**SOME PHRASES FOR VALIDATION**

**By Barbara Moon**

As we learn to share pain, even the pain we have caused, validation and comfort are very important. When someone is hurting, upset, or distressed, it is more helpful to sit with them than to try to “fix” them or the situation. Our usual tendency is to immediately say the TRUTH or quote a scripture or recommend a book. We usually do this in order to make *ourselves* feel more comfortable. It’s hard to watch someone hurt. Sitting in silence is totally OK until the person quiets. Words don’t help, but voice tone can. Here are some possible phrases that we can say when led to speak. Truth and solutions can come later—AFTER validation and comfort. Validation and comfort are relational skills that can change a relationship.

It’s important to validate and comfort ourselves as well. Avoiding pain is detrimental to our health. Pain is supposed to mean, “Comfort is on the way.” These are learnable skills.

This/that is (really) hard.

I am here (for you).

I’m not going anywhere.

You have my support.

It’s OK to feel angry about that (sad, etc.).

Go ahead and let yourself feel, I’ll be right here.

How can I help?

I believe you.

Would it be OK for me to touch you? (When appropriate)

OTHER TIPS: When a person starts to feel their feelings, don’t jump to give them the tissue box. That makes people stop feeling sometimes. Just sit with them.

We are so often programmed to avoid pain. We can help others, and ourselves, learn to feel what we need to feel by validating and comforting instead of trying to “fix.”