

Procedure for dealing with the emotion

1. **Acknowledge it** e.g. "you're looking very anxious"
2. **Name the reasons back** e.g. "It's understandable in your situation. You've been through a lot. You're worried about your relative and you've been told you can't see them and kept waiting for 2 hours."
3. Then ask "is there **anything else** that's making you angry?"

Tips

- Never say "I understand" to an angry patient
- Counter their anger with soft, slow speech
- Ensure you are at their eye level
- Don't interrupt an outburst
- Don't take offence personally
- With an upset patient – silence and long pauses are key. See OSCEstop notes on [breaking bad news](#).

Responding to cues/ questions

1. Cue = verbal/non-verbal negative feeling (tip of the iceberg)
2. Dealing with a cue
 1. Bounce it back (you must show you heard it)
 2. Empathise
 3. Explore it: find the content of the cue e.g. "would it be OK if I asked more about that?"
 4. **ONLY** reply/ try to solve the problem if you have to – most the time, DON'T!

e.g. "I'm dying, what does it matter?"

"You're dying? What's going through your mind when you say that phrase?" PAUSE & WAIT

"I'm really sorry about that. I can't imagine what it's like to feel like that" MASSIVE PAUSE & WAIT FOR PATIENT