V: It sounds as if you reacted quickly, showed good judgment and helped the driver in the best possible way.*

A: (Sighing...) Yes, that is true, but it was shocking.

*V: I can understand how it must have been a great shock to you.*

*V: How are you feeling now?*

A: A little better, thank you. It still feels unreal, but I am glad the driver survived…

A: Do you think I should go to the hospital and see the driver?

*V: I am not sure I can answer that question for you. Maybe you can tell me more about why you want to go and we can talk about it?*