

ACTIVE LISTENING GUIDE



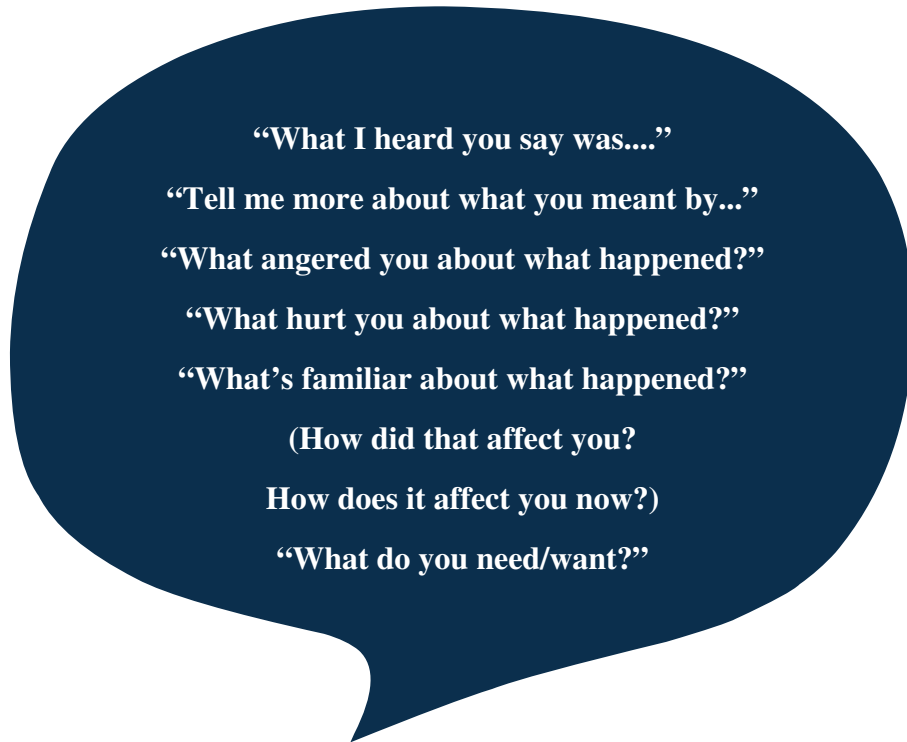
Creative Communication: *Art of Listening*

Wisdom-based leaders understand that listening is one of the most important aspects of communication. We take time to listen to and learn from those around us, elevating the voices of those not often heard or represented. Our ability to listen and make space for others to share is a marker of our leadership. In this section, read the statements below about listening and communication, and take some time to reflect on these by answering the questions that follow.



1. Listen to what is being said and what is not.
2. Observe the language of the body.
3. Notice how something is being expressed and what words are used.
4. What you feel is as important as what you hear and see.
5. Be willing to adapt and to adjust to the moment.
6. Notice how your body and words express your projections.
7. Notice when you are asleep and why.
8. Keep breathing. Allow space for humor, warmth, and grief.
9. Compassion is one of the highest forms of being present.
10. Acknowledge and utilize the wisdom that is in each person.
11. Accept and validate the truthfulness of each person's perception.
12. Notice where someone begins and ends.
13. Notice what is in the middle of the room.
14. Model the acceptance and openness to conflict, anger, and pain.
15. Acknowledge the courage and intimacy of being vulnerable.
16. Be kind to yourself and others

Creative Communication: *Art of Mindful Inquiry*



1. What feelings come up for you as you read the statements above?

2. Reflect on your relationship with listening. What’s easy for you? What’s difficult for you? Feel free to highlight in one color the statements above that are easy for you, and in another color the ones that are difficult for you.

Creative Communication: *Healthy and Unhealthy Communication*

Healthy Communication

1. Reflect back what is being said. Use their words, not yours.
2. Begin where they are, not where you want them to be.
3. Be curious and open to what they are trying to say.
4. Notice what they are saying and what they are not.
5. Emotionally relate to how they are feeling. Nurture the relationship.
6. Notice how you are feeling. Be honest and authentic.
7. Take responsibility for your part in the conflict or misunderstanding.
8. Try to understand how their past affects who they are and how those experiences affect their relationship with you.
9. Stay with the process and the relationship, not just the solution.

Unhealthy Communication

1. Saying nothing and appearing emotionally detached
2. Taking it personally, rather than being curious and empathetic
3. Statements/questions that cause the speaker to become defensive
4. Questioning the validity of what is being shared and the veracity of the speaker
5. Lacking compassion
6. Not responding by changing the subject
7. Interrupting the speaker by talking over them and/or yelling
8. Not acknowledging/validating what has been shared
9. Being defensive, blaming or adversarial; not willing to take responsibility
10. Threatening to leave or staying, but unwilling to listen
11. Searching for the exception
12. Demanding a solution or defined outcome before they are willing to listen or participate
13. Needing proof
14. Generalizing to trivialize the importance or relevance of what is being shared

