

Week 8: Active Constructive Responding

Active Constructive responding is a way of responding to good/positive news that has been shared with you, and which has been shown to enhance relationships. At times we might all recognise that we might give other types of responses and this might be for a whole range of reasons. However, we can practice becoming more aware of our responses and using more active constructive responses for when we want to support someone to capitalise on their positive experiences.

The table below is a reminder of the four different response styles that we might give when responding to positive news:

ACTIVE & CONSTRUCTIVE

- Enthusiastic, excited asks questions and re-lives the experience with you. Keeps conversation going.
- Non-verbals: eye contact, smiling, positive emotions

PASSIVE & CONSTRUCTIVE

- Brief and fleeting positive acknowledgement of good news. Understated support. Not much dialogue
- Non –verbal: May smile in acknowledgment but not much emotional expression.

ACTIVE & DESTRUCTIVE

- Raises alarm bells, devil's advocate, points out what might go wrong.
- Non-verbals: negative emotion, frowning, looks worried

PASSIVE & DESTRUCTIVE

- Changes the topic of conversation, avoidance, disinterested
- Non-verbal: no eye contact, leaves room, turns away

For some people active-constructive responses come naturally, for others it can take a bit more practice, as though learning a new habit. You can use the table below if you want to practice developing these responses, you might write down something someone has said to you and how you responded, or how you could have responded. You could even take it one step further if it is a response you have given you can write down what the impact of this was e.g. it led to a really good conversation, you learnt something new about the person etc.

What was the good news the person said to you.	Active-Constructive Response