

LISTENING HINTS

AMPP

Ask – simply invite the other person to express themselves. Get the ball rolling. And whenever there seems to be an impasse, simply ask a question and remember *the power of the pause*.

Mirror – mirroring is often helpful when the other person’s tones, gestures, facial expressions, or posture seem inconsistent with their words. Again, remember *the power of the pause* and simply ask ... “Are you (or “You seem a little) ... frustrated or confused or joyful or concerned or angry or hurt or sad or troubled ... whatever.

Paraphrase – briefly summarize to the other person what you have heard. “I think I hear you saying ...” Or “Let me see if I’ve got this right?”

Prime – if things seem stuck, offer your best guess at what they might be thinking or feeling and say it in an inviting way, with a questioning tone that makes it ok for them to talk more.

The power of the pause: Questions coupled with pauses give people time to find their self, to gather their self or gather their thoughts or roll things around in their mind, especially if they are nervous or in distress. It gives them time to engage their brain and find their self.

Other Thoughts

- The goal is to keep people talking, especially when they are in some “distress.” Create space for people to find their voice and their real meaning. People will speak when they feel safe.
- Consciously suspend your thoughts, opinions, judgments, ideas, conclusions, experiences, feelings, emotions, passions, or anything in your own story that might come to you:
 - Set it aside (Senge)
 - The absence of thought (Shenk)
 - Come to nothing (Keating)
 - Suspend your thoughts, feelings, emotions, passions, assumptions (Bohm)
- Resist adding your own experiences with anything you identify with in their story.
 - (You might take a mental note of when you wanted to do this)
- Listen for the meaning in what someone is saying, the meaning to them. Investigate meaning by reflecting or paraphrasing ... “So you mean” Said slowly almost as a *pause*. This a great way for them to feel listened to, hear their impact, and clarify further.
- Pick up on key words and ask them to expand: “Could you say more about X?”

More later hints and helps to come