

Reflective Communication Stems

Presence

(Helping staff pause, settle, and feel emotionally safe)

- “Let’s slow down for a moment...”
- “Take your time.”
- “Tell me a little more about that.”
- “What’s coming up for you right now?”
- “How are you feeling as you talk about this?”
- “Let’s pause before we jump to solutions.”
- “What feels most important to talk through today?”

Connection

(Helping staff feel understood and supported)

- “That sounds really...”
- “It makes sense that you would feel...”
- “I can hear that this impacted you.”
- “What was that experience like for you?”
- “What part of that stayed with you?”
- “What felt hardest about that interaction?”

Thinking

(Encouraging insight, perspective-taking, and critical thinking)

- “What do you think was happening there?”
- “What stood out to you?”
- “What assumptions might be influencing this?”
- “What options have you considered?”
- “What feels unclear right now?”
- “What do you think the other person needed in that moment?”
- “What might be another way to look at this?”



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Action

(Supporting independent thinking instead of dependency)

- “What ideas do you already have?”
- “What would you like to try first?”
- “How would you approach this?”
- “Walk me through your thinking.”
- “What feels like the next best step?”
- “What support do you need from me?”

Growth

(Helping staff recognize development and capacity)

- “What are you learning about yourself?”
- “What strengths did you bring into that situation?”
- “What went better than you expected?”
- “What would you want to carry forward from this experience?”

