EMPATHIC LISTENING: The Heart of Communication.

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It’s not about the nail!
Empathic Listening

INTENT
Listen to
Understand

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SKILL
Reflect
Feelings and
Words
Empathic Listening **is** reflecting what a person feels and says in your own words.

It **is not** listening to advise, counsel, reply, refute, solve, fix, change, judge, agree, disagree, question, analyze, or figure out.
Benefits of Empathic Listening

- More Fulfilling Professional and Personal Relationships
- Increased Ability to Focus and Concentrate
- Greater Understanding of Complexities, Needs, Issues, and Problems
- Increased Clarity and Performance
- Greater Cooperation, Teamwork, and Trust
- Improved Productivity
- Enhanced Communication and Negotiation Skills
- Lowers the Risk of Costly Inaccuracies, Assumptions and Errors
What Gets in the Way

**Advising:** Giving counsel, advice, and solutions to problems.

**Probing:** Asking questions from our own frame of reference or agenda.

**Interpreting:** Explaining another’s motives and behavior based on our own experience; trying to figure people out.

**Evaluating:** Judging, and either agreeing or disagreeing.
What Gets in the Way of Empathic Listening?

- Mind Wandering and Distractions
- “Selfing” versus Listening with a Stance of Curiosity and Compassion
- Lack of Awareness of Body-Mind States and Mindless Speaking
- Power and Status Differentials
- Assumptions, Biases, and Unconscious Filters/Triggers
- Focusing on Outcomes versus the Process of Listening
- Stress Response, Rebuttals and Defenses vs Acceptance & Understanding
Listening With a Virtuous Heart

Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood
Mindful Empathic Listening

- A Practice of Giving and Validating the Other in Adverse Situations is a Skill

- Be "FULLY" Present in the Moment

- Relax, Breathe, and Sense of Calm

- Know your Intention

- Quiet Inner Noise (mind-wandering) and Outer Noise

- Tune-in and Focus like a Hawk for Clarity

- Understand Other’s Reality, Story (meaning), & Acknowledge Feelings

- Mind-Body Attunement and Acceptance→ Trust
“Sharpen Your Listening Focus” Exercises

- Know Thyself → Self-Listening
- Practice Purposeful Pausing → Noticing Present Moment
- Practice 2-3 Minutes of Being with Silence
- Full Attention to Sounds within your Current Environment
- How do you know when someone really listens to you? How do you feel?
- Pause to Notice your Natural Breath
- Tune in and Savor a Simple Activity that Seem Mundane or Routine
- Practice Paraphrasing the Other’s Thoughts
- Practice Noticing the Other’s Non-Verbal and Emotional Expressions
Mehrabian Formula

- Facial expressions, body language: 55%
- How we say words, tone of voice, style: 38%
- Words we use: 7%

Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood
Stop and listen empathically.

Slow down. Watch and be ready to listen empathically.

Go forward and seek to be understood.
Empathic Listening

**INTENT**
Listen to Understand

**SKILL**
Reflect Feelings and Words
“You feel ________________________________ about ________________________________.”
Now it’s your turn.

Person A: Tell your Story
Person B: Listen with intent and reflect feelings.