

How are you listening?

Listening is like second nature to most of us, so stepping back and having a look at our listening habits can be challenging, but worthwhile. It is not implied that the responses below are 'wrong', only that being aware of our typical responses can remind us that we have a choice when we are interacting.

Use a check mark to indicate how frequently you have engaged in these habits over the past week or two. Remember the value of honest self-assessment:

No	Some	Often	RESPONSES
			The Faker - Outward signs are visible - eye contact and nodding but your mind is elsewhere.
			The Interrupter - You are eager to speak and are looking for opportunities to jump in. You aren't allowing the speaker to finish.
			The Intellectual or Logical Listener - You are trying to analyze what the person is saying. Usually this means fitting them into a logic box. You rarely try to find the underlying feeling or emotion behind the message.
			One-Upper - You look for 'hooks' or ways to bring the conversation back to you. You hear yourself saying – 'Oh, that's nothing; you'd never believe what happened to me.... One time I...'
			The Rebuttal Maker - You listen only long enough to rebut and use the speaker's words against him/her. This may take the form of being argumentative, sparring or getting the speaker to see another point of view.
			Advice Giver - You love solving problems and are always ready with suggestions. This can get in the way of good listening because the speaker hasn't fully explored his/her thoughts or feelings.
			Consoler - Suggesting it 'wasn't your fault'.
			Storyteller - You are waiting for an opportunity to tell your story... 'that reminds me of the time...'
			Corrector - You want them to know that 'that is not how it happened...'
			Questioner - Being more interested in 'diagnosing' than in understanding... 'when did you first have that experience?'
			Sympathizer - 'Oh you poor thing'. Empathy is sensing the unspoken, whereas sympathy is a sharing of someone's trouble or an offering of compassion.