



Active Listening Guide

When you truly listen to another person without rushing to judgment, giving advice or offering a solution, you make the other person feel valued, respected, honored, and safe. This type of listening is called “active listening” because it takes effort for most people to do.

Here are some guidelines and tips on how to listen actively:

1. Offer your full attention

- Position yourself so you can see the speaker directly.
- Look the speaker in the eye.
- If you are in a noisy place, move somewhere with fewer distractions.
- Allow silence. If the speaker pauses to think, let there be silence.

2. Use your body to show you are paying attention

As the speaker is speaking:

- Lean toward the person to show you are listening.
- Sit with uncrossed arms.
- Nod or smile once in a while.
- Occasionally say “yes” or “uh-huh” but do not respond.
- Do not interrupt.

3. Reflect back what you heard

When the speaker is done speaking, show you have been listening by:

- Paraphrasing or summarizing what you heard. For example, you can say: “What I heard you say was...” or “It seems like you are saying...”
- If you have questions about certain things the speaker said, you can say: “What do you mean when you say...?” or “Did you mean ...?”
- Avoid offering solutions, advice or judgments.