Empathy Bingo Exercise

This exercise was contributed by Sherri Sorro.

Copy the handout or put on newsprint 12 squares with the following words written in the boxes: advising, one-upping, educating, consoling, story-telling, shutting-down, sympathizing, interrogating, explaining, correcting, fixing it, and empathizing. Hand out the handouts [if you are using them] to all participants. Have a co-facilitator read each one of the “A’s” below and you respond with the “B.” Ask the group to name the type of response you gave.

Fix it
1. A I’m worried about having enough money to pay my bills this month.
   B I’ll loan you the money.

One-upping
2. A Look at my scar from the cycling accident.
   B That’s nothing, you should see the one I have on my knee.

Story telling
3. A I got caught in traffic for 2 hours in 100 weather and no air conditioning.
   B That reminds me of the time……

Consoling
4. A I feel so sad that my son was court ordered to a rehab center.
   B It’s not your fault, you are a good parent. You did the best you could.

Sympathizing
5. A I just got the lab report back and it was what I most feared.
   B Oh you poor thing.

Empathy
6. A I have so much to do today.
   B Are you feeling overwhelmed and wanting support?

Advising
7. A It’s scary for me to get up and speak in front of people.
   B I think you should join Toast Masters.

Interrogating
8. A I’ve been trying to get this weight off and just feel frustrated.
   B When did you first start having this problem?

Shutting down
   B Cheer up, let’s go eat.

Explaining
10. A I’m really upset. You promised to be here at 11 and it is now after midnight.
    B The reason I’m late is because …..

Correcting
11. A I’m hurt over what you said to mom last night
    B That’s not what I said……

Educating
12. A My boyfriend left for college 3,000 miles away.
    B This is an opportunity for you to learn …..
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVISING</th>
<th>ONE-UPPING</th>
<th>EDUCATING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONSOLING</td>
<td>STORY-TELLING</td>
<td>SHUTTING-DOWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYMPATHIZING</td>
<td>INTERROGATING</td>
<td>EXPLAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORRECTING</td>
<td>FIXING IT</td>
<td>EMPATHIZING</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>