

COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS—ACTIVE LISTENING WORKSHEET

OBJECTIVE: to listen for the speakers emotions

1. Let the speaker know you want to listen.
2. Use the five skills listed below.
3. Use “open ended” questions.
4. Don't give advice or try to “fix it.”
5. Wait until it's your turn to have the floor.
6. GOAL: Communication happens when two heads share the same picture.

FIVE SKILLS:

1. Reflections

Repeat back the information you were just told, and be a verbal “mirror” for the feelings: *Okay. Um Hmm. Really? Ouch! So, you say you were mad? Alright. I see. I'm listening.*

2. Clarification questions

Getting it clear: *So let me get this straight, he called you a name? Let me see if I have the facts right... Is this what he mean,... is that it? Can you say that again? I don't get it yet.*

3. Explorations

Getting the whole story: *Is that everything? It sounds like you weren't just mad, you were really mad. What else was going on .. for you, .. for them? I wonder if you feel...? What do you think it meant? Can you say more about that part?*

4. Extend

Connecting the (emotional) dots: *Something else seems to be going on inside you, could that be? You were mad, were you also a little bit scared? What else are you thinking, feeling? If it was me I'd feel ..., do you? How does this impact you in this or that area?*

5. Summarize

Getting ready to take turns with the floor: *Okay, you said some things. Let me see if I've got it. In other words, _____. Is that right?*

Example Situation:

A wife comes home unexpectedly from work. She is upset and begins telling her story to her husband. She explains that there was a big lay-off at work and she no longer has a job. “I can't believe it!” She puts her things down that she brought home from her office. “There was no warning,” she says out loud after a silence. She is caught up in her thoughts and hasn't yet noticed the tension building in her husband. “We were all shocked!” she exclaimed. Finally her husband says, “What do you mean, ‘no warning’? Couldn't you see that there were problems?!” “Well,” she starts (feeling a little caught off balance), “I guess I could have but I didn't. But neither did...” Her husband interrupts, “Now what? Have you thought about looking in the paper at the job ads?” It wasn't really a question. “We can't go very long without the extra income.” At this point the wife feels too discouraged to continue talking to her husband. She doesn't feel that he is listening to her.

Where was the husband's focus? _____

If he had focused on her feelings what could he have said instead?:

1. For a **Reflection** example when his wife said, “I can't believe it!”

Husband could have said:

2. For a **Clarification** questions example when his wife said, “There was no warning!”

Husband could have said:

3. For an **Exploration** example when his wife said, “We were all shocked!”

Husband could have said:

4. For an **Extend** example when his wife said, “We were all shocked!”

Husband could have said:

5. **Summarize** : giving a good summary sends the signal that you've got it (if the speaker agrees that you do) and that you would like to have the floor to give your response now.