

FUNSHEET HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER



**ABSOLUTELY
WRITE**
WITH ADITI SURANA

WM
IVM PODCASTS

HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER

*Hello!
Are you
listening?*



There is a philosophical riddle.

If a tree falls in the forest where there is no one to hear it, does it still make a sound? The scientific view here is, although the tree may create sound waves but it takes an ear to generate the sound.

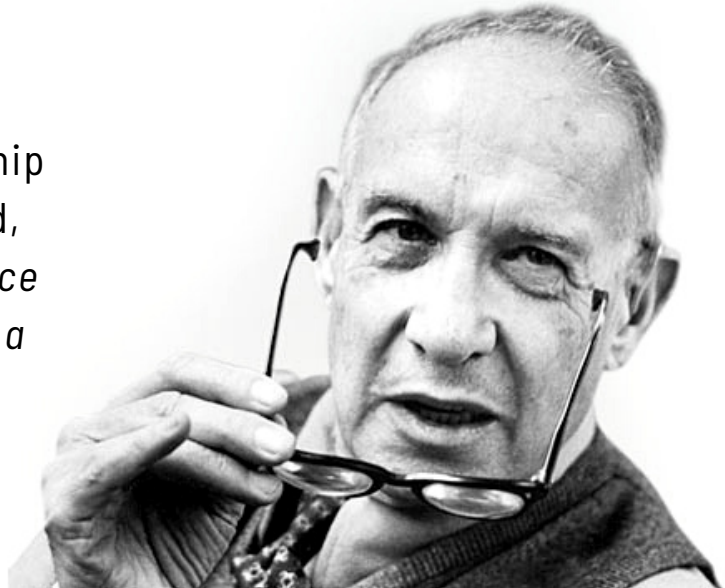
So the question is - if someone speaks from the bottom of his heart and tries to convey the most troubling thoughts or deepest feelings but **no one listens**, *then is it communication?*

COMMUNICATION = SPEAKING + LISTENING

Why listen?

I have sat through numerous such conflicting conversations. Exit interviews, settlement talks, legal battles, complicated negotiations. Most people lack listening skills. We innately believe that if we listen, we have to agree. We start speaking, arguing, denying, dismissing. Verbally or in our heads.

A famous Author and leadership consultant Peter Drucker said, *"Listening, the first competence of leadership is not a skill but a discipline."* He further added, *"The most important thing in communication is to listen to what is not being said!"*



**COMMUNICATION = SPEAKING + LISTENING
(VERBAL + NON VERBAL)**

So please listen!

1. Listen to **build trust**.
2. Listen to have a **greater influence**.
3. Listen to solve the **real problem**.
4. Listen to diffuse **emotional pressure**.
5. Listen to **save lives**. Please listen when a disturbed friend is reaching out.

I personally feel when someone wants you to listen to them, it's an honor. We do not feel like speaking or opening up with everyone. We open up only when we genuinely feel safe. The person speaking is non verbally saying, I trust you, I respect you and your opinion matters.

Aditi Surana

Graphology test:

Write anything that comes to your mind in the box below.
(3-4 sentences) You could also look for today's stroke in your regular diaries and scribbles.

Handwriting stroke of a good listener: Look for a small case letter 'e'. If the loop in the letter e is well formed then you are a good listener but if it is *squeezed*, making your letter e look like letter c, then you genuinely **need to work on your listening skills.**



Well formed
'e'



Squeezed
'e'

Now the question is how to listen?

Some hygiene factors of good listening skills:

1. Make **eye contact**.
2. **Don't interrupt** someone while their speaking
3. Keep your phone or any other **distraction aside**
4. Avoid the temptation to **fix them or the situation**.

Let's focus on 5 crucial aspects of compassionate listening:

1. **LISTEN TO
YOURSELF
BEFORE YOU
LISTEN TO OTHER
PEOPLE.**

If you are all preoccupied, stressed, anxious and worked up in your own mind, then you cant be available to someone else. So please take out some time to be quiet and calm, before a delicate and sensitive conversation.

Write down an incidence where you were completely occupied while still pretending/ struggling to listen?

Did you do anything to calm yourself in that situation?

I'm attaching a page of Graphotherapy practice called '**Flow of thoughts**'. Graphotherapy is an act of making conscious alterations in your handwriting in order to create desired changes in your personality and behaviour. Learn this stroke by carefully watching this video: <http://tiny.cc/flowstroke>. Practise it for the next 7 days.

**2. DROP THE NEED
TO BE RIGHT.**

Now that's the tough one. We all love being right! We are addicted to being right.

Think of a argument where you were being **stubborn about some fixed belief** and then realised that you could opted for other options.

For example, you thought your way of folding the towel is the best option. Until you realised that *there are more than 5 ways of doing it*.

Fixed point of view	Alternate point of views
1.	A. B. C.
2.	A. B. C.
3.	A. B. C.

Be more interested *in learning what people were experiencing, when they did what they did. Yes. Be curious to learn.* People are training us with each conversation about what they like or dislike, prefer or detest. This helps you deal with them & other similar people in a better manner.

**3. YOUR JUDGMENTS
ARE YOUR
OPINIONS AND
NOT UNIVERSAL
FACTS.**

Now this is the biggest barrier to listening. Those who live from a fixed sense of black or white judgements, lose all the grey areas of growth. I was a terrible listener in conversations when I was fixated on my sense of righteousness.

**4. CONNECT
VULNERABLY.**

When you are willing to drop your position of righteousness and your judgments, something magical happens. You become human again. You are willing to connect. We all feel affected when someone suffers. We all experience other people's emotions. We avoid it as we do not want to feel uncomfortable. We avoid getting in touch with the dark corners in our hearts.

Fill in the blanks:

There are some thing you can say that can help you create safe space for people -

- a. *I am _____ that you are going through this.*
- b. *I don't think I understand your situation, can you _____me understand it?*
- c. *I might not have a _____ but I would like to listen to your side of the story.*
- d. *Is there anything I can do to make it_____ for you?*

**5. AGREE
TO
DISAGREE.**

You are not obliged to do what the other person expects. Most people avoid listening as they feel it's a trap. If I listen then I have to agree or defend. No, you do not.

It may look like it initially, but things change when you are consistently operating from being calm and firm. Say things like:

- a. I hear your *perspective*. I would like to think and get back.
- b. I am *not sure about my decision* yet. Give me some time to think.
- c. I *care for you*. I don't intend to hurt you or myself.
- d. Let's find a way that makes *both of us happy*.

Narrate a situation where you agreed to disagree.

*Lets learn to become better listeners. This will help us be more kind & empathetic. Let's become **Wellness warriors**. Come join our movement.*

I would like to know what were your takeaways from today's episode? What small action will you be taking to listen to someone close to you? Write to me on my Instagram account @Aditisurana

