



Listen



Listening is an incredible gesture . . . it shows you care, it shows respect, and it shows you are a true friend. Have you ever noticed how talkers can be exhausting to be around because they require so much of everyone? Listeners are pleasant to be around because they allow others to open up, share, and be heard. If you become a good listener, you'll gain the trust of the person you're listening to, you'll form a bond, and you'll become friends.

Listening is more than just hearing what a person is saying. It is understanding. Reacting. Commenting. Being an active participant in the conversation is an important part of listening.

Tips for being a good listener:

- look at someone when they are talking to you
- give them your undivided attention (with no restlessness or distractions)
- keep your mind concentrated on what they are saying, rather than letting your mind wander
- refrain from interrupting the person talking
- body language tells the person whether you are listening or not . . . are you turned toward or away from them? are your facial expressions in sync with what they are saying?
- finish listening before formulating your response . . . it is easy to start thinking about what you're going to say next before your friend is done talking

“We should all know this: that listening, not talking, is the gifted and great role, and the imaginative role. And the true listener is much more beloved, magnetic than the talker, and he is more effective and learns more and does more good.” —*Brenda Ueland*