



WORKSHEET

Getting Ready To Be An Empathetic Listener

The following are several strategies that people have found effective in getting into and/or staying in the mindset of empathetic listening. Circle which 2-3 you think might have the most positive effect on you. (Feel free to experiment with which strategies work best).

I. Strategies that focus on your own thoughts:

- Conceive of the person as a vulnerable child
- Remind yourself that the listening process you are doing is part of a long-term change process
- Remind yourself of qualities you like about the other person
- Think back to a time when you very much wanted to be listened to
- Think about things you have in common with the other person
- Think about helpful values you hold, like empathy, curiosity, and/or patience

II. Strategies that focus on the mind-body connection:

- Get centered by taking deep breaths
- Imagine that there is a drop of superglue keeping your lips together
- Look directly into their eyes
- Touch your tongue to the roof of your mouth
- Shift your position to one that maximizes your relaxation
- Look directly at their lips (or forehead)

III. Strategies that focus on the content of the exchange:

- Remind yourself that just because you listen empathetically to a point of view does not mean that you agree with it
- Tell yourself to listen for experiences that may be similar to ones you have had
- Get ready to listen for potential openings for future conversations
- Remind yourself to listen for the underlying needs that are behind statements you will hear
- Get ready to notice things you can agree on
- Tap into gratitude for the fact that one person is giving you some insights about how many people think who see issues very differently than you do