



STAYING PRESENT AS A LISTENER

GOOD LISTENING IN A TIME OF TRAUMA OR GRIEF

DO

- Clear your mind of mental distractions.
- Listen beyond the immediate words and when you respond, use open ended questions. (i.e. What was that like? How did that feel?)
- Listen for key words in the statement before asking any questions.
- Limit questions and responses.
- Be silent in an active way.
- Ask for clarification only when it is necessary to understanding in order to listen better.
- Stay with the intent even when the manner of speaking is not the best or when you do not agree with their perspective.
- Respond by restating some of what was said in your own words before offering anything -else.
- Use eye contact.
- Pay attention to body language - yours and theirs. Yours should somewhat match.
- Honor the sentiment just as it is without judgement.
- Be willing to be changed by confronting and accepting your own limitations.
- Let silence be a healer.
- Participate in the experience but do not guide it.

GOOD LISTENING IN A TIME OF TRAUMA OR GRIEF

DON'T

- Offer advice.
- Offer philosophical or theological reasoning.
- Tell a personal story.
- Offer cliches.
- Interrupt silence just for the sake of speaking.
- Ask detail questions.
- Plan what to say ahead while they are speaking.
- Anticipate - instead, listen fully even though you think you know what will be said.
- Immediately offer tissues while they are crying; Let the tears just be, as appropriate.
- Make hasty interpretations.
- Do more talking than the sharer.

Source: Community of Hope International Training
Module 4 - Listening Skills

"It's about the skills and the practices of the spiritual life that prepares each one of us to be open to the other...to believe and trust that the hospitality of the Christian faith is to look for the Christ in the other person, and as we approach them to serve them and in humility provide ministry to them. Our prayer is that the stranger will receive us and look for the Christ in us."

*Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg
Founder of Community of Hope International*

To learn more about equipping people to serve in all forms of pastoral ministry visit our website.

www.cohinternational.org