

Intent of Feedback with Genuine Curiosity

In 2006 Rudolph et al published “There’s no such thing as a ‘nonjudgmental’ debriefing: a theory and method for debriefing with good judgment.” *Simul Healthc.* 2006 Spring;1(1):49-55. This landmark paper is available <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19088574> . It is the basis of an 11-minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnJLM0zfn34> .

Assignment: Either watch the video or review the sections of the paper listed below. Then complete questions #1 and #2 below and on the next page.

If you use video: A key term more emphasized in the article than the video is “frame”. The Genuine Curiosity approach assumes our actions stem from how we frame a situation. We ask questions with a goal of learning someone’s frame. For example, if we think the learner made a mistake, we need to know how they saw the situation to know what learning they need.

If you use the paper: I suggest focus on a) Tables 1-3, b) the first paragraph of the section “Debriefing with Good Judgment”, and c) the entire section, “‘Transparent’ Talk in Debriefing”. We use the terms “Good Judgment” and “Genuine Curiosity” interchangeably.

1. One phrase of each pair below tends to fit “Nonjudgmental” feedback and the other feedback with “Genuine Curiosity”. For each, write at the right whether #1 or #2 seems more descriptive of genuine curiosity. If you can’t identify one as fitting Genuine Curiosity, look for one fitting Nonjudgmental and then pick the other. Also consider moving on and coming back. The first pair is labeled as an example.

| #1 | #2 | Genuine Curiosity |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Goal is for both to learn | Goal is to help other person to learn | #1 |
| Use an indirect approach | Use a frank approach | |
| Show respect by not saying there is a problem | Show respect by asking for help to understand what may be problem | |
| Use the first person to avoid giving the Word of God | Withhold judgment to avoid giving the Word of God | |
| Start discussion with questions to which you have a good answer | Start discussion with questions to which you wonder about the answer | |
| Give your opinions as explicit hypotheses to be discussed | Keep your opinions unstated so others find the truth on their own | |
| Revealing why you’re asking helps others feel your question is not a trap | Hiding why you’re asking helps others not be threatened by your opinion | |
| <i>Bonus Round</i> | | |
| Treat emotion as data (may be dispassionately discussed) | Treat emotion as baggage (pointless to discuss) | |

2. Imagine your 17 y/o daughter Lisa was out on a date, and arrived home enough after her midnight curfew on a snowy night in January that you had been worried what happened. She has a mobile phone, but did not let you know that she would be late.

a. *Nonjudgmental*: Imagine you must prevent her from doing that again, but sounding angry will start a counter-productive fight. Write a one-sentence question to which you know the answer to begin the conversation gently. A leading question might help her see the problem.

b. *Genuine Curiosity*: Now instead imagine you hypothesize that her reason for being late must have seemed good at the time, though you can't imagine what it was. You have no reason to fight. Write your first sentence or clause to note your understanding of the difference between the planned and actual arrival time. Consider using a second sentence or clause to calmly explain in a few words why it matters or why you're asking. Then write a short (often 8 words or less) open-ended (i.e. should not be yes-or-no) question to which you are not sure of the answer. (Note: this may feel awkward right now.)