

Active Listening Basics and Empathy Building

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CHICAGO
ILLINOIS
AHEC
network

A PROGRAM OF
HEALTH & MEDICINE

Active Listening

Acting on *What Matters* for Older Adults



CATCH-ON

A HRSA GERIATRIC WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Disclosures

Collaborative Action Team training for Community Health —
Older adult Network (CATCH-ON)

Mission: To unify academic, health, and community organizations and resources to prepare a geriatric collaborative practice-ready health workforce optimizing health while serving and improving person-centered health and wellness outcomes inside the walls of the clinic and into the community.

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Guidelines for Today's Presentation

- Participation is encouraged
- Confidentiality is important
- Respect each other's experiences and opinions
- Please complete evaluation at the end

Today's Goals

- Identify active listening strategies
- Apply active listening to common situations
- Describe advanced active listening skills
- Discuss strategies for conveying empathy

Let's Discuss

- How do you know that someone is listening to you?
- How do you feel when someone is listening to you?



Why do we want to actively listen?

- Improves overall communication
- Helps make connections stronger
- Helps you better communicate with families and providers
- Reduces stress and burnout

Communication Tips

- Speak slowly and clearly
- Use plain language
- Face the person you are talking with
- Be aware of any vision or hearing concerns
- Be patient

#1 Ask Open-Ended Questions

Ask questions that start with "what" and "how"

Why use this strategy?

To get more information

Example:

What did you do on Saturday?

How would you like me to sort this mail?



#2 Use Close-Ended Questions

Ask brief, close-ended questions

Why use this strategy?

To get a yes or no answer

Example:

Did you have a fun time at lunch with your aunt?

Are you in pain?



#3 Use Minimal Encouragers

Use brief, positive verbal phrases or gestures

Why use this strategy?

To show you are listening & encourage talking

Example:

“Really?”, “Oh!”, “Uh-huh,” nodding, raising eye brows



#4 Use Non-Verbal Communication

Use non-distracting nonverbal behaviors

Why use this strategy?

To show interest without using words

Example:

Eye contact, face the person who is talking,
tone of voice



#5 Use Silence

Know when to stay quiet in some conversations

Why use this strategy?

Allows person who is talking time to collect thoughts/share them.

Example:

....



#6 Re-statements

Repeat what you think the person said by paraphrasing what you heard

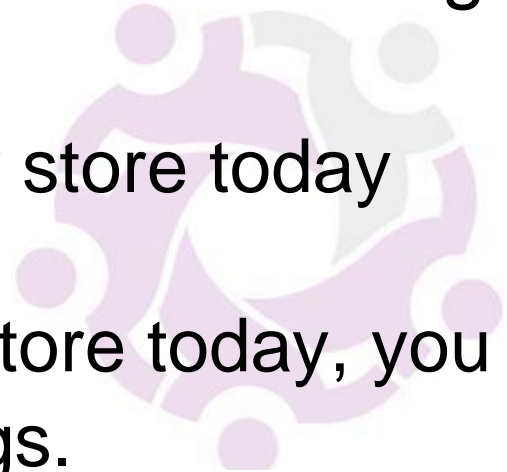
Why use this strategy?

Show you are listening and confirm understanding

Example:

Speaker: I have a lot to get the grocery store today including milk and eggs.

Listener: When you go to the grocery store today, you are going to pick up some milk and eggs.



#6 Summarize

Restate major ideas and feelings as you understood them at the end of conversation

Why use this strategy?

To recap main ideas and show understanding

Example:

"From what we have been talking about, it sounds like you would like to get some fresh air today and would like to start off the morning by going to the park."



Let's Discuss

- Which of the six active listening skills do you already use?
- How does the use of the skill help your communication with others?
- Which if the six active listening skills would you like to try using in the future?

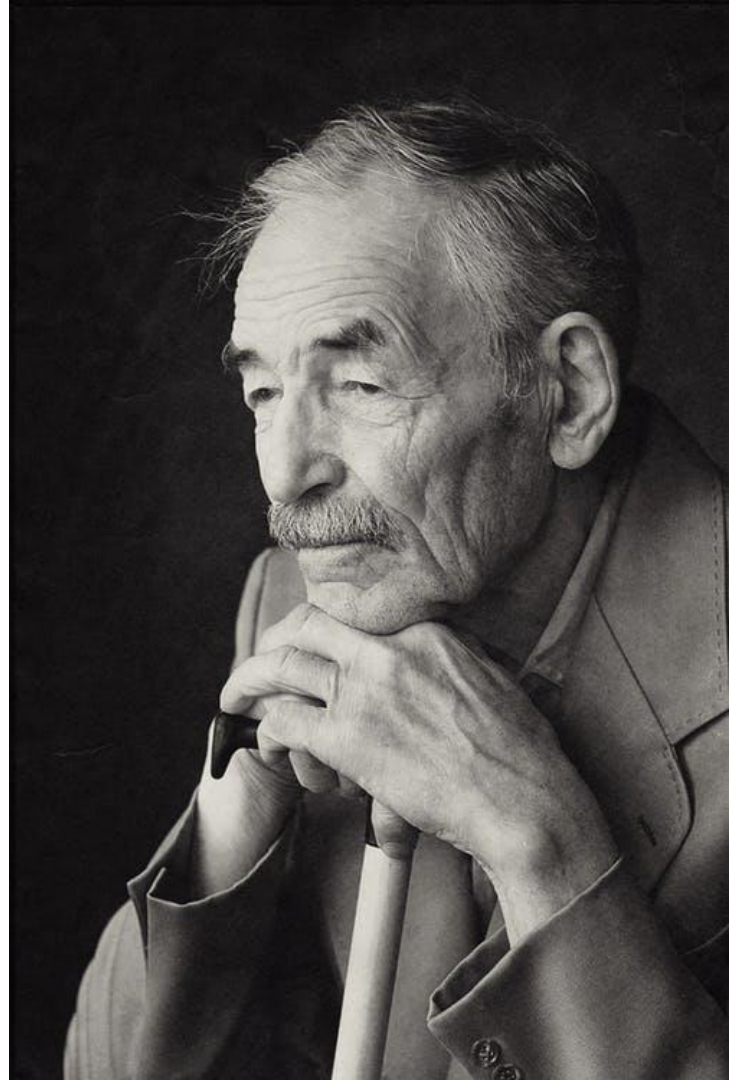


Let's Practice



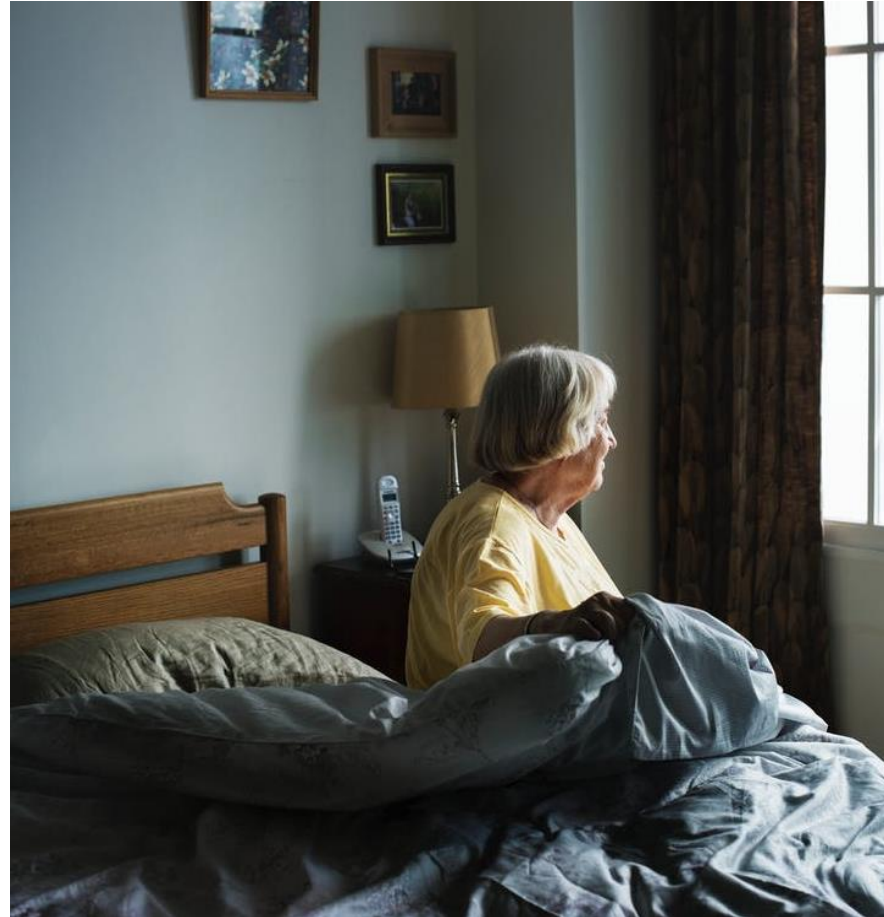
Scenario 1

- **Care Worker Marcus:** Hi, Diego
You doing okay? Do you need anything? Is that foot any better?
- **Diego:** It's okay...
- **Care Worker Marcus:** Good.
Glad you are feeling better.
Let me know if you need any help getting ready for the day.
- **Diego:** Okay...



Scenario 2

- **Margarita:** I don't want to get out of bed. Just give me the remote control.
- **Care Worker Joan:** The doctor wants you to get out of bed and move around.
- **Margarita:** Not now.
- **Care Worker Joan:** Dr. Jones is going to be very unhappy....



Scenario 3

- **Care Worker Lucy:** Time for lunch.
- **Edna:** I'm not really hungry.
- **Care Worker Lucy:** It's really important you eat. You need to keep your strength up. You can't do that if you don't eat.
- **Edna:** I don't know...I ---
- **Care Worker Lucy:** I'll just heat up these leftovers.



Let's Review

- Active listening
 - Improves overall communication
 - Helps make connections stronger
 - Helps improve communication with families and providers
 - Reduces stress and burnout
- Active Listening Skills
 - Open ended and closed ended questions
 - Minimal Encouragers
 - Non-verbal Communication
 - Silence
 - Restatements
 - Summarize



Advanced Active Listening Skills

Show Empathy and Sympathy

- **Empathy** is about putting your self in their shoes. When we are empathetic, we see the person's perspective, and are not judgmental.
- **Sympathy** is recognizing that someone is having a hard time and acknowledging it.

These differ in emotional response and time.



Fixing problems vs. Showing Empathy

- When people are upset, we naturally want them to feel better.
- We can feel helpless when we don't know what do to help.
- Actively listening and showing empathy is how we can help!



[Let's watch a short video](#)

•
Empathy

SYMPATHY



Video Discussion

- How does Brene Brown describe empathy?
- Although portrayed negatively in the video clip, when might sympathy be important when interacting with other people?
- How can we be empathetic while also maintaining our own emotional well-being?

Reflection

Reflections: Identify and label the emotion that is being conveyed by the person we are talking with.

Example:

“My headaches are really wearing on me and making it hard for me to work. I just can’t take it!”

Reflection: *“It sounds like your headaches are causing you a lot of frustration.”*

Validate

Validations: Acknowledge and connect with the individual's problems, issues, and/or feelings.

Example: "It is hard to get around when you are in pain."



Instead of this...

Try this!

Judging someone's emotions or reaction as good or bad, wrong or right

Try to understand where they are coming from by putting yourself in their shoes

Trying to fix someone's problems

Listen to what they have to say

"At least...(you have your health; you have a roof over your head)"

"I am sorry you are going through this."

"Don't worry," or, "Everything will be fine"

"This sounds like a really difficult time. I am glad you told me what is going on."

"Don't cry"

"Thank you for sharing your emotions with me. I am right here. "


"I understand. Let me tell you about what I have been through."

"I hear your frustration. Tell me more about how this has been affecting you."

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Additional Resources

The Power of Deliberate Listening

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A343tIP5iUA>

Want to help Someone? Shut Up & Listen

https://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen?referrer=playlist-listen_up

How to Truly Listen

https://www.ted.com/talks/evelyn_glennie_shows_how_to_listen?referrer=playlist-listen_up



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**We want to know
what you think!**



Thank you!

