

Compassionate Listening



Presence in Conversation

Managing our own beliefs, biases, and judgements is critical in allowing deep presence in a conversation.

These beliefs, biases, and judgements show up as “needs” and often the person we are in conversation with can feel these.

Look at the list below, think and journal about real life examples of how people’s “needs” can lessen the joy and flow in communication—how it can stymie your compassionate response.

Some of these needs include:

1. The need to fix the problem, or improve the situation.
2. The need to be of service and value.
3. The need to be liked.
4. The need to not have too much silence in the conversation.
5. The need to have the person be somewhere further along their path.
6. The need to look like you know what you’re talking about.
7. The need not to have the other person feel bad or uncomfortable.
8. The need to be “right”.

Can you think of other needs that sometimes arise in conversations?

When we’re in our judgement or “needs”, the energy in the conversation drops and the joy in the interaction drops. We may feel lower energetic emotions like confusion, frustration, irritation, and boredom. When we are in the higher energetic levels we are more likely to be “tapped into” infinite wisdom and can then share from that place.

Here’s what to do:

1. Watch this short video about deep compassionate listening [HERE](#)?
2. Ask a friend to have a conversation about an issue that is arising for them in their lives (not the deepest and most difficult issue, but something they would like to bounce off someone). Share this sheet and the video with them.

Let your friend speak first and practice deep compassionate listening.

Notice what “needs” show up for you, what perceptions. Be aware of these perceptions then return to a place of curiosity. Say to yourself, “*I don’t know what’s going on for this person, I will simply be present.*” (I won’t try to fix them, scoff at them, or make them feel uncomfortable).

3. After about 5 or so minutes, reverse the roles and repeat the exercise.

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4. Share anything either of you noticed during the exercise, particularly if you noticed any "needs" showing up.
5. Journal your reflections and see if you can slip some compassionate listening into your conversations every day.



"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view ... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

~ Atticus Finch ~

(To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee)

