



Notice your listening habits, practise six core skills, try three exercises this week, use the phrase bank, then look back.

01 Notice how you listen now

Tick the habits you recognise in yourself. They are just things that can get in the way of the other person feeling heard.

- ☐ I plan my reply while the other person is still talking
- ☐ I interrupt to add my own point or story
- ☐ I jump to fixing the problem before they have finished
- ☐ I look at my phone or another screen
- ☐ I finish their sentences
- ☐ I decide what they mean before they say it
- ☐ I say 'at least...' or 'don't worry' to cheer them up
- ☐ I drift off and miss part of what was said

The habit I notice most in myself:

Who I find it hardest to listen to, and why:

How well do I feel I listen right now?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not well

Very well

02 The six core skills

Each skill is a small action, not a technique to perform. Read the idea, then write one line you could use. Pick one or two to start.

Attention: put the phone away, face the person, and keep your mind on what they are saying. My way to do this:

Open questions: ask things that need more than yes or no, such as 'What was that like?' A question I could ask:

Reflecting back: say in your own words what you heard, then let them correct you. 'So it sounds like...' My version:

Summarising: pull the main points together at a natural pause and check you have it right. My version:

Checking feelings: name the feeling you think you hear, as a guess, not a fact. 'You sound frustrated, is that right?' My version:

Staying quiet: leave a pause after they stop. They may add something more. How I will manage the silence:

- ☐ The skill I will practise first is attention
- ☐ The skill I will practise first is open questions
- ☐ The skill I will practise first is reflecting back
- ☐ The skill I will practise first is summarising
- ☐ The skill I will practise first is checking feelings
- ☐ The skill I will practise first is staying quiet

03 Three practice exercises for this week

Choose a low-stakes conversation for each, not your hardest one. Say what you are doing only if you want to. Fill in the last column soon afterwards.

Exercise

Reflect before you reply: say back what you heard before you say anything of your own

Who with

What I noticed

Exercise

One question more: after they answer, ask one more question before you speak about yourself

Who with

What I noticed

Exercise

Summary at the end: finish by saying the main points back and asking if you got it right

Who with

What I noticed

04 Phrases to reflect and summarise

Use these as they are or change them to sound like you. Tick the ones you would be comfortable saying, and add your own.

- ☐ 'So what I'm hearing is...'
- ☐ 'It sounds like you felt...'
- ☐ 'Let me check I've got this right...'
- ☐ 'Tell me more about that.'
- ☐ 'What was the hardest part?'
- ☐ 'So the main things are... Have I missed anything?'
- ☐ 'You seem upset, is that right?'
- ☐ 'Take your time. I'm listening.'

Phrases in my own words:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

05 Weekly look back

A few minutes at the end of the week. It is for you, so keep it honest and kind.

A moment when I listened well:

A moment I slipped back into an old habit:

What the other person seemed to want from me:

How well do I feel I listened this week?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not well

Very well

The one thing I will practise next week:

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- When someone really listened to you, what did they do?
- What makes it hard for you to stay quiet while someone else talks?
- Is there a person in your life you listen to less than you would like?
- What do you want to be true of how you listen in a year?
- If you did not need to fix anything, what would you do instead?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/active-listening-worksheet



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.