

Personal Growth Series

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Listening

It has been said that poor listening is often the cause of interpersonal issues and conflicts. People often cite feelings of alienation or being put down whenever they perceived that the conversation is one-sided.

If listening is such an essential communication skill, then why do few people concern themselves with it? One possible reason is that people misconceived listening as a passive (or even uninteresting) function in a conversation. The same people may perceive that providing verbal response is more important than offering the other party 'a listening ear'. But effective listening has vast benefits – at work, at home or at play, and they include better relationship and productivity. So it will be prudent to make listening a lifelong skill to master.

SUTD Wellbeing Services offers professional counselling services for students in a private and confidential setting.

If you would like to see a Counsellor to discuss any issue or challenge, please email us at wellbeing@sutd.edu.sg.

One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say. *Bryant H. McGill*

Tips on developing listening skills more effectively:

- ❖ People often associate listening with dispensation of advice or opinion, but this is not the principal thing. A good listener mainly pays attention to what the speaker is saying, rather than focus on what suggestion to provide.
- ❖ Listening to someone does not mean that you have to agree or consent to what the other party is saying, but it does require you to respect the person's thoughts and feelings.
- ❖ Offering the other party your undivided attention requires you to put aside anything that may distract you. This could lessen the possibility of misinterpreting and misunderstanding what the person is saying.
- ❖ Most of us would appreciate being heard rather than being told what to do. Thus, the proverbial saying, "Do to others as you would have them do to you" would apply to listening just as well.

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