

Nonviolent Communication

Empathy

The different qualities of empathic listening are

- Reflecting back what you are hearing
- Asking questions from a position of curiosity
- Focus on Feelings and Needs
- Can include some paraphrasing to support you into a rhythm with the other person
- Listening from the heart
- Open and an empty vessel
- Offer space by listening mostly in silence
- Being with rather than doing
- Following the life energy as it emerges rather than guiding

What Empathy is not

When someone is full with emotion, the following are unlikely to contribute to connection:

- Advising: I think you should/why don't you try?
- One-upping That's nothing, wait until you hear what happened to me.....
- Educating This could turn into a very positive experience for you if you....
- Consoling It wasn't your fault, you did your best.
- Story-telling That reminds me of a time...
- Shutting down It's not so bad, let me get you an ice-cream.
- Sympathizing Oh you poor thing, that is so unfortunate.
- Data-gathering Asking questions to satisfy your own curiosity
- Explaining I would have called but, ...
- Correcting That's not what happened. It was like this....

When empathic listening is difficult

- When I am triggered
- When I do not have space for it
- When I am in judgement or blame of the other
- When I am in judgement or blame of myself



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Examples of ways that you could start an empathic guess

- "I am guessing that you are needing"
- "Is it that you would really enjoy a greater sense of"?
- "Are you longing for"?
- "Do you feel"?
- "Are you needing"?

The process is like watching an onion being peeled. With every layer, another layer is revealed. You don't need to go anywhere, just be present and witness life unfolding in front of you.

You may get stuck and have no idea what the other is feeling or needing. When this happens, you can paraphrase / summarize

- "So, you would like to get a dog and your partner doesn't like the idea?"
- "You have so many bills to pay and not enough money to do it?"
- "You would really love to go out tonight?"

Super tips !!!

- Notice when you are taking things personally. Remember that even when the other is judging and blaming you, it is an expression of their feelings and needs, and not about you.
- Wait until the other has been fully heard before sharing what is going on for you. They are more likely to have the capacity to hear you when they have been fully heard.