

Active Listening

Open-Ended Questions	Who, What, Where, When, How <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was that like for you... • Where did you... • How did that impact you... • When did you... • Who in your life...
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-verbal and verbal attending (body posture & <i>how</i> you respond) • Paraphrasing what people say • Reflecting feelings and implicit messages (what was <i>not</i> said)
Empathic Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That sounds really difficult... • That sounds frustrating... • I wonder how that felt...
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What</i> are they saying? (content) • <i>How</i> are they sharing? (body language, tone, eye-contact) • Allowing silence to process what is being shared <i>before</i> responding
“Fixing” Statements to Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know exactly how you feel... • I completely understand... • The same thing happened to me... • At least... • What if you _____ ? • If you could just...

You may need to brush up on your active listening if any of the following questions describe you. Do you sometimes...

- ...think about what to say next rather than listening to what the speaker is saying?
- ...zone out when the speaker has a negative attitude?
- ...focus more on your opinion rather than seeking to understand the speaker?
- ...give solutions to problems instead of helping the speaker process their own thoughts and emotions?

As you read through the questions above, how have you personally experienced those scenarios--either as the speaker or as the listener? What thoughts/feelings come to mind as you read those questions? What are you taking away from this exercise? How can you grow in your active listening?