

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

The Art of Listening

A place to practice curiosity, accurate reflection, and fair disagreement. You may pass on any prompt.

PAUSE	HEAR	ASK	REFLECT
Notice your defense	Find the meaning	Replace assumptions	Check accuracy

Core message: Listen to learn - not to prepare a defense while the other person is talking.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

Community or chapter: _____

My intention for this session

Your choice: You are welcome to speak, listen, write privately, or pass. Respectful participation never requires personal disclosure.

Our Shared Commitments

1. Listen to learn, not to win.
2. Do not build a defense while another person is talking.
3. Speak from your own experience.
4. Ask before you assume, and reflect back before you challenge.
5. Challenge ideas without attacking a person's dignity, intelligence, faith, or motives.
6. Make room if you speak often; take room if you usually stay quiet.
7. Stories stay private; lessons may be carried forward.
8. Anyone may pass, pause, or step out.

Which commitment may be hardest for me, and what will help?

The 270 Story: Invisible Knowledge

"One day I told Anita that when an airplane turns to a heading of 270, it is turning west. I said 180 means south. Anita looked at me and said, 'Speak English.' I was surprised because I honestly assumed everyone knew what 270 meant. To test my assumption, I asked my Sunday School class. Not one person knew. The problem was not that they were not listening. The problem was that I was speaking from knowledge I had gained through aviation and treating it as if it were common knowledge." - Brent

Lesson: Familiar knowledge can become invisible to the person who has it. Ask instead of assume. Unfamiliarity is not unwillingness or lack of intelligence.

What knowledge, language, or local history do I sometimes assume everyone knows?

When have I felt left out because someone used unexplained knowledge or shorthand?

One question I can ask instead of assuming

Listen to Learn: PAUSE - HEAR - ASK - REFLECT

PAUSE

Notice your urge to interrupt, correct, solve, or rehearse. Take one breath and let the speaker finish the thought.

HEAR

Listen for more than facts. What value, fear, hope, experience, or consequence seems important to the speaker?

ASK

Use a genuine question: 'What led you to that view?' 'What does that word mean to you?' 'Can you give me an example?'

REFLECT

Offer the meaning back: 'What I hear is...' Then ask, 'Did I get that right?' Let the speaker correct you.

My early warning signs that I am building a defense

A reset phrase I can use

Paired Practice - Round A

Speaker: _____

Listener: _____

Topic: _____

Facts or experiences I heard

Values, hopes, fears, or consequences I heard

My reflection: 'What I hear you saying is...'

The speaker's correction or addition

Paired Practice - Round B

Speaker: _____

Listener: _____

Topic: _____

Facts or experiences I heard

Values, hopes, fears, or consequences I heard

My reflection: 'What I hear you saying is...'

The speaker's correction or addition

Fair-Disagreement Map

Rule: Do not state your disagreement until the other person says your summary is fair. Understanding is not agreement, and fair is not the same as neutral about harm.

My view and the value or concern underneath it

The other person's view - stated in words that person recognizes

One point of agreement or shared value

One honest disagreement

One fact, experience, or question we still need to explore

Take-Home Practice

Within the next seven days, choose one conversation where understanding matters more than winning.

Person or situation (keep private details private):

Before: What defense am I likely to build?

During: What question helped me replace an assumption?

After: What did I learn that I did not know before?

What did I summarize well, and what correction did I receive?

My next listening step

Optional Founder's Christian Reflection

Optional - participation is never required: People of every faith and people of no faith are welcome. You may consider this reflection, connect it with your own beliefs or experience, use the quiet for personal reflection, or pass. No explanation is required.

"I believe God is always present, much like the sun. The sun keeps shining during the day, while our part of Earth turns into night, and behind clouds that block our view. The sun has not changed even when I cannot see it. My position, the conditions around me, or my perspective have changed. In the same way, I believe God does not leave us when life is dark, painful, or confusing. Our view can be limited while God's presence remains. I offer this from my Christian faith, not as a test and never as pressure on anyone else." - Brent

When have circumstances limited what I could see without changing what was true?

What helps me stay open when pain, uncertainty, or perspective clouds my view?

How could humility about my limited view change the way I listen?
