




VIDEO 11

— LISTENING A PERSON INTO LIFE:
HOW TO LISTEN WELL



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have to say much at all.
... We just have to listen
and be willing to step into
someone's world.

SUMMARY

In this 11th video, “Listening a Person into Life: How to Listen Well,” participants explore the process of active listening, the five levels of listening, and common barriers to listening. Listening well to another involves intentional body language, silence, and verbal/physical cues that demonstrate understanding. Good listening also requires empathy, which allows us to listen without applying the filter of our own experience, judgment, values, and needs. Listening well to another opens a beautiful space for the Holy Spirit to work in the situation.

OPENING PRAYER

Most Holy Trinity, we praise and thank you for loving each one of us into life. We ask for the grace to receive anew the gift of our own lives, that we may live deeply out of our true identity as your beloved sons and daughters. We pray that each person may know themselves as chosen and loved, willed into being from the very beginning of time and held in existence at every moment by your love. Father, we ask you to fill us with your light and renew us with your peace. Holy Spirit, we ask for the courage to speak your Word of life; may our actions, words, and thoughts serve to uphold and protect the dignity and worth of every person, and may our lives give radiant witness to the truth of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to share something that is meaningful to you. Sharing an experience of importance is deeply humanizing and encourages the formation of trust between individuals. These connections are essential for maintaining community.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

Describe a time in your life when you have felt unheard or misunderstood.

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INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

The suggested Scripture passages and questions are offered as aides to prayer. You are not required to answer every question or reflect on every Scripture passage, but should follow the promptings of God. You may spend all of the allotted time reflecting on just one passage from Scripture or one reflection question and not write down a single word, and that's okay!

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

JAMES 1:19

“Know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.”

LUKE 11:28

“But he said, ‘Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!’”

JEREMIAH 29:12

“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Was there a word, phrase, or idea that resonated with me? That was new to me?
2. Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* says, “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.” Is this how I listen in my day-to-day life? Honestly reflect on your listening tendencies. Looking at the 5 Levels of Listening, which level most accurately describes how I listen most of the time?
3. Do I take time to listen to God each day? Do I give myself time to be silent? Or am I constantly exposed to noise?
4. When have I felt listened to in my life? What effect did it have on me?
5. Sister Gianna Maria says, “When someone is in crisis or distress, or they are vulnerable, or sharing an intimate part of themselves, they deserve to be heard and understood. When we actually listen and understand someone this gives us the perspective we need to best help them out of their crisis!” How have I experienced this to be true in my own life and relationships?
6. Sister Amata Filia says, “Level 5 listening requires empathy. It shows that we don’t have to have all the answers, and sometimes we don’t even have to say much at all. ... We just have to listen and be willing to step into someone’s world.” Am I willing to step into someone else’s world, to try to see the world as they do? Am I willing to let Jesus step into my world? Will I give him permission to do so?
7. Is there a fruit from your prayer that you would like to share with others?

Steps of Listening

1. Attending
2. Following
3. Reflecting
4. Silence

Levels of Listening

- Level 1: Not Really Listening at All
- Level 2: Distracted Listening
- Level 3: Listening to Respond
- Level 4: Listening to Interpret in Our Own World
- Level 5: Empathic Listening

Barriers to Communication

1. Giving Advice too Soon
2. Agreeing and Disagreeing
3. Assurance
4. Adding Our Own Story
5. Asking Questions that Take the Speaker off Course

DISCUSSION

At the close of the time allotted for personal reflection, rejoin the group for discussion. This period of dialogue and conversation is intended to promote genuine understanding, reflection, and insight.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is there a fruit from your prayer that you would like to share with others?
2. The Sisters describe the four steps of listening as attending (showing someone we are present to them by our body language), following (demonstrating our attention through verbal cues), reflecting (described more in the next video), and silence (giving someone the space to respond). Have you thought about listening in this way before? Is it new to you? How does it resonate with you? Reflect on each of the steps. Are there ways you can apply these steps in your life? How would listening like this change your conversations and relationships?
3. Sister Amata Filia says, “Don’t give in to the temptation that we have to fill in every moment with more words! Pauses or silence in a conversation can be a powerful moment of just resting in what the other has said, showing empathy, or just giving us the opportunity to take it all in and to come up with a meaningful reply, not just one that is off the cuff.” What is your experience of silence in conversations? How can silence create a helpful space for deeper communication? Are you open to trying to make more room for silence in your conversations?
4. Sister Amata Filia says, “We never want to come across as that person who looks down on someone, giving our own one-sided perspective or advice, but as someone who understands the real struggles [others] are experiencing.” Why is empathy so important in listening well?
5. Untimely advice, agreement/disagreement, and assurance are three common barriers to communication. Which of these barriers am I most likely to engage in? How can these well-intentioned comments dissuade someone from sharing more? Have you ever had an experience like this yourself? Why is it so important to let someone “empty the bucket” before offering our own thoughts?



Pauses or silence in a conversation can be a powerful moment of resting in what the other has said, showing empathy, or giving us the opportunity to take it all in and to come up with a meaningful reply.



CLOSING PRAYER

*Jesus, we praise and thank you for your goodness and mercy.
We ask for an outpouring of your Spirit upon the whole world.
We pray that every person may powerfully encounter your love today,
and that all will come to know that life is a gift to be cherished and
protected. Please give us the peace, trust, and interior silence to be able
to listen deeply to the hearts of our brothers and sisters.*

*We ask this in your name as we pray: Glory be to the Father, to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.*

Amen. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Life, pray for us.

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