



Quality listening reduces anxiety, improves satisfaction, enhances compliance and has been correlated with improved health outcomes.

What is Active Listening?

When a listener intentionally uses body language, tone of voice and word choices to help a speaker feel heard and understood.

Essential Ingredients:

Empathy is understanding, being aware of and sensitive to the feelings and emotions of your patients or a family member.

"It sounds like you're feeling.....is that right?"

Respect can be shown by hearing the patient and allowing them to express their thoughts thoroughly without interruption.

"What do I need to know about you that will help me take care of you?"

Presence is being attentive to the needs of a patient or family member & offering your whole self to be with them in that moment.

"I'm just going to sit here quietly with you for a moment if that's okay."

Active Listening Techniques

Pay attention	focus solely on the patient, listen to their body language as well as their non-verbal signs - like pauses or facial expression.
Show you are listening	tilt your head slightly when listening, nod appropriately, smile when appropriate, and encourage the speaker to continue.
Provide feedback	reflect what is being said by paraphrasing, asking questions to clarify and summarizing comments to validate that the message has been understood.
Respond when appropriate	allow the speaker to finish speaking without interrupting or formulating your response while the patient is still speaking.
Defer judgment	aim to gain information and perspective without jumping to conclusions, treat the speaker as you would wish to be treated.

The Benefits of Active Listening:

- Helps you learn more from the conversation.
- Helps the speaker be certain that he or she is understood.
- Encourages the speaker share information that may be crucial to outcomes.
- Fosters empathy.
- Builds rapport.
- Helps to establish trust and credibility.
- Validates and helps to de-escalate strong feelings and emotions.



This Practical Wisdom Adapted from:

Brown, P. & Yessis, J. (2008). Listening for excellence in patient-centered care. *NRC Picker Quarterly White Paper*.

Retrieved from <http://www.nrcpicker.com/testimonials-resources/resources/>

Simpson, M., Buckman, R., Stewart, M., Maguire, P., Lipkin, M., Novack, D., & Till, J. (1991). Doctor-patient communication: The Toronto consensus statement. *British Medical Journal*, 303(6814), 1385-1387. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1671610/>