

Active Listening

In a world full of soundbites and distractions, really listening is an important skill. The method used by counsellors, coaches and mentors is *Active Listening*. A technique which enables you to...

- ♥ really engage with the speaker(s)
- ♥ concentrate on what is being said
- ♥ dig deeper to increase shared understanding

Working more effectively together and being more connected all benefit for a healthy dose of active listening skills.

It can be improved by...

1. Practicing
2. Being present, relaxed and attentive (mobiles away and silent!)
3. Actively trying to keep an open mind
4. Engaging all the senses
5. Acknowledging you're listening
6. Reflecting the speaker's feelings
7. Occasionally summarising or re-stating what has been said
8. When appropriate, asking questions for clarification
9. Trying to listen without judging
10. Attempting to empathise with the speaker

The best place to start practicing active listening is during everyday conversations with friends or family. So you're practicing skills while relaxed and with people you know.

Active listening helps. you..

- ♥ build rapport and find common ground
- ♥ acknowledge the views of others
- ♥ identify mutually beneficial solutions to problems