

Expansive Listening

Try listening through these ways of listening one at a time.

Ways of Listening <i>Listen...</i>	Description
For the Big Picture	Listen for the whole, the interconnectedness, the intersection of systems; see the person and situation embedded within the many moving pieces; see the forest and the trees.
For Pain	To acknowledge its presence, without trying to fix it; to hear the raw emotions under the story.
With Humility	In front of the emotion, the experience, the other person; before the task of listening and responding; with vulnerability.
With Curiosity	Without an attachment to how you think things should be right now, without conjuring up the past or clinging to notions of the future. Be willing to be surprised. Let go of assumptions.
With Compassion	Suspending judgment of ourselves and others, appreciating and accepting that everyone makes choices based on their knowledge and skills and what makes sense given their histories and worldview.
With Confidence	In yourself, in your abilities to listen expansively and respond from that expansion; in the other person's abilities to solve their own problems.
For Relationships	For healthy relationships with others who might be resources; for untapped sources of strength and nourishment.
For Possibility	With the conviction that there are other ways that things that be; with belief that the other person can discover those ways; for unseen potentials.
With Hope	While being unattached to outcomes, but with deep conviction that transformational possibilities exist that we may not perceive.
With Love	With an open heart, with the knowledge that your heart will not break and that it can hold the pain and suffering of many; to be present with and understand the humanity of the person who speaks.

