


Pastoral Skills Training Family Life Course

Lesson 5: Listening

Student Guide

Lesson Objectives	
Recognize active listening and tracking skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identify how anxiety inhibits listening.○ Identify attitudes that assist good listening.	
Session 1: Presentation Webinar	
Part 1	Creating a Listening Environment
Part 2	A Theology of Presence
Student Readings	
<i>How to Create a Listening Environment</i> (Capps)	05-How-to-Create-a-Listening-Environment.pdf
<i>Theology of Presence</i> (Augsburger)	05-Theology-of-Presence.pdf
Case Study	05-case-study.pdf
Session 2: Discussion Webinar	
A discussion of the assigned case study	

Listening
Lesson 5



Pastoral Skills Training
Family Life Course
Phase 1
USACHCS

Listening

Objectives


- Recognize active listening and tracking skills.
 - Identify how anxiety inhibits listening.
 - Identify attitudes that assist good listening.

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Listening

PART 1:
Creating a Listening
Environment

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Listening

How Anxiety Inhibits Listening

- ▾ Listening has an intentional and an attentional aspect, and both are needed for true listening to occur.
- ▾ One might be very intentional – “I will make every effort to listen” – and yet be unable to attend to what is being said or communicated. We might call this the paradox of intentional listening. The more intentional one is, the greater the danger that one will not be attentional.
- ▾ The more intentional one is may have more to do with the anxieties that are evoked in oneself by what the other person is saying.

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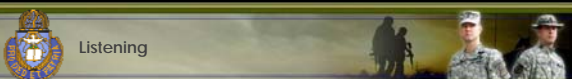


Listening

Sources of Anxiety

- ▾ The subject matter itself produces anxiety.
- ▾ The subject matter produces anxiety when this particular person talks about it.
- ▾ A particular person produces anxiety regardless of the subject matter.
- ▾ The anxiety is due to anticipatory dread.
- ▾ The anxiety is due to an inability to understand what the other person is saying.
- ▾ The anxiety is due to one’s awareness of differing points of view.
- ▾ The anxiety is due to the counselor’s current emotional or psychological health.

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Listening

Fear Behind the Anxiety

▾ Sudden or unexpected change	▾ Losing one’s boundaries
▾ Losing autonomy	▾ Being immobilized
▾ Being impoverished	▾ Being manipulated
▾ Being exposed	▾ Being abandoned
▾ Being closed-up	▾ Not being guided



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 Listening 

Discussion Questions

- ▾ How can the counselor's anxiety have a negative effect on the counseling and helping process?
- ▾ How can what a Soldier says create anxiety in the counselor or chaplain?
- ▾ What do you do in a session when you get anxious? For example, do you start talking more or do you start dominating the conversation by giving direct advice?
- ▾ Have you ever found yourself doing something in a counseling session that later you have to simply ask yourself, "What was I thinking?" or "What was that about?" or "What was the anxiety behind it?"



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Attitudes That Assist Good Listening

- ▾ Real listening means imagining yourself in the other's experience.
- ▾ Good listening requires a combination of three attitudes:
 - ▾ Attention
 - ▾ Appreciation
 - ▾ Affirmation


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Attitudes That Assist Good Listening: Attention

- ▾ Better listening does not begin with techniques. Instead, it starts with making a sincere effort to pay attention to what is going on in the conversation partner's private world of experience.


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Attitudes That Assist Good Listening: Appreciation

- One should assume, until proven otherwise, that the other person has a valid and valuable perspective on the problem or concern being discussed. The hardest situation in which to be genuinely appreciative is when the other's point of view is critical of oneself.
- Appreciative listening is often silent but never passive. It means focusing on the other and on what the other is saying. It often means asking questions for clarification and elaboration.

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Attitudes That Assist Good Listening: Affirmation

- Affirmation is one's understanding of what one has heard. Silence is ambiguous, so it is necessary that we communicate—with words—what we have understood the other person to be saying.



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 Listening

Conditions That Support Good Listening



- Accurate communication of empathy
- Respect for the other person in the helping relationship
- A manner of communication that is concrete and genuine
- Appropriate self-disclosure
- An ability to use confrontation when necessary
- A focus on the immediate

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 Listening 



QUESTIONS?

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 Listening 

PART 2:
A Theology of Presence



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 Listening 

Presence

- ▾ Presence is an awareness that you are there (fully present) to aid the Soldier.
- ▾ Authentic presence begins as an attitude on the part of the counselor. It includes:
 - ▾ Faith in God and that he is at work in the counselor and this person.
 - ▾ Patience with God's timing.
 - ▾ Confidence that this is not about you (the counselor).
 - ▾ An attitude of prayer or awareness of God's presence in the moment.



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The Culturally Capable Counselor

- ▾ The culturally aware counselors have a clear understanding of their own values and basic assumptions.
- ▾ Culturally aware counselors have a capacity for welcoming, entering into, and prizing other worldviews without negating their legitimacy. They are curious, respectful, and slow to pass judgment.
- ▾ Culturally aware counselors seek to find elements in parishioners' cultures that can give them strength to negotiate their current callings.



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 Listening 

The Culturally Encapsulated Counselor

- ▾ Compare that (the culturally capable counselor) to the culturally encapsulated counselor, which is a counselor who:
 - ▾ Tends to stereotype instead of getting to know the individuals.
 - ▾ Is unwilling or unable to learn how things can look differently to someone who has a different perspective.
 - ▾ Has usually failed to listen well.


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 Listening 

Four Levels of Cultural Awareness

1. Awareness of superficial or very visible cultural traits (stereotypes)
2. Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own
3. Awareness of the meanings of the cultural traits that contrast sharply with one's own
4. Awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider



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Discussion Questions

- What role does cultural awareness play in counseling efforts?
- Have you experienced a conversation in which understanding a culture played a role in effective communication? What happened?
- How would you describe presence?
- Can you describe a time you felt someone really "got" you and a problem you were going through, and then was able to be helpful without actually doing anything or giving advice?

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QUESTIONS?

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