

### Appendix 1. Instructions and Trigger Statements Used in the 10-Item Empathy Scale

In order that we may assess the effectiveness of this practical in teaching basic medical communication skills, students are asked to complete the task below. Your participation is voluntary, anonymous, and designed to allow evaluation of this project. Please help. Imagine that each of the following statements has been made to you by someone you care about. Beneath each one, fill in what you regard as an appropriate verbal response. (Two lines were allowed beneath each item.)

1. My parents really get me down. They insist I study physics and chemistry, when I'm not at all interested in those subjects.
2. I thought I'd have a talk with you because you did well in that subject. But, you've been no help to me at all.
3. My children tell me I'm old-fashioned. After all I've done for them! However hard I try, they just don't appreciate me.
4. So, I studied hard for years, and now, nobody wants to give me a job. Perhaps I'll go back and work on the farm.
5. If my exam marks don't improve, I'm going to fail and lose my government allowance. I don't know what to do.
6. I just can't communicate with my parents. Whenever I try to explain how I feel about things, they get all upset and call me a fool.
7. I finally got up courage to tell him that we all think he's big-headed. Then, he turned on me and made me feel so stupid, I ended up apologizing and slinking away.
8. I try so hard to please everybody, but it always seems to go wrong. Nobody seems to care whether I'm around or not.
9. Whenever I try to get close to someone of the opposite sex, I always mess it up. Am I so physically unattractive? How do I turn them off?
10. My brother has started to act so strangely. He's very, very nervous—I'm wondering if I should do anything.

Adapted from Winefield and Chur-Hansen. *Med Educ* 2000; 34: 90-94 [14].

### Appendix 2. Coding Rules of Pencil-and-Paper Empathy Rating Test

Scale	Coding rule
0	Aggressive or derogatory response
1	Nonempathetic: does not acknowledge feeling or content of trigger; includes advice, reassurance, closed question
2	Partially acceptable: open-ended question or response that acknowledges feeling or content of trigger
3	Interchangeable/empathetic: acknowledges both the feeling and the content of the trigger (i.e., some variation of the classic 'you feel...because...')
4	Facilitative: reflects but also adds deeper feeling and meaning to the trigger statement in a way that encourages self-exploration (not really to be expected after a brief statement of the problem)

Adapted from Winefield and Chur-Hansen. *Med Educ* 2000; 34: 90-94 [14].