

Homework - Practising your listening skills

A. Listen to happiness - Rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15)

- Find a partner.
- Think of a happy moment in your childhood that you could describe briefly.
- Take it in turns to tell your happy stories to each other.
- If you are the listener: Give appropriate eye contact.
- Sum up what the speaker says by repeating their story in your own words.
- Ask curious questions that invite the speaker to share more details.
- Listen with your heart for any emotions. Identify and name them.
- Eg. Wow! That was amazing! - I'm so glad that happened to you! – That must have been a lot of fun!

B. Listen to sadness - Mourn with those who mourn (Romans 12:15)

- Find a partner.
- Think of a sad or challenging moment in your childhood that you could describe briefly.
- If you are the listener: Give appropriate eye contact.
- Sum up what the speaker says by repeating the story in your own words.
- Ask curious questions that invite the speaker to share more details.
- Listen with your heart for any emotions. Identify and name them. That sounds frustrating. How disappointing!
- Identify any relational needs expressed in the story – the child's need for affection, acceptance, attention, appreciation, comfort, encouragement, respect, security, support, being valued, etc.

C. Telephone listening practice

- Find a partner in your listening team.
- Take it in turns to call each other unexpectedly.
- The caller pretends to be someone calling the listening service with a concern – it can help if you pretend to be someone you already know.
- The listener uses the sample script to guide the conversation.
- After the call has ended, discuss what went well and how the response could be even better.

D. Everyday listening

- Every day you are listening to the people around you.
- Use these natural opportunities to practise your listening skills.
- It may help you to focus on one skill at a time, especially one of the skills that you might usually find more difficult.
- The better listener you are, the less arguments you are likely to have, and the more caring you will become!

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