



# MINDFUL LISTENING & COMMUNICATION

**When was the last time you felt truly seen and heard by someone?**

Can you remember what it felt like?

Perhaps you can remember a feeling of being cared about? Maybe you felt relaxed, calm and open?

**When someone gives us their undivided attention the message it sends is “I care, I’m here for you, I’m listening.”**

But that kind of attentiveness is quite rare these days.

When listening to another person, we are often there in body but not fully present. Very often, we are not truly listening to them.

**We are caught up in our own mind chatter.** We judge what they are saying, mentally agreeing or disagreeing, or we think about what we want to say next.

We sometimes interrupt, become impatient or just insert our own opinions instead of truly listening. And the people we often do this to the most are the people closest to us.

**One of the most simple and powerful practices I know of is mindful listening. We human beings are social creatures. We are always talking to each other. So we have a lot of opportunities to practice.**

Here’s the invitation- next time you’re with a loved one or co-worker, try using your time as an exercise in mindful listening. Simply see if you can give them your undivided attention. Really listen to what they’re saying. Give them a space to be seen and heard. Just like in meditation practice, if you find your mind wandering or judging what they are saying just gently bring your focus back to the listening.

**People appreciate it deeply when you truly listen to them.** You’ll also find that when it’s your turn to speak – it’s much more likely they’ll listen to you in the same way.

**The greatest gift you can give the people in your life is your attention**—in a world with so much disconnection and distraction, mindful listening gives you back the possibility of genuine connection, authenticity and love in your life. That’s why mindful listening truly is a radical act of sanity and love.

## **How to listen mindfully:**

- As difficult as it is, give yourself time.
- Tune in to yourself before listening. Be mindful of your own bodily sensations, thoughts, and feelings that invite you to go racing off thinking about what you must do and attend to next. These thoughts distract you from deeply attending to what the person is saying. Focus on your breath for 4 inhalations and exhalations.
- Listen from a position of empathy. You don’t have to agree with a person to acknowledge and see things from their point of view.
- Meditation practice is a great way of bringing you back to the present moment.