

ACTIVE LISTENING STEPS

1. Put yourself in the other person's place to understand what that person is saying and how she/he feels.
2. Show understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behaviors:
 - ✓ Tone of voice
 - ✓ Facial expressions
 - ✓ Gestures
 - ✓ Eye Contact
 - ✓ Posture
3. Restate the person's most important thoughts and feelings.
4. Ask open ended questions to better understand the other person's issues and concerns.
5. Remain neutral. Don't take sides.

Active Listening Techniques

These are encouragements to another person to talk:

Statement	Purpose	To do this. . .	Examples
Encouraging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To convey interest 2. To encourage the other person to keep talking 	. . .don't agree or disagree . . .use neutral words . . .use varying voice intonations	"Can you tell me more?" And then. . .?
<i>Clarifying</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To help you clarify what is said 2. To get more information 3. To help the speaker see other points of view 	. . .ask questions . . .Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further	"When did this happen?" "When that happened you got frightened and . . .?"
<i>Restating</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show you are listening and understanding what is being said 2. To check your meaning and interpretation 	. . .restate basic ideas and facts	"So you wish the Board would trust you more?"
<i>Reflecting</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show that you understand how the person feels 2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else 	. . .reflect the speaker's basic feelings	"You seem very upset." "You were pretty angry at that reaction."
<i>Summarizing</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review progress 2. To pull together important ideas and facts 3. To establish a basis for further discussion 	. . .restate major ideas expressed including feelings	"These seem to be the main things that I heard you describing. . ."
<i>Validating</i>	To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person	. . .acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings . . .show appreciation for their efforts and actions	"I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter." "It must have been very difficult for you to tell me this. I appreciate your courage."

A good listener:

Hears the words accurately

Can summarize

Tunes in

Has no preoccupations

Empathizes with the speaker

Checks his/her understanding

Senses feelings behind the word

HUMAN NEEDS

Each of us seek to meet basic needs in our daily lives. The most powerful need is the one that has not been satisfied.

These needs motivate us to act the way we do, and in particular, in ways that satisfy the needs that are not yet fulfilled. Unmet needs can generate conflict.

Physical Needs [these are universal]: food, water, shelter, rest, sleep.

Security: safety, stability, trust, nurture, consistency, order, structure, peace of mind.

Social Needs: love, belonging, affection, acceptance, community, support, companionship.

Esteem: self-esteem, achievement, recognition, self-respect, to be understood, independence, freedom, to be trusted, to see yourself as a good, worthwhile and valued individual.

Meaning: purpose, creativity, self expression, dignity, honesty, integrity, authenticity, faith, challenge, contribution to society, hope, inspiration, beauty, exploration, knowledge, equality, joy, humor, play, control over one's own life.

I-Messages: Making it Real

I feel (State the emotion) when (Describe the behavior SPECIFICALLY) because (State the effect the behavior has on YOUR life)

You may feel a bit uncomfortable with this format. It may not feel quite “natural.” So the next step is to adapt I-messages to your personal communication style.

The most important thing is to stay true to the principles of communicating with I-messages:

Speak from your own feelings, interests and values.

Take responsibility for your part of the problem.

Don't blame the other person.

Here are some hints for making I-messages a realistic option for discussing a problem:

1. I-messages are not appropriate in all conflict situations. Using them is a choice. Use them with people you have a relationship with, or with people who have a reason to care about how you feel.

You *wouldn't* use an I-message when someone you don't know bumps into you on the street, or if a stranger cuts in line ahead of you at the movie theater. In those cases, confronting the person with an I-message may escalate a conflict rather than solve it. You might decide to use an I-message with a friend who revealed a secret you shared in confidence. You might use one with a teacher who you think has treated you unfairly. You might even use it with a clerk who has overlooked you to serve another customer.

2. Using I-messages involves a risk. The other person may say they don't care about how you feel. Don't use an I-message unless you choose to take that risk.

3. An I-message can be stated in many ways. Just be sure to include all the elements of the formula. For example, here's an I-message stated by using the formula:

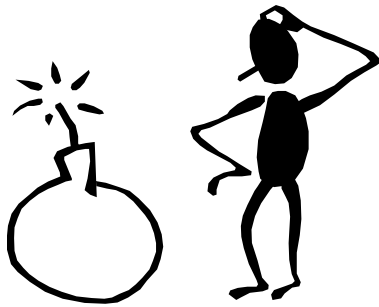
“I feel betrayed when other people ask me about something I told you in confidence, because I want to be able to trust you with my private thoughts.”

And here are two other ways to say the same thing:

“I feel betrayed. Someone just asked me about X. That was a secret I shared with you. Now I'm afraid to trust you with my private thoughts.” Or

“Someone just asked me about X. That was a secret – I didn't tell anyone but you. I feel betrayed. Now I don't know if I can trust you.”

4. Beware of You-statements masquerading as I-statements. *“I feel angry when other people ask me about a secret I told you, because you betrayed my trust.”* This may look like an I-statement, but it's actually blaming the other person.



Defusing Conflict

How can you keep anger from turning into a fight? Maybe you can defuse the situation. Here are some strategies to use:

1. **Stay Cool.** Breathe deeply. Move slowly. Think before you act. Keep your voice low and calm. Don't get loud. Shouting makes the other person angrier. So does calling names, Loud voices will bring a crowd, too.
2. **Walk Away.** Is the other person looking for an argument? Are they trying to get you angry? Don't "take the bait." Just say, "I'm sorry, I have something else to do now." Don't discuss it. Just leave.
3. **Use Empathy.** What is the other person feeling? Can you put yourself in that person's shoes? Try to figure it out. Ask them how they are feeling. That may help you solve your dispute.
4. **Give the Other Person a Way Out.** Usually the other person is as interested in saving face as you are. Don't back the person into a corner where he or she will have to fight. Provide a graceful way out.
5. **Keep it Light.** If you can make fun of the situation, you might not get in a fight. Make a joke, or do something silly. But don't make fun of the other person. Make fun of yourself.
6. **Use the "Magic Words."** Be polite and respectful. Say "sorry" or "excuse me." That doesn't mean you are wrong. It doesn't mean the other person is right. It can be a simple way to prevent an argument or fight.
7. **Use "I-Messages"** Talk about your part of the problem and your own feelings. Avoid blaming the other person with "you-messages."

FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM NOT THE PERSON

Step-By-Step Mediation Process to Help Settle Conflicts

Underlying Principle: Empower the disputants to solve their own problem peacefully, with your guidance and oversight. We want them to learn to settle their own differences.

STEP	TOOLS
1. De-escalate * Give the parties time to cool down.	Deep breathing, separate, move to a quiet space, "time out", take a walk, etc.
2. Offer to help disputants solve their parties to conflict. * Get agreement from both * Avoid imposing your solution * View it as both parties vs. the conflict, rather than one vs. the other.	Listening Skills, "I" Message
3. Listen to both sides. * Listen for the conflicts roots e.g., needs, resources, values * Listen for feelings and values as well as facts. * Each side must be fully heard -one speaks while the other listens silently. * Restate and clarify the concerns and feelings of each party.	Listening skills, especially reflective, "I" statements
4. Help disputants brainstorm alternatives * Look for several possible solutions * Don't rush to choose one solution. * Wait before you evaluate	Brainstorming, imagination, creativity
5. Help disputants consider the possible solutions.	Win/Win concept, consider disputants' needs or interest above their positions.
6. Invite them to choose a solution Both must agree.	Consensus decision-making.
7. Agree on a plan for implementing the solution.	Active Listening
8. Check back later to make sure the solution is working.	Active Listening