

Skills Practice - Listener – your role (and Speaker)

Speaker

Choose something problematic that you would like to talk about for about 10 minutes. It needn't be a very deep or serious. You needn't tell the whole background of the situation – you can just start in with what you are feeling or what is problematic for you. Try to notice what you are feeling in your body as you talk.

Listener

Listen to what your partner says – take it into your body – and breathe

Take a slight pause after they have spoken and Say back what your partner has just said – using his or her words. Changing nothing except I into you.

Have an attitude of wanting to hear exactly

Do not add anything of your own:

No judgements

No agreeing or disagreeing

No suggestions

Listen for the next response

If the focuser says that's not exactly right – acknowledge the correction and say back again what you hear now.

When the focuser is on track stay out of the way.

Mostly just use the “echo” (verbatim words back) and refer to the sheet on Process guiding suggestions if you think it might be helpful. As you focus regularly with a partner they can let you know what they want or need you to do.

Some partners are completely in charge of their own process and some like you to guide them eg Perhaps you can ask that something in you..... what it needs, or wants or how it wants you to be with it. Or perhaps you can just be with that “something” now and keep it company in a gentle friendly way.

Notice how you are in this process. *“I want to start with the most important thing I have to say: the essence of working with another person is to be present as a living being. And that is lucky, because if we had to be smart, or good, or mature, or wise, then we would probably be in trouble. But, what matter is not that. What matter is to be a human being with another human being”* (Gendlin Lecture 2003). **(Adapted from Jane Quayle notes and Nada Lou taken from Gray and Marder eds 2009 p 6)**

Skills Practice – Observer - your role



Observers

Be present to the process of the Speaker and notice how you are as you witness the process. This is a similar role to that of the Listener, except you do not need to reflect the Speaker's words back, the listener will do that.

At the end of the session we want to protect the Speaker's process so we won't direct any questions to him/her. The Speaker is welcome to speak at any time if they wish to.

Turn to the listener and ask:

1. What do you think you did well?
2. Was there anything you might have done differently, were curious about or have a question about?

Next give your feedback to the Listener

Give your feedback to the Listener.

Give your feedback in terms of observation not evaluations. Using the same formula:

1. Something you liked
2. Something you might have done differently, were curious about or had a question about.

Note: it is important to acknowledge that there is always more than one right way. If the observer talks about something they might have done differently it doesn't imply that the Listener's response was wrong.