

active listening

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Submission date: 04-Jul-2020 12:27PM (UTC-0700)

Submission ID: 1353430288

File name: active_listening_reflection.docx (19.83K)

Word count: 1097

Character count: 5621

Active Listening Exercise Reflection

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The active listening assignment was both fun and interesting. I never really paid attention to whether I am an active listener and if I use it in my personal and work life. Quite honestly, I think it varied if I used it when my emotions are high, I tend not to be an active listener. This assignment made me look at different perspectives of active listening what it means and how others perceive me. The exercise showed me I have never taken the time to realize whether I am an active listener, I always thought that I was a good listener but being an active listener is more to it. The exercise showed me that that I try to find out what the real problem is, I ask questions and I try to problem solve by throwing out suggestions. I realize that I am very curious, which make me ask a lot of questions, I reiterate to ensure I am receiving the information correctly.

I have realized this is a challenge for me because of my emotions depending on how I handle my emotions to determine if I am actively listening. This is something I want to change; I want to be able to always actively listen. This was eye-opening for me to learn that I'm not the active listener I thought I was and that I have much more to learn. The conversation with Chrissy and Santino was great, they both had interesting stories. In one of the role-play session's Chrissy talked about her job and how they had mandatory meetings, and no one would wear their mask, she felt very uncomfortable and did not want to attend these meetings. I was the listener I asked Chrissy did she ever suggest having a virtual meeting, mentioning that they should adhere to the mayor concerning being 6ft away/social distancing and wear a mask. Chrissy stated she didn't make any suggestions for everyone the risks and were not adhering to it. Santino stated that I did a great job by asking questions, reiterating some of what Chrissy mentioned, and giving suggestions. "Attributes of successfully listening and that was to be curious. (Stone, Patton, Heen. P. 189).

By asking questions I was able to uncover that Chrissy was very worried and uncomfortable because she has a son with underlining issues, which she wanted to be extra safe and not by any chance bring home anything. I asked these questions to get a better understanding of where Chrissy was coming from and if her coworkers knew how much it bothered her. My curiosity to participate in the active conversation and participation in the discussion increased my level of understanding of the importance of creating awareness to others on the important aspects I learned from the conversation, and which I consider worth sharing.

I realized that when you find it hard to listen to certain people or to participate in a certain conversation as I was at the beginning of the conversation, the moment you develop curiosity in the conversation you simply create a relief. It enables you to slow down, relax, and get better into the conversation by simply relying on your sense of curiosity. However, I learned that you first have to be aware of your tendencies, that is, how you usually listen to improve your listening mastery. However, I realized that there is also a need to create a listening framework that helps in regulating your level of curiosity and keeping your listening intentions within the topic conversation.

Curiosity drives interest. This was well displayed in the many random questions I kept on asking all through the conversation. The high level of curiosity drove me into paying attention to my thoughts through internal listening, focused on the meaning being communicated in the conversation (empathy), and hence was able to ask questions which continued the thread of relating the topic to myself. I remained open-minded on my interpretation of the intentions of both Chrissy and Santino, hence I was able to acknowledge their feeling and avoided leap from impacts of their intentions. I realized that after understanding the intents of both Chrissy and Santino, I was able to

reevaluate their ideas, thoughts, and perceptions and negotiate with my feelings, and effectively avoid judgments and blames, (Richards, 2010).

Having an interest in the conversation also helped me have the best understanding of the feelings and experiences of both Chrissy and Santino. The experiences with these two speakers drove me through the issues in the conversation and most importantly turned me into an act of wanting to have a similar conversation with the world. Chrissy inspired my inner empathy, getting a better understanding and experience throughout the conversation. This taught me the importance of being mindful of the concept of active listening in daily life activities since mindfulness is mostly linked to ethics and compassion of others which would enable me to understand their positions better. Since the benefits of empathy are enormous, I should, therefore, make it part of my daily activities and live.

However, I also learned that there is a level/depth of empathy required for compassion. Through how Chrissy narrated her stories, I experienced a deeper and stronger feeling of connection to the outcome of the conversation which was beyond meditation and which drove me to the idea of having/sharing the same conversation with other people. This was driven by the ability of Chrissy to be assertive enough to articulate and advocate the interests in her stories and most effectively develop expertise along the dimensions of empathy and assertiveness in her stories, (Mnookin, *et al*, 1996).

In conclusion, the experience in the active listening exercise was an educative, interesting, and informative experience. I learned that developing interest is the most basic step in having an active listening experience even in difficult conversations. Interest will help you ask questions, which will also create room for creating empathy with the narrators as they answer the questions.

Once you have understood the feelings and interests of the narrators/speakers, then you can have a successful conversation since you have known and understood the intentions of one another.

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