

Active Listening





First... a brief review of principles

A social relationship is different
from a helping relationship

Social

The feeling of closeness
between 2 people is about
the same

People take turns being the
center of attention

Helping

The helper is in the
other person's intimate
space

The helper always focuses
on the other person





What is the best way to listen ?

Be Fully Present

Communication tools for a helping relationship

REFLECT	<u>Repeat</u> a portion of what the other person just said
PARAPHRASE	<u>Restate</u> in your words what the other person just said
SILENCE	<u>Allow</u> the other person to gather thoughts and sort them out
CLARIFY	<u>Request</u> information when there seems to be misunderstanding
OPEN-ENDED QUESTION	<u>Encourage</u> the person to talk, cannot be answered “yes” or “no”
AFFIRM	<u>Acknowledge</u> the person’s worth (“Thank you for sharing”)
SUMMARIZE	<u>Validate</u> your understanding of what the person said
EMPATHY	<u>Acknowledge</u> your understanding of another person’s feelings
	NOT SYMPATHY: Your <i>own</i> feelings about the situation





What is the best way to listen ?

Be Fully Present

Barriers to further communication

OFFERING YOUR OPINION invalidates the person's feelings

GIVING FALSE REASSURANCE OR APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL ignores the person's feelings

USING STEREOTYPES OR CLICHES moves focus away from the person

ASKING WHY..... may feel like an accusation

BEING DEFENSIVEperson may be afraid to express ideas

CHANGING THE SUBJECTshows lack of empathy (understanding feelings)





What is the best way to listen ?

Be Fully Present

Establish and maintain gentle eye contact

Sit down to be at the other person's eye level

Place your hand under his, if you wish

Keep your mind focused on what is being said

Pay attention to your body language...

Don't fiddle, look out the window, check or check the time!



Hearing is passive ... it just happens

Listening is active ... you make it happen



Active Listening

Focused, concentrated attention enabling you to understand the meaning and significance of facts and feelings communicated by a person

This takes practice



Let's practice ...



I support ...



- ☆ Religion in public schools
- ☆ Early term abortion
- ☆ Vegetarian or vegan diet
- ☆ Democratic political party
- ☆ Republican political party
- ☆ Socialism
- ☆ Space exploration
- ☆ Physician assisted suicide
- ☆ Fully open borders
- ☆ Atheism
- ☆ Domestic oil consumption
- ☆ Black Lives Matter movement
- ☆ Same sex marriage
- ☆ Single gender public bathrooms
- ☆ *Different topic of your choice ???*

Volunteer ...

**Take 5
minutes to
tell us:**

- ☆ Why do you hold this view ?
- ☆ When did you begin to hold this view ?
- ☆ What influenced you to hold this view ?
- ☆ How does this view affect your daily life ?
- ☆ What is most important to you about this view ?
- ☆ How important is it to you that others agree with your view?

Defend your position !

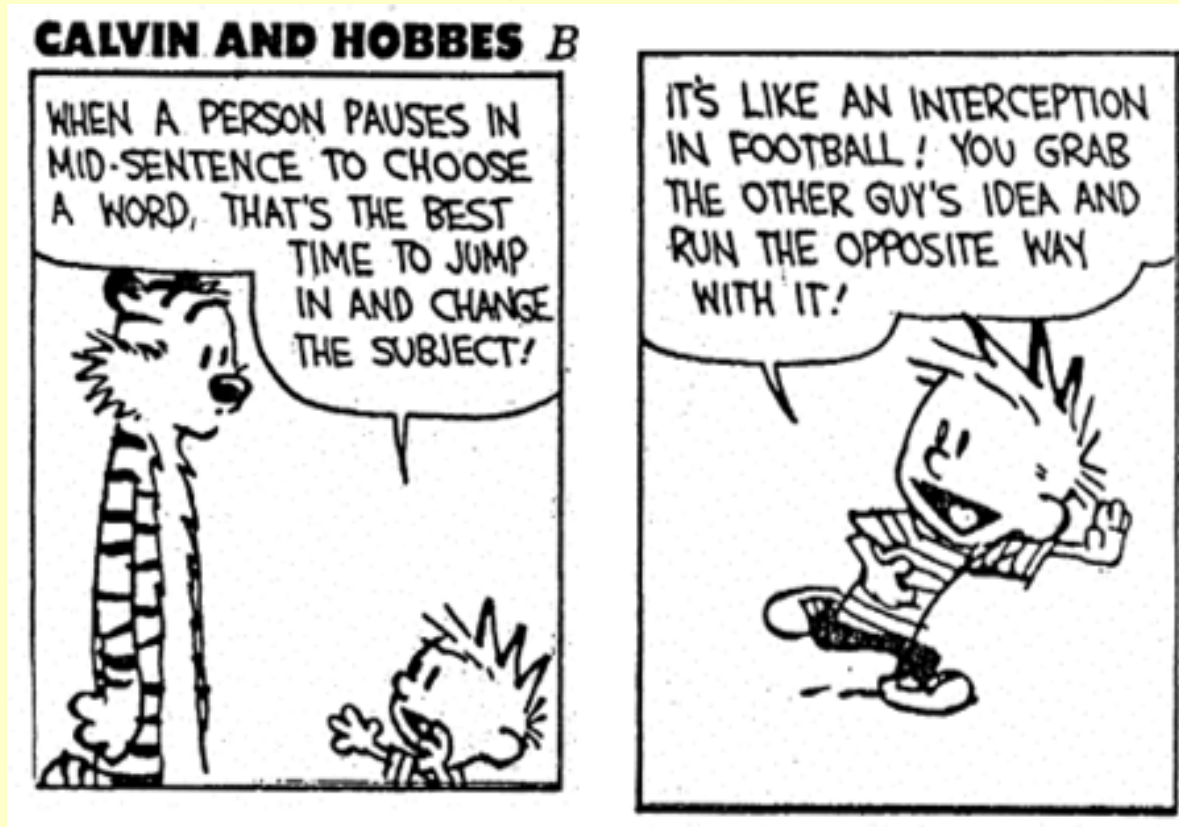
***We will listen
actively***

***But not say
a word***

Was it hard to just listen ?

? Were you forming a rebuttal in your mind ?

? Did you want to interrupt to agree or disagree ?



? Do you have a powerful urge to share your thoughts now ?

Be fully present ... some skills



"I forget—are you not speaking to me or just not listening to me?"

Be fully present ... some skills

Face the person and maintain eye contact
(at their level if possible)



No fidgeting

No looking out the window

No looking at a clock

No answering a cell phone



Look at me when I'm talking to you

Be fully present ... some skills

Be attentive, but relaxed



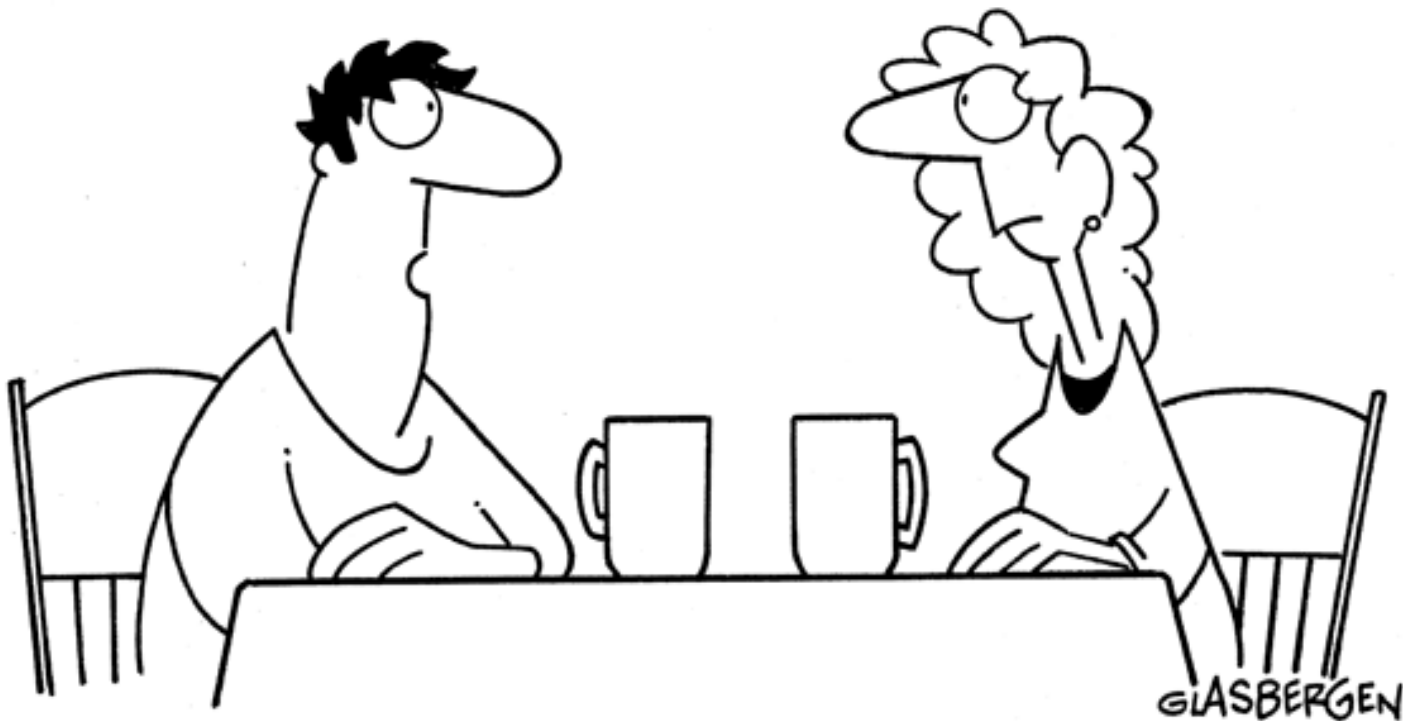
"Have you tried doing the thing you just told me you tried?"

Be fully present ... some skills

Keep an open mind



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“I’m trying to be a good listener, but you keep breaking my concentration by talking!”

Be fully present ... some skills

Don't interrupt and don't impose your "solutions"



Be fully present ... some skills

Slow your "mental pace" ...
don't finish the other person's sentence



Be fully present ... some skills

Ask questions only to ensure understanding

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Be fully present ... some skills

Ask questions only to ensure understanding



His 'lytes
are off



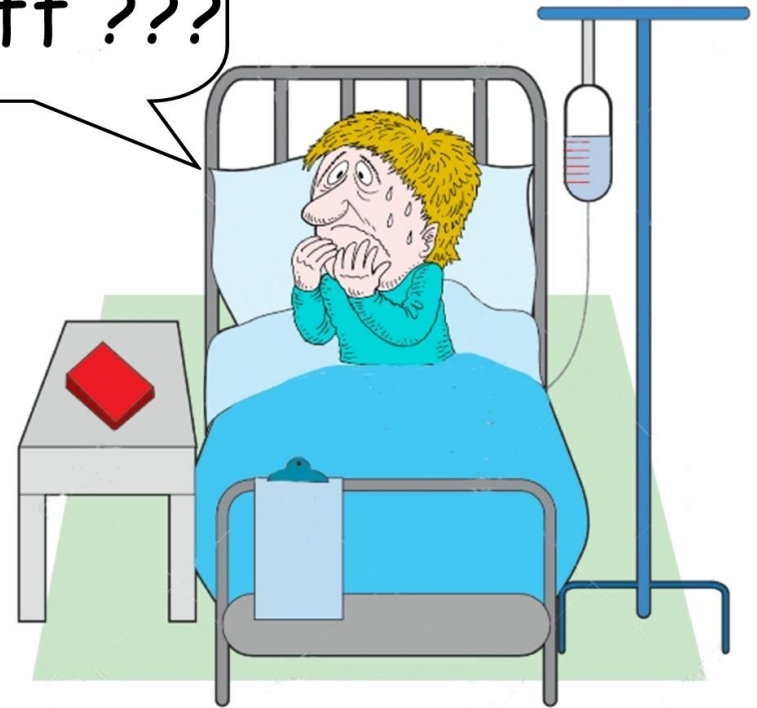
Be fully present ... some skills



His 'lytes
are off



My lights
are off ???



Ask questions to ensure understanding

Be fully present ... some skills

Wait for the person to pause
to ask clarifying questions



Although Edna had stopped talking several minutes before, Frank was still stuck in his phony "I'm interested" face.

Be fully present ... some skills

Listen to the words and try to picture
what the person is saying



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"OK, stop for a minute and really listen.
My water broke."

Be fully present ... some skills

Try to feel what the person is feeling



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"Would you like to see the drawing I just did of my doggie?"

Be fully present ... some skills

Give the speaker regular feedback



Be fully present ... some skills

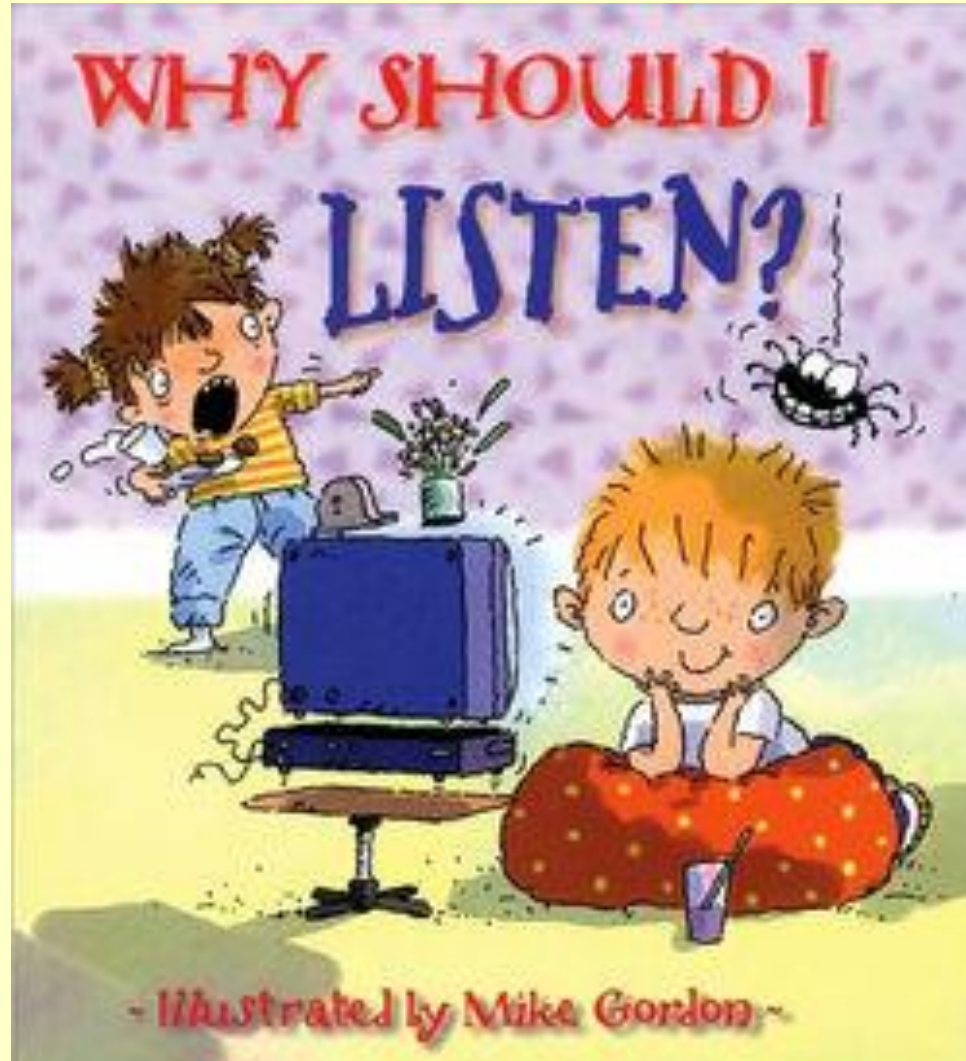
Pay attention to what isn't said...
to nonverbal cues



Facial expressions

Physical posture

Tone of voice



Let's practice ...

Storyteller...tell us a 5-minute story about...



Your first date or your first job or your first car .. or
Your favorite pastime, hobby, or cherished possession .. or
Your children or grandchildren or pets .. or
Anything of great interest to you

Include in your story:

- ☆ Colorful descriptions...
What do you see in your mind's eye, with lots of details
- ☆ Pauses from time to time, so we may respond to you

We will listen actively and
we may use listening skills
such as reflection,
paraphrasing, clarifying
[no notes...we are sitting with you]



"For one million dollars, what have I been talking about for the past ten minutes: the upcoming election, my mother, my job, or an article in the Home section about kitchen makeovers?"

Listeners...



Can you summarize, in just a few sentences, the most important points in the story ?

How did the storyteller feel about the happenings in the story ?

Did you "read" anything into the story that the storyteller did not mention ?



"You know, it would be nice if, every once in a while, I got credit for bearing the first part of almost everything you say."

Storyteller...



Did we listen ?

Do you feel heard AND understood ?

When you listen reflectively, you are letting the other person know that s/he is being heard AND understood



Active Listening

Focused, concentrated attention enabling you to understand the meaning and significance of facts and feelings communicated by a person ...

Strive to understand a situation as the other person sees it

Take time to prepare yourself to be ready to actively listen

I hear you

And I'm interested
in what you have to say

