Say this, not that

Keep it on the fridge, or give a copy to the family.

Instead of	Try
“But you look fine.”	“I believe you. What would help today?”
“You were fine yesterday.”	“Today’s a bad day, then. Shall I change our plans?”
“Have you tried…?”	“Do you want ideas, or shall I just listen?”
“Everyone gets tired.”	“That sounds like a different kind of tired.”
“You never listen.”	“No problem, I’ll write it down.”
“How can I help?”	“Shall I cook tonight, or take the kids out for an hour?”
“Don’t be silly.”	“That sounds hard. What’s making you feel that way?”

Validation in four steps

- [ ] Notice: stop, look at them, let them finish.
- [ ] Name it: “You look shattered.”
- [ ] Make sense of it: “After this week, of course you are.”
- [ ] Ask: “What would help most right now?”

When it goes wrong: “That came out wrong. I’m sorry. I do believe you.”

Our own phrases (fill in together):

Information, not medical advice. For questions about diagnosis or treatment, talk to the doctor or care team.
Based on: Kool et al.: Understanding the lack of understanding. Invalidation from the perspective of the patient with fibromyalgia (Arthritis & Rheumatism); Linton et al.: Painfully reassuring? The effects of validation on emotions and adherence in a pain test (European Journal of Pain)