

Did You Really Hear What I Said?

In today's world it is easy to not *really* listen to another person when they're talking. We may act like we are listening, but the truth is, we are not! It's not that we don't try to listen, it's that we have never been taught how to *truly* listen.

The majority of my day is based on listening to people. "Really" listening! So, you can imagine how I am at the end of the day when my husband gets the *rest* of me. I have to try really hard to give him my attention. And he can ramble on and on and his view and beliefs are very important to him. So, it is very important for me to give him my ear.

Many people can relate to this feeling. "I have to work all day and have little energy left to give to my family, especially when it comes to listening. There's dinner to be made and that never ending chore list." Listening comes last! Instead, demands are made, lists are gone over for the next day, and homework becomes a priority.

My advice to you is to take some time out of your day and truly listen to your loved ones. Listening is part of communicating by the way. And if you aren't truly listening, you're missing a big part of the conversation.

No need to worry though. I won't leave you hanging here. I do have some **tips**.

1.)When you get home from work make it a priority to take some time out for you. Whatever time you view as valuable will work such as exercising, taking a bath, reading a short story, meditating, or just being by yourself for a while. You cannot give yourself to others without first taking some time out for you. Especially when it comes to listening!

2.)True listening is taking the time to really listen to what a person is and isn't saying such as listening to your loved one's feelings, listening to their tone of voice in a conversation, and listening to their hopes and inspirations.

3.)Practice true listening by repeating what your loved one has just said back to them. For example, your husband states "I cannot believe my boss gave him a raise and he didn't give me one," and your reply is "It sounds like your upset that your boss didn't recognize your hard work."

4.)Dinner is a great time to catch up on everyone's life. Give each person a chance to ventilate about their day and give them as much attention as possible while their speaking. In addition, make sure the rest of the family is also paying attention to the one speaking. This gives each family member a feeling of importance and worthiness. Practice the "repeat listening" skill explained in #3.

5.)At the end of the night when everyone is going to bed, make sure your family members have shared everything they have needed too by asking and listening for the answer.

I know how difficult this is. Just practice and don't expect perfection. You are doing the best you can. Just keep an eye on your listening skills. Ask yourself before the night is over whether or not you have listened as much as you would have liked. And if you can do better, do better the next day.

About the Author

Brandy Shirley is a Mental Health Therapist helping individuals, couples, families, and groups build better communication skills, repair relationships, and improve self-esteem. Click [here](#) for more information.

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