



ACTIVE LISTENING STRATEGIES IN THE TECH AGE

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AGENDA

- Need, Basis, Specific Skills
 - Integrate Skills (Partner Activity)
-
- Caress Skill
 - Review Barriers
 - Four Types of Listeners
 - Culmination (Small Group Activity)

NEED FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING

BOMBARDED BY INFORMATION

- With the internet, TV and smart phones we now receive 5X the information we received in 1986
- Every day, the average person sends 6 newspapers worth of information vs. 2 ½ pages 24 years ago
- The average person checks their device 85 times a day, spending ~five hours on the web and using apps
- This equates to about 1/3 of a person's awake time and is twice as often as many people self-assess

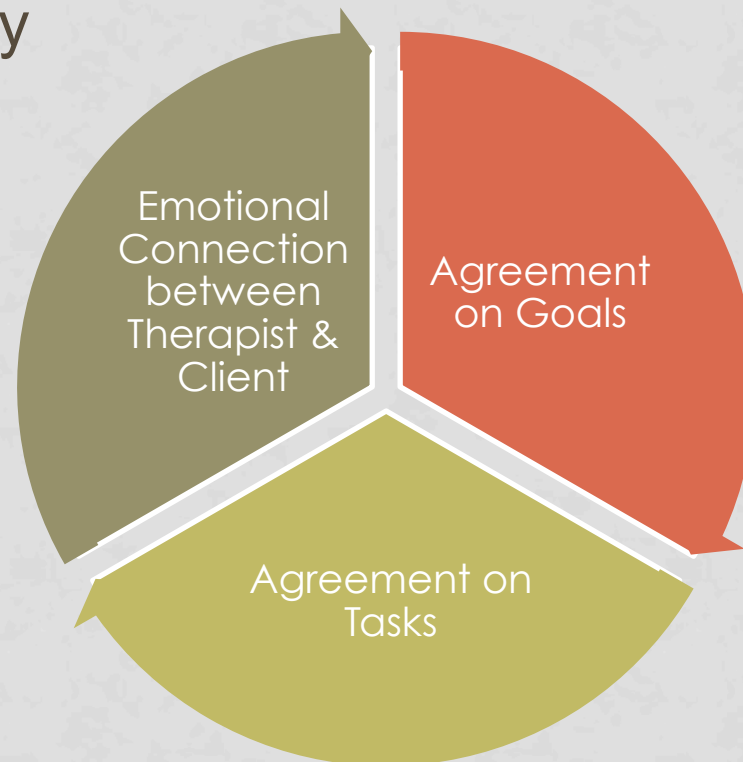
WHY PARTNERSHIPS FAIL

- Poor Communication
- Financial Problems
- Lack of Commitment
- Dramatic Change in Priorities
- Infidelity

(American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 2006; J. Brody. *Communicating: How We Form, Maintain, and Destroy Our relationships*, 1981; Burns, D. *The All-Hits, No-Misses Way to Get What You Want. Communication Vital, Marriage Study Finds*, Grit. 1982; Lucas, *Skills: Listening is a Learned Art*; Nichols & Stevens. *Are You Listening?*; Porter, S. *Poor Listening Is Big Problem for Businesses*; Carl Rogers and F.J. Roethlisberger. *Barriers and Gateways to Communication*. Harvard Business Review, 1952)

WORKING ALLIANCE & COLLABORATION

- Working Alliance: Necessary condition requiring collaboration to enact change across all forms of psychotherapy



(Bordin, 1979; Horvath & Greenberg, 1989, 1994; Horvath & Symonds, 1991)

They've Learned...Will We?

- A Poor Listener = A Poor \$ale\$person
- Executives rank active listening as most critical managerial competency¹
- Over 60% provided listening training²
 - Delta Airlines, Ford, Honeywell, IBM, Pillsbury, Pepsi, Campbell's, Bank of America, Xerox, Pfizer, General Electric, Pitney Bowes, Dun and Bradstreet, AT&T, 3M

¹Academy of Certified Administrative Managers, ²Training Directors of Fortune 500 Industrial and Fortune 500 service corporations

ACTIVE LISTENING & ATTENDING BEHAVIORS

TERMINOLOGY

- Kinesics: Postures, gestures, nods, legs
- Tactile: Touching
- Paralanguage: Vocal cues: rate, pitch, quality, volume, pauses
- Chronemics: How time affects communication
- Proxemics: Use of distance
 - Impersonal space, personal space, intimate personal space
- Channel: How message gets to the receiver
 - The more channels that carry the message, the better

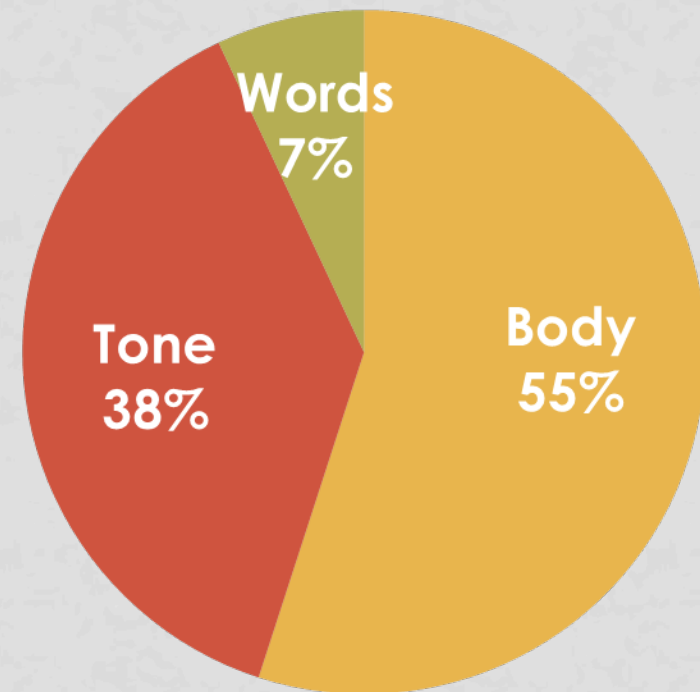
TERMINOLOGY CONTINUED

- Verbal: What you say
 - Let others know something
 - Convince others of an opinion
 - Want information from others
- Nonverbal: How you say it
 - Convey attitude
 - Convey feelings

IMPORTANCE OF NONVERBALS

- Send two messages all the time
 - Verbal
 - Nonverbal
- If the messages contradict, nonverbal always wins!
 - Learn to sense the nonverbal message
 - Understand the importance of body language & tone

Message Delivery



THE SEVEN GUIDELINES

**Maintain Good
Eye Contact**

**Lean Forward
Slightly**

**Reinforce with
Nodding &
Paraphrasing**

**Clarify by
Asking
Questions**

**Actively Move
Away from
Distractions**

**Be Committed
to
Understanding**

**Listen Without
Judging**

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY!

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**“I read someplace that eye contact
is a very important business skill.”**

PARAPHRASING

- Restating message, but with fewer words
- Purpose: Test your understanding of what's being heard and communicate your attempt to understand
- When listening, ask yourself:
 - What is client's basic **thinking** message?
 - What is client's basic **feeling** message?
- Successful Paraphrasing: Indicates client's verbal exploration is being followed and the basic message understood

PARAPHRASING EXAMPLES

Cl: I just don't understand—he tells me to do something and when I do it, he says it's wrong.

Prac: I see. He really confuses you.

Cl: I really think she understands me. It's like we're married to the same man.

Prac: You two have really connected, then.

CLARIFYING

- Process of bringing vague material into sharper focus
- Purposes:
 - Untangle unclear/wrong listener interpretations
 - Get more information
 - Identify what was said
- Clarifying Starters:
 - Let me see if I've got this right...
 - I'm really trying to get what you're saying...
 - I'm confused, I think your saying that...
 - I've heard a lot from you, let me see if I've got it all...

PERCEPTION CHECKING

- Request for verification of your perceptions
- Purposes:
 - To give and receive feedback
 - To check out your assumptions
- Perception Checking Starters:
 - Let's make sure I'm understanding what you're saying...
 - So if I've gotten all this, then you're saying...
 - What I'm hearing is that...

SUMMARIZING

- Purposes:
 - Give a sense of movement and accomplishment in the exchange
 - Establish a basis for further discussion
 - Pull together major ideas facts, and feelings
- Summarizing Starters:
 - Many good points have been raised at this evening's support group. Let's take a few minutes to go over them and write them on the board.
 - We're going all over the map this session. If I understand you correctly...
 - The two major challenges in the relationship were...

PRIMARY EMPATHY

- Relation of content and feelings
- Purposes:
 - Show you're grasping the client's experience
 - Allow client to evaluate his/her feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else
- Basic Formula: You feel (state feeling) because (state content)
 - Client: "I don't want his family to hate me, but I think I turned them off somehow last Thanksgiving and know we're going back for Christmas."
 - Therapist: "You're worried because you're not sure of how this is going to turn out."

PRIMARY EMPATHY EXAMPLES

- You're scared of losing Tyler because of what you shared about your past relationships.
- You're frustrated because people aren't believing your side of the story...
- You're lonely because you haven't ever been away from Ava before...

ADVANCED EMPATHY

- Reflection of content and feeling at a deeper level
- Purpose: Attempt to gain understanding of possible deeper feelings
- Examples:
 - I get the sense you're really angry about what was said, but I am wondering if you also feel a little saddened by it.
 - You said you've forgotten about your old friends since starting job corps, but I wonder if you might be a little lonely.
 - I see. You're saying you're glad to be in services here, but part of me also wonders if you might also be a little upset about something.

GROUP ACTIVITY: DYADIC CONVERSATIONS



CARESS SKILL

CARESS

- **Concentrate:**
 - Eliminate external noise
 - Mentally paraphrase to prevent daydreaming
 - Where eyes focus, ears follow
 - Deep breathing
- **Acknowledge:**
 - Verbal responses and vocal prompts
 - Smiling, nodding
 - Leaning forward
 - Appropriate facial expressions and body language

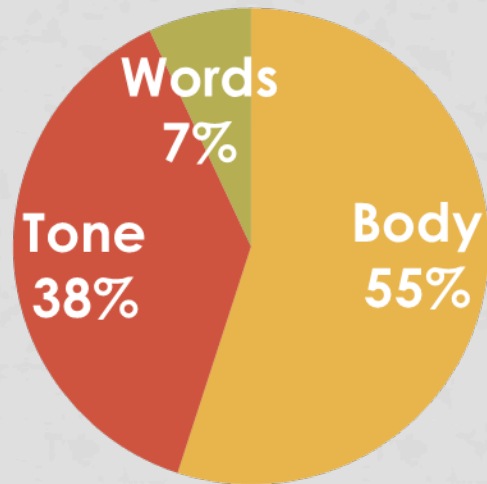
Allesandra and Hunsaker

CARESS

- **Research**
 - Keep conversation flowing two ways
 - Participation essential: Feedback, comments
 - Information imbalance
 - Speaker becomes uncomfortable, tense, suspicious
- **Exercise Emotional Control**
 - When an emotional reaction begins, an almost irresistible tendency to interrupt (block) follows. Can be prompted by:
 - Dress, speech patterns, loaded words, idiosyncrasies
 - Techniques to counteract blocking:
 - Pause (take long deep breath)
 - Think about commonalities
 - Visualize a calm you
 - Wait until entire message is received before responding

CARESS

- **Sense the nonverbal message**
 - Understand vocal, visual words
 - Message meaning <10 = words



- **Structure**
 - Organize info (make sense out of) as you receive it
 - Improves retention
 - Aids understanding

Allesandra and Hunsaker

BARRIERS TO ACTIVE LISTENING

5 BARRIERS TO ACTIVE LISTENING

1. It's very hard work
 - Physically more demanding
 - Concentrating on other person instead
2. Over-stimulation
 - Competition for our attention
 - We screen out info we deem irrelevant
3. Need to act fast
 - We think we we're psychic
 - We jump in, not taking time

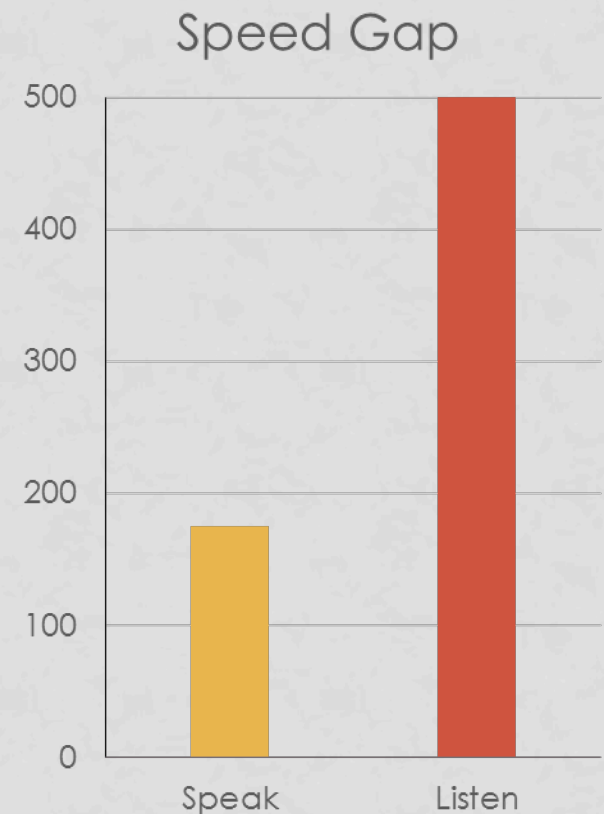
5 BARRIERS TO ACTIVE LISTENING

4. Lack of training

- Speaking, reading or writing combined
- No formal education in listening

5. Speed Gap

- We speak 135-175 words per minute
- We can process 400-500 words per minute when listening
- Jump to conclusions, daydream, plan reply or arguments



FOUR TYPES OF LISTENERS

NON-LISTENER

- Does not hear speaker at all
- Demonstrates fake attention
- Desires to do most of the talking
- Repeatedly interrupts
- Must have last word

Know-it-all, insensitive and not understanding

MARGINAL LISTENER

- Hears the words, but not meaning and intent
- Occupied with preparing what to say next
- Distracted by own thoughts and environment
- Listening only for the bottom line

Doesn't listen; simply waits to talk

EVALUATIVE LISTENER

- Actively tries to hear
- Doesn't make effort to understand speaker's intent
- Evaluates message strictly on basis of words
- Ignores intonation, body language, facial expressions

Most everyday and casual conversations

ACTIVE LISTENER

- Conveys determination
- Most comprehensive and powerful level
- Most demanding and tiring level
- Concentration on thoughts/ feelings
- Suspends own thoughts/feelings
- Sends verbal and nonverbal affirmation

Speaker feels understood; message is absorbed

GROUP ACTIVITY: FOUR TYPES OF LISTENERS



Thank you!



“Listen hard, talk straight -Frederick F. Reichheld

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