

Active & Empathetic Listening in Your Relationship

Use this worksheet to explore your listening habits and identify gentle ways to deepen connection in your communication.

1. Self-Check: How Do I Usually Listen?

Think of a recent conversation with your partner. What were you focused on during that moment?

Tick any that apply:

- ☐ I was trying to work out what I would say next
 - ☐ I felt defensive or misunderstood
 - ☐ I was distracted by my phone or environment
 - ☐ I was genuinely trying to understand their experience
 - ☐ I noticed their tone, body language, or unspoken emotion
 - ☐ I jumped in with advice or solutions
 - ☐ I allowed space for them to talk without interrupting
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2. Reflection Prompt:

What tends to get in the way of you listening empathically?

(e.g., stress, feeling blamed, being tired, multitasking, wanting to fix things quickly)

3. Building Awareness

Next time you notice yourself reacting or planning a reply mid-conversation, try pausing.

What could you say instead?

Some grounding phrases to try:

- “I really want to understand what you’re saying.”
- “It sounds like this was really important to you.”
- “I didn’t realise it felt that way — thank you for telling me.”
- “Can you help me understand more about that?”

➡ Write one you’d feel comfortable using:

4. Try It Out This Week

Choose one practice to focus on in your next conversation:

- ☐ Make eye contact and put away distractions
- ☐ Pause before responding
- ☐ Reflect back what you hear
- ☐ Acknowledge your partner’s feelings, even if you disagree
- ☐ Use an “I” statement if sharing your own perspective

What will you commit to trying?

5. What Did You Notice?

After trying one new listening approach, reflect on the experience:

- What felt different?
 - How did your partner respond?
 - How did you feel during or after the conversation?
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Remember

Empathic listening is a practice, not a perfection. The goal isn't to get it right every time — it's to show up with curiosity, care, and a willingness to grow together.