

FINE TUNING COMMUN ICATION

Lars

Active Listening

Active listening has many benefits in your relationships. It allows you to understand the point of view of another person and respond with empathy. It also allows you to ask questions to make sure you understand what is being said.

Finally, it validates the speaker and makes them want to speak longer.



Non-verbal signs of active listening

The people who are listening are likely to display at least some of these signs. However, these signs may not be appropriate in all situations and across all cultures.

- Smile - Small smiles can be used to show that the listener is paying attention.
- Eye Contact - It is normal and usually encouraging for the listener to look at the speaker.
- Posture - The attentive listener tends to lean slightly forward or sideways whilst sitting.
- Distraction - The active listener will not be distracted and therefore will refrain from fidgeting, looking at a clock or watch, playing with their hair or yawning.

Verbal Signs of active listening

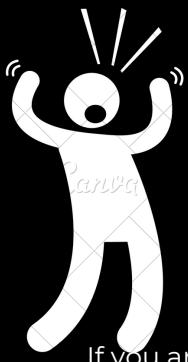
- Positive Reinforcement - Occasional words and phrases, such as: 'very good', 'yes' or 'indeed' will indicate that you are paying attention.
- Remembering - Try to remember a few key points.
- Questioning - Asking relevant questions and/or making statements that build or help to clarify what the speaker has said.
- Clarification - Clarification usually involves the use of open questions which enables the speaker to expand on certain points as necessary.



Try this

for the next few days I would like you to bare in mind the below 3 rules, and let me know what you think.

1. **Let them speak first** - enter into every discussion firstly wearing your 'listener' hat, so as to focus on understanding the other person's perspective. Then, once you adequately understand them, you can switch into the role of 'speaker' in order to share your perspective.
2. **Ask 'why'** - Typically, we don't freely share our internal beliefs with others. With each asking of the "Why?" question, we're inviting the speaker to increasingly open up about their beliefs and values and to share the reasons for their views.
3. **Summarise the conversation** - try concluding every conversation in which information is exchanged with a summary.



Think Before You Speak

Your mouth can get you into a lot of trouble if you are in the habit of speaking before you think. It also makes you a bad communicator, shows a lack of emotional intelligence and confidence.

The only way to break this habit is to close your mouth as soon as it opens. Take a moment to think about what you are going to say before it comes out, it just takes practice. I wasn't thinking when I said you need to close your mouth as soon as it opens.

If you are in the habit of your mouth as soon as someone has finished speaking, then you are making two errors:

1. **You are not listening**, as your mind is busy thinking of a response while they are still a, this is how miscommunications & misunderstandings happen.
(Check out part 1 of this social set, active listening, to try and break that habit).
2. You are **reacting to what they say by speaking** and not reacting by thinking.

Diligently practise closing your mouth as soon as you open it. When you close your mouth, you are breaking the pattern or habit and taking control. You are giving yourself time to consciously **CHOOSE** what you want to say.

Step 2

You need to mean what you say, you have now paused so the 'sorry, I wasn't thinking excuse' can't be used.

To get into the hang of this you need to use emotional intelligence (Empathy), so you can really feel where they are coming from and understand what they are communicating. Then integrity so that your response is well thought out, but more importantly 100% true.

Following this way communicating takes practice. but with time it will become second nature, what's more, you will be able to identify the way other people communicate.

Check these out...

1. Below are youtube videos of some of the great communicators that choose to think before they speak.
2. Pay attention to how they actively listen, they pause, and then they respond with understanding and honesty.
3. It can feel odd when you start pausing during conversations but as the videos will show, it also shows confidence and makes conversations more engaging.
4. Plus, as you choose to think before you speak, so will the other person, this makes arguments a thing of the past.

Joe Rogan, comedian and host of one of the worlds most popular podcasts & Elon Musk, genius, entrepreneur and second richest man in the world.

<https://youtu.be/RcYjXbSJBN8>

Oprah Winfrey, world-renown talk show host & Barack Obama, ex-president of the united states.

<https://youtu.be/51uk5SFF5s8>

Here's how **not** to do it, when a good communicator (Jordan) comes up against someone (Cathy) who doesn't listen, doesn't pause and intentionally dishonestly puts words in others mouths.

Jordan Peterson, a Canadian professor of psychology & Cathy Newman, Channel 4 News reporter in the UK.

<https://youtu.be/aMcjxSThD54>

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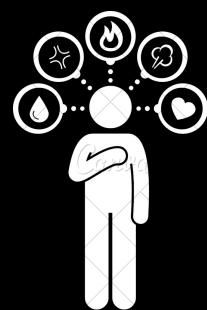
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Emotional Intelligence

We probably all know people who are masters at managing their emotions.

They don't get angry in stressful situations. Instead, they have the ability to look at a problem and calmly find a solution.

This quality is very attractive, it shows control and reflection, it makes a person seem trustworthy and easy to talk to.



Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize your emotions, understand what they're telling you, and realize how your emotions affect people around you. It also involves your perception of others: when you understand how they feel (empathy), this allows you to manage relationships more effectively.

So how do we improve our EI?

Pay attention to how you react to people.

Do you pass judgment before you know all of the facts?

Do you stereotype? Try to put yourself in their place, and be more open and accepting of their perspectives and needs.

Practice part 1 and part 2 of this social set. Being able to actively listen then pausing before you respond will give you the information and time to understand where other people are coming from before you respond.



Practical Steps

Step 1

Take time - be it by pausing before responding, or time to calm down before a situation needs changing. Taking control of your emotions can be practised. Deep breathing exercises or the count to three exercises can also be used to help develop EI.

Step 2

Continually examine how you react to stressful situations - EI takes practice. Do you become upset every time there's a delay or something doesn't happen the way you want? Pay close attention to the times you react without thinking and be self-critical, how could you have dealt with it better?

Step 3

Take responsibility for your actions - If you hurt someone's feelings, apologies directly – don't ignore what you did or avoid the person. People are usually more willing to forgive and forget if you make an honest attempt to make things right.

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Integrity

The 48 hr people pleaser exercise was to help you gauge your own level of integrity.

Having low integrity and telling even little white lies can be very damaging

Importance Of Integrity

Confidence

When you lie, you know in your heart, you are not a person of high integrity, this dramatically reduces your confidence.

When you are a person of high integrity you are more confident at voicing your opinions, giving your advice & saying what you think, because it naturally comes from a place of honesty.

Respect

You may think that you only tell little white lies, but that is enough when noticed by people to realise you are not 100% honest and therefore less trustworthy. This loses peoples respect and makes them less likely to want to have serious conversations with you

Role Model

Integrity is one of the first things that a child will learn from a parent. The level of honesty child has is directly proportional to the amount of honesty they have seen in their lives and will affect their entire future.

It's contagious

When having conversations if you show absolute integrity you will find that the level of integrity people treat you with will increase, making conversations, friendships and working relationships far easier

Try this

For 24 hours

DO NOT LIE

It sounds crazy to not even tell little lies

But..

It's actually easy and a nice habit to get into.
It takes a while, but when you get used to it, and the people around you start to notice, you will find your communication with people becomes calmer, easier and more pleasant.



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Social Intelligence

Social Intelligence (SI) is a continuation of emotional intelligence (EI).

It's about being comfortable in social situations being aware of what is happening around you and the ability to confidently join in with people.

SI is also what makes you a great date!

Once you have learnt the other stages of this social set you will naturally have better SI, but SI takes practice.



So how do we improve our SI?

The best way is to jump in at the deep end, put yourself in social situations, and get used to it.

Learn Active Listening - If you want to be able to engage in group conversations you must actively listen to what's happening around you.

Think before you speak - When in a group of people you will have more confidence voicing your opinions if they are thought out before you speak. You will also more likely be listened to and respected by the group.

Develop your emotional intelligence - Understand the opinions, backgrounds and emotions of the people in the groups, also understand and control your emotions. It's very hard to have a conversation with someone who is overly emotional.

Act with integrity - Be honest, even if there's a fear you may upset someone. It's better to disagree with someone and risk losing their respect than agree, go against your values and lose everyone's respect..

Get A life - Follow your interests, have hobbies, ideas, passions, dreams. These are all conversation pieces and everyone likes being in the company of people that have a lot going on. We feel our company is appreciated and respect that person more

Be knowledgeable - Read books, watch TED talks, listen to podcasts and follow the news. Especially on subjects that interest you. If you want to meet more interesting people and have more full-filling conversations it's unlikely they will be talking about gossip, soap operas or Netflix

Just reading this booklet will help you improve your communication. If you would like to take it further then complete this booklet as an exercise.

Communication Exercise

For six days I would like you to actively focus on each of the social sets below. Read the appropriate handout that morning and try to inject it into your conversation.

Focus on them one at a time.

Don't expect instant change, but rework this exercise regularly and you will start to become more aware of how you communicate and add improvements.

Day 1

Active Listening

- Let them speak first.
- Ask 'why'.
- Summarise the conversation.

Day 2

Think Before You Speak

- Diligently practice closing your mouth as soon as you open it.
- Pause before you respond.

Day 3

Emotional Intelligence

- Pause before you respond.
- Acknowledge your emotions.
- Consider others positions and feelings.

Day 4

Integrity

- Be 100 % honest

Day 5&6

Social Intelligence

- List 3 current affairs, subjects, topics you find partially interesting. (E.g politics, animal welfare, black lives matter, LGBTQ)
- Find and subscribe to 2 resources on each of the above to develop your knowledge on each subject.

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