

4 Typical Responses

Clients will respond in many different ways.

Four typical responses are:

Disengaging - This often appears by not showing up to an appointment, or repeatedly not knowing or understanding something.

Minimizing - This can sound like an issue isn't a 'big deal'. For example, elevated A1C, missed medication, or a foot concern may not seem like a 'big deal'. The person may be minimizing the situation for lots of reasons, but the most likely reason is out of fear that you will react or fear that an issue are worse.

Emotionally Offloading - This is often a reaction to some 'good' or 'bad' news/situation. It is the natural release of emotional energy. Emotional offloading maybe directed at the reduction or rise of A1c, relief or increase of symptoms, decline or improved medical condition, or it could be about their ability/inability or a relationship/situation at home or at work.

Learning In - This occurs when a client is interested and actively engaged in the subject you are teaching.

7 Things to Affirm

Affirmations are the ‘way to go’ to keep a counseling session moving forward toward change. Offering an affirmation in a weight neutral way is easy if you focus on these seven things.

1. The **DESIRE** to change towards self-care and self-kindness.
2. The ability to **SEE CHOICES** or **OPTIONS** aren't tied to restriction or deprivation.
3. The **ABILITY** to identify sustainable steps toward change.
4. The willingness to **COMMIT to SELF-CARE** vs. being a specific weight or size.
5. **ACTION.**
6. The **EFFORT** to engage in self-care despite the surrounding diet-culture.
7. The **INSIGHT** after reflection of goals and values.

What To Affirm?

Hunger & Fullness

Affirming the awareness of eating and of body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety without attaching these behaviors to weight loss for people with diabetes.

- Desire to learn about eating and body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety.
- Ability to become aware of eating and body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety.
- Ability to identify steps to listen to hunger or fullness.
- Willingness to listen to hunger/fullness.
- Being aware of eating and body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety.
- The effort to listen and respond to eating and body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety.
- Insight after listening and responding to eating and body cues such as hunger, fullness, and satiety.

What To Affirm?

Self -Care

Affirming self-care instead of focusing on weight-loss desires for people with diabetes.

- Desire to care for the body regarding weight or weight change.
- Ability to see all bodies need care regardless of size.
- Ability to identify steps toward self-care.
- Willingness to commit to self-care.
- Being able/aware of what self-care is for them.
- The effort to engage in self-care, including managing a chronic disease.
- Insight after engaging in self-care or responding to the body with self-compassion.

What To Affirm?

Variety and Fewer Food Fears

Affirming the many ways to embrace all foods and explore how to reduce food fears.

- Desire to expand diet or identify what foods are triggering.
- Ability to see all foods can fit - it is learning when, where, and how much works for their body.
- Ability to identify steps toward adding variety to the diet.
- Willingness to commit to eating a wide variety of foods and end restrictive eating.
- Being able/aware of how a new food may/may not promote self-care.
- Affirming the act of eating
- The effort to increase variety in the diet.
- Insight after engaging increasing variety.

What To Affirm?

Size Diversity

Affirming the many ways size acceptance and size diversity may present for the client.

- Desire to accept their body and other bodies (not in a comparison).
- Ability to see bodies come in all shapes and sizes.
- Ability to identify steps toward body acceptance (theirs or others).
- Willingness to commit to embracing his/her body as it is.
- Being aware of size diversity as a concept.
- The effort to accept the body as it is, without change.
- Insight that arises from less body judgment and more body/size acceptance.

What To Affirm?

Enjoyable Movement

Affirming enjoyable movement for health, well-being, and blood sugar control instead of weight loss.

- Desire to move the body for health and enjoyment.
- Ability to explore and find enjoyable movement options.
- Ability to identify steps toward adding enjoyable movement.
- Willingness to commit to moving the body in enjoyable ways.
- Being able to engage in enjoyable movement.
- The effort to engage in enjoyable movement in consistent and sustainable ways.
- Insight after engaging in enjoyable movement.