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Sacred Listening



#### How do you know if you are a good listener? Do you know when to offer advice? Here are the 3 qualities of sacred listening.

then we listen to someone who is confiding in us, they end up with

If we offered any well-meaning but unsolicited advice, we might have caused them to feel as if we couldn't possibly understand what they're experiencing.

Sacred listening happens when you recognize the inherent worth of the other person. You offer their jour time rather than theating their words as a disruption to your busy day. You don't approach a conversation with the desire to compose with them or prove who is water or who has suffered more. You don't implicitly will for them to puse see you can explice the words of the wor

If you're practiting sacred listening, you might end up offering the other person advice or alternative way of looking at a situation, but your advice is in their best interests, delivered harmfly and an acceptance that they may have trouble seeing things your way. You might together to agree to disagree.

register to eigene 10 dislignes. If you're is boss, you would be remiss if you didn't help it might be your job to give advice at times. If you're a boss, you would be remiss if you didn't help you're mightigwe how what you want them to do, given the circumstances. A parent must guide their children. A clinical psychologist or analyst may feel they have to offer some guidance at times too.

If you are giving advice, you can listen without interrupting and without mentally checking out so you can come up with what you want to say rather than turning in to what the other person is communicating verbally and nonverbally.

communicating versions and nonversions.

A long pause one commone stops speaking might open a door to a deeper revelation. Maybe this person is able to come up with a solution of their own, one that could be better than yours. By giving them the space to talk through a problem, you are sending the message that you are there for them, being supportive but not institute or necusion or controlling.

#### What Exactly Is Sacred Listening?

Sacred listening has qualities that ordinary listening lacks. In pa three major elements:

#### 1. Sacred listening respects people's autonomy.

The person who is confiding in you might not need you to come up with solutions, observations, and interpretations of events for them. Even if you're in an authority position, consider the value of appointing someone's process of coming to understand their experience their way and making a decision or taking action without you telling them what to do.

# 2. Sacred listening respects people's emotions.

Years ago, as part of my psychological training, I listened to a recording of a man having a conversation with his wife. She was taking about some experiences she'd had that bothered her and every cone in a wither hrusband would make an observation about what she said or offer suggestion in an attempt to be helpful.

"I know you want to help," she eventually said to him, "but I don't want your advice. I just want you to be quiet and lister."

She was expressing her emotions as she spoke and didn't want someone talking her out of them by pressuring her to be analytical—or correcting what she was telling him so that it was factually socruste. You may also feel tempted to say, "I understand how you feel" or "I feel your pain." In my experience, that sort of statement can sometimes come off as presumptuous. You are not them and can't truly know how it feels to be in their shoes.

So as you practice secred listening, be mindful of the nature of your responses. Are you clarifying? Exploring? Agreeing? Interpreting? Letting them know they've been heard?

I've sometimes said to a client, "I hear you. That sounds really tough."

responding, you can easy, it can image, on an among such a contracting the semanticist, Inguist, and English professor Samuel Hayakawa, Ph.D., wrote about how language can bridge a gap between people. If someone's looking out a window and it's raining, there's no practical need to say, "It's raining," They can see that.

However, that statement expresses a desire to connect with the other person. You might wan to brink about whether it's better to connect by asking a question, making an observation, restating something they said and asking if you heard them correctly, giving advice—or simply listering.

A long pause once someone stops speaking might open a door to a deeper revelation . . . By giving them the space to talk through a problem, you are sending the message that you are there for them, being supportive but not insistent on rescuing or controlling.

# 3. Sacred listening is timed well.

Once in a write, I may offer an interpretation, fying in what my client is currently dealing with to what's going on between us in our work or to what they experienced in the past when they felt the same emotions or were in a similar situation. I might comment on what some people do in situations like theirs or point out choices the person might not have thought about.

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Sometimes people confide in the because they are described to size of the confidence of the confidence

# Do You Hang in There?

Sacred listening demonstrates to others that you value them and what they have to say. That can help them find the courage to confide in you.

When they're finished confiding, they might be much more open to your insights and ideas than they were before.

### If they do withdraw from you out of embarrassment, you might

- Thank them for trusting you enough to be vulnerable with you.
  Reassure them that you value them and your relationship with them.
- Offer to do more sacred listening if that's what they need.

While they might continue to keep their distance, they might recognize that their trust in you was warranted and come to you again, this time for guidance or to work through a solution to the challenge they are facing.



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