



ACTIVE LISTENING

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WORKSHEETS

THE LISTENER'S POSTURE (THE "WHAT")



THE GOAL:

To move from just "hearing" noise to "actively receiving" a message. Active listening isn't just about being quiet; it's an active sport.

SECTION 1

THE 5 LEVELS OF LISTENING



Review the 5 Levels of Listening in the table above. Think of three people in your life and honestly rank your "Default Level" with them.

YOUR PERSONAL AUDIT:

Person A (e.g., Partner/Parent): My default level is

because.....

Person B (e.g., Boss/Client): My default level is

because.....

Person C (e.g., My Child/Friend): My default level is

because.....

SECTION 2

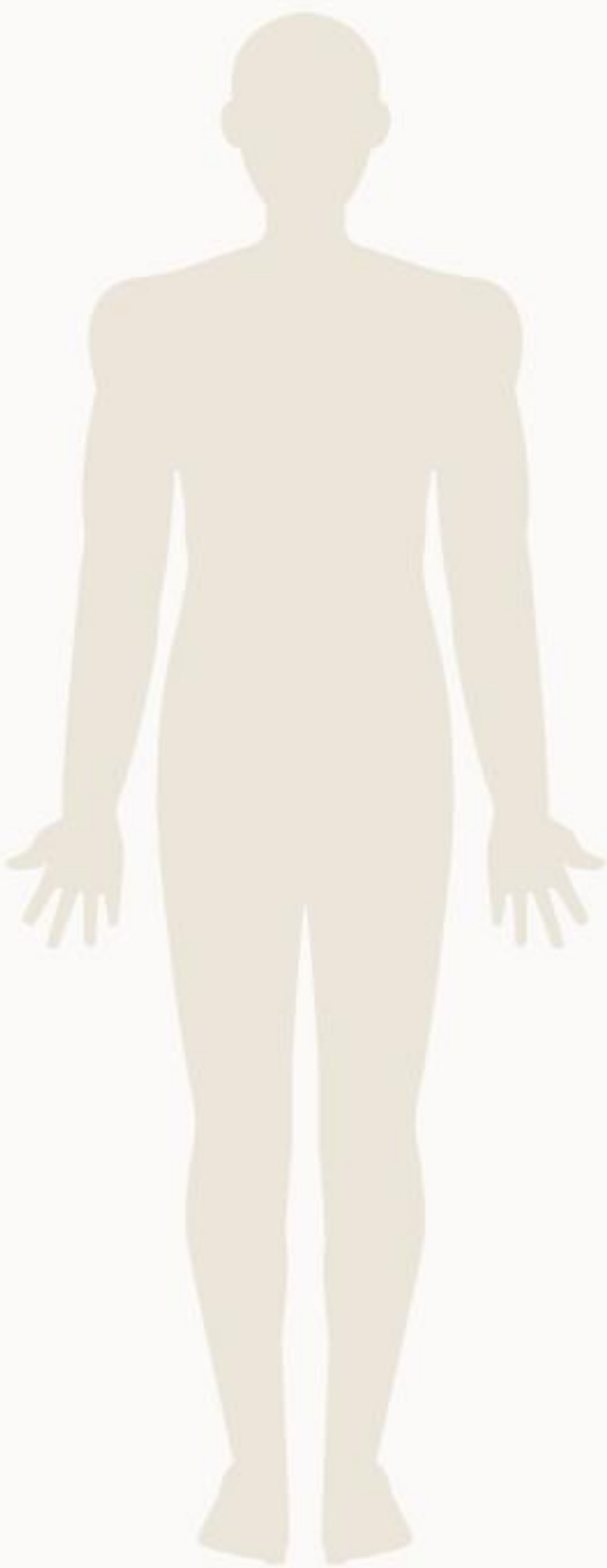
THE WHOLE-BODY CHECK

Active listening starts before anyone even speaks. Use this checklist to "prep" your brain for a conversation.

- Eyes:** Am I making soft, comfortable eye contact (or looking near them if eye contact is hard)?
- Heart:** Am I open to what they are about to say, even if I might disagree?
- Hands:** Are my hands still? Am I fidgeting with something that is distracting me?
- Mouth:** Is my "inner talker" quiet, or am I already waiting for my turn to speak?

Reflection: Which of these is the hardest for you when you are tired or overwhelmed?

Active listening is a physical act. Use the diagram to identify where your "Listening Energy" usually goes. For each area, write down one thing that usually distracts you.



EYES (Visual Focus): What usually pulls your eyes away?
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EARS (The Filter): What background noises make it hard for you to focus?
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HANDS (Fidgets): Do you have a "productive fidget" or a "distracting fidget"?
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HEART (The Bias): What "pre-judgments" do you often bring into a conversation?
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SECTION 3

THE "WAIT" RULE

In a conversation, only one person can hold the spotlight. If you start talking about yourself, you've "stolen" it. Practice rewriting these responses to keep the spotlight on the other person. In the middle of a conversation, ask yourself: **W.A.I.T. (Why Am I Talking?)**

Scenario 1: A friend is telling you about a hard day at work. You have a really funny story about your own day that is slightly related.

The Challenge: Should you tell your story now?

- Yes, it will cheer them up!
 - No, it shifts the "spotlight" away from them. Why?
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Scenario 2: A friend says: "I'm so overwhelmed with this project. I feel like I'm drowning."

- The Spotlight Thief says: "I know exactly how you feel, I had a project like that last month and..."
 - The Active Listener says:
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Scenario 3: A colleague says: "I'm really nervous about the presentation tomorrow."

- The Spotlight Thief says: "Oh, you'll be fine! I've done hundreds of those, just don't think about it."
 - The Active Listener says:
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SECTION 4

THE 24-HOUR "WAIT" CHALLENGE

For the next 24 hours, use the W.A.I.T. rule: Why Am I Talking?

Keep a log of one moment today where you caught yourself about to interrupt or "steal the spotlight," but chose to listen instead:

THE SITUATION:

WHAT I WANTED TO SAY:

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WHAT I DID INSTEAD:

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HOW THE OTHER PERSON REACTED:

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THE NEURO-HACK: "THE 3-SECOND BUFFER"



Tip: Our brains process information faster than people speak. To prevent interrupting, tell yourself you will count to three in your head after the other person stops talking before you say a word. This ensures they are actually finished and gives your "CEO brain" time to process.



THE STATIC ON THE LINE



THE GOAL:

To identify your personal "Listening Blockers" and understand how environmental and internal "static" can hijack your ability to connect.

SECTION 1

MEET THE BLOCKERS

We all have a "Default Blocker" we retreat to when we are tired or uninterested. Read these descriptions and rate how often each one "shows up" for you on a scale of 1 (Rarely) to 5 (All the time).

- **The Rehearser:** You aren't listening because you are too busy practicing your response in your head. You're waiting for a gap so you can jump in. **MY LEVEL:** 1 2 3 4 5

- **The Advice-Giver:** You are listening only enough to find the "problem" so you can fix it. You jump to "You should..." before they finish. **MY LEVEL:** 1 2 3 4 5

- **The Mind-Reader:** You assume you already know what they are going to say, so you tune out or finish their sentences for them. **MY LEVEL:** 1 2 3 4 5

- **The Judge:** You are too busy critiquing the speaker's tone, their clothes, or their logic to actually hear the message. **MY LEVEL:** 1 2 3 4 5

- **The Dreamer:** Your brain has hopped onto a word they said and drifted off into a totally different memory or daydream. **MY LEVEL:** 1 2 3 4 5

SECTION 2

THE STATIC MAP

Static comes from two places: the room around you (External) and the "tabs" open in your brain (Internal).

The Room Audit (External Static) List 3 things in your typical environment (home or work) that make listening difficult:

The Brain Audit (Internal Static) Listening is an energy-intensive task. Tick the "Internal Static" that is currently affecting your focus:

- The Body:** Am I hungry, tired, or in physical pain/discomfort?
- The "To-Do" Loop:** Am I thinking about the next task I have to do?
- Sensory Overload:** Is it too bright, too loud, or is my clothing itchy?
- Emotional Weight:** Am I already annoyed or upset with this person?

SECTION 3

THE FOCUS PIVOT

In this section, practice how you would advocate for your own focus. Instead of "faking it" when you're overwhelmed, you are "pivoting" to a better time or environment.

Scenario: A friend starts a deep conversation while you are halfway through cooking dinner and the TV is on.

- **The "Old Way" (Faking it):** Nodding while burning the onions and missing half of what they said.
- **The Focus Pivot (What to say):** "I really want to hear this, but I'm right in the middle of a task and I can't give you my full attention yet. Can we chat in 15 minutes when the food is in the oven?"
- **Your Action:** (e.g., Setting a clear boundary and a "check-back" time).

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Scenario: You are in a meeting and your "Inner Dreamer" has just spent 5 minutes thinking about what to have for lunch.

- **The Focus Pivot (How to recover):** "I'm sorry, I just lost my thread for a moment. Could you repeat that last point so I'm definitely on the same page?"
- **Reflection:** How does it feel to advocate for your own attention rather than pretending you didn't lose it?

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SECTION 4

THE PERSONAL DISCOVERY LAB

Track your listening over the next few hours. When did the static get the loudest?

WHO WAS TALKING?

WHAT WAS THE 'BLOCKER' (Rehearser, Dreamer, etc.)?

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WAS THE STATIC INTERNAL (MY BRAIN/BODY) OR EXTERNAL (THE ROOM)?

ONE THING I COULD DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME:

THE NEURO-HACK: "THE PATTERN BREAK"



Tip: If you catch yourself being The Rehearser (preparing your speech), physically change your posture. Uncross your legs, lean back slightly, or take a deep "clearing breath." This physical movement signals to your brain that it's time to switch from "Output Mode" back to "Input Mode."



THE RESPONSE TOOLKIT



THE GOAL:

To move from passive hearing to active connection. This worksheet gives you the specific tools to show the other person they've been heard and to keep the conversation flowing without "stealing the spotlight."

SECTION 1

THE MIRROR (REFLECTIVE LISTENING)

Reflective listening is like holding up a mirror. You aren't adding your own opinion yet; you are just reflecting back what you heard to make sure you got it right.

The Formula: "It sounds like you're feeling [Emotion] because [Fact/Situation]. Is that right?"

PRACTICE THE MIRROR:

- **They say:** "I'm just so frustrated with my boss. I put in all this extra work and didn't even get a 'thank you!'"

Your Reflection:

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- **They say:** "I'm actually really excited about this trip, but I'm also terrified I'm going to forget something important."

Your Reflection:

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SECTION 2

THE QUESTION BANK

Closed questions (Yes/No) shut conversations down. Open-ended questions (How/What/Tell me more) open them up. Transform these "Dead-End" questions into "Door-Openers."

THE DEAD-END QUESTION (CLOSED)	THE DOOR-OPENER (OPEN-ENDED)
"Did you have a good day?"	YOUR VERSION

THE DEAD-END QUESTION (CLOSED)	THE DOOR-OPENER (OPEN-ENDED)
"Are you mad at me?"	YOUR VERSION
"Was the meeting boring?"	YOUR VERSION
"Do you like your new job?"	YOUR VERSION

SECTION 3

THE PRACTICE ARENA

Think of a conversation you expect to have soon (with a partner, a child, or a colleague). Plan your "Active Response" now so your brain has a script to follow.

WHO IS THE PERSON?

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WHAT IS THE LIKELY TOPIC?

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MY "DOOR-OPENER" QUESTION TO START:

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A 'MIRROR' PHRASE I CAN USE IF THEY GET EMOTIONAL

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MY PLAN FOR THE "3-SECOND BUFFER" (WAIT BEFORE SPEAKING):

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SECTION 4

THE 24-HOUR CONNECTION LOG

Reflect on one conversation today where you consciously used a tool from this toolkit.

WHICH TOOL DID YOU USE? MIRRORING, OPEN-ENDED QUESTION, OR THE WAIT RULE?

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HOW DID THE OTHER PERSON'S ENERGY CHANGE?

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MY LEVEL OF COMFORT (CIRCLE ONE): (Very Awkward) 1 2 3 4 5 (Totally Natural)

THE NEURO-HACK: "TELL ME MORE"



Tip: If your brain "glitches" and you can't think of a reflective response or a good question, use the Universal Key: "Tell me more about that." It's the easiest way to keep the spotlight on them while giving your own brain a few extra seconds to process what they've said.

