

## Items of the Helpful Responses Questionnaire

1. A 41-year old woman says to you: “Last night Joe got really drunk and he came home late and we had a big fight. He yelled at me and I yelled back and then he hit me really hard! He broke a window and the TV set, too! It was like he was crazy, I just don’t know what to do”

2. A 36-year-old man tells you: “My neighbor is really a pain. He’s always over here bothering us or borrowing things that he never returns. Sometimes he calls us late at night after we’ve gone to bed and I really feel like telling him to get lost.”

3. A 15-year-old-girl tells you: “I’m really mixed up. A lot of my friends stay out real late and do things their parents don’t know about. They always want me to come along and I don’t want them to think I’m weird or something, but I don’t know what would happen if I went along, either.”

4. A 35 year old parent says: “My Maria is a good girl. She’s never been in trouble, but I worry about her. Lately she wants to stay out later and later and sometimes I don’t know where she is. She just had her ears pierced without asking me! And some of the friends she brings home—well, I’ve told her again and again to stay away from that kind. They’re no good for her, but she won’t listen.”

5. A 43-year old man says: “I really feel awful. Last night I got drunk again and I don’t even remember what I did. This morning I found out that the screen of the TV is busted and I think I probably did it, but my wife isn’t talking to me. I don’t think I’m an alcoholic, you know, because I can go for weeks without drinking, but this has to change.”

6. A 59-year-old unemployed teacher tells you: “My life just doesn’t seem worth living any more. I’m a lousy father. I can’t get a job. Nothing good ever happens to me. Everything I try to do turns rotten. Sometimes I wonder whether it’s worth it.”

## **SCORING:**

It is scored on a 5 pt ordinal scale of depth of reflection. Definitions are as follows:

- 1 Point: The response contains no reflection, but does include one element scorable as a “roadblock” response (from Gordon’s “typical twelve”)
- 2 Points: The response contains both a reflection and a roadblock, or contains neither reflection nor roadblock response.
- 3 Points: The reflection that merely repeats the content already stated.
- 4 Points: The reflection is paraphrased, adding inferred meaning that appears appropriate or plausible.
- 5 Points: When the response qualifies at level 4 AND includes either a reflection of feeling that fits the original statement or an appropriate metaphor or simile.

When multiple responses are made, the highest level of reflection is scored, unless a roadblock is included (resulting in a score of 2).

For further information:

The Roadblocks to Listening and Levels of Reflection are both in the book “Motivational Interviewing” (both editions) by Miller & Rollnick.

From: The Helpful Responses Questionnaire: A Procedure for Measuring Therapeutic Empathy. William Miller, Kim Hedrick, & Debra Orlofsky, the University of New Mexico