

## Are You a Good Listener?

21 WAYS TO TELL

In a world where communication happens at the speed of light and we feel more "connected" after a 140-character tweet—listening is a dying artform. Few of us possess the time or the training to receive the stories of those around us. Unfortunately this means people are withering around us. They carry their lives tucked deep within them, and long for somebody (anybody!) to ask for and absorb what's on their minds, what makes up their lives.

So we've created a brief inventory to help identify some strengths and weaknesses of your personal listening style. Again, it's an artform. So expect to need a lot of practice! But don't let that stand in the way of you taking a few definitive steps to loving better through listening.



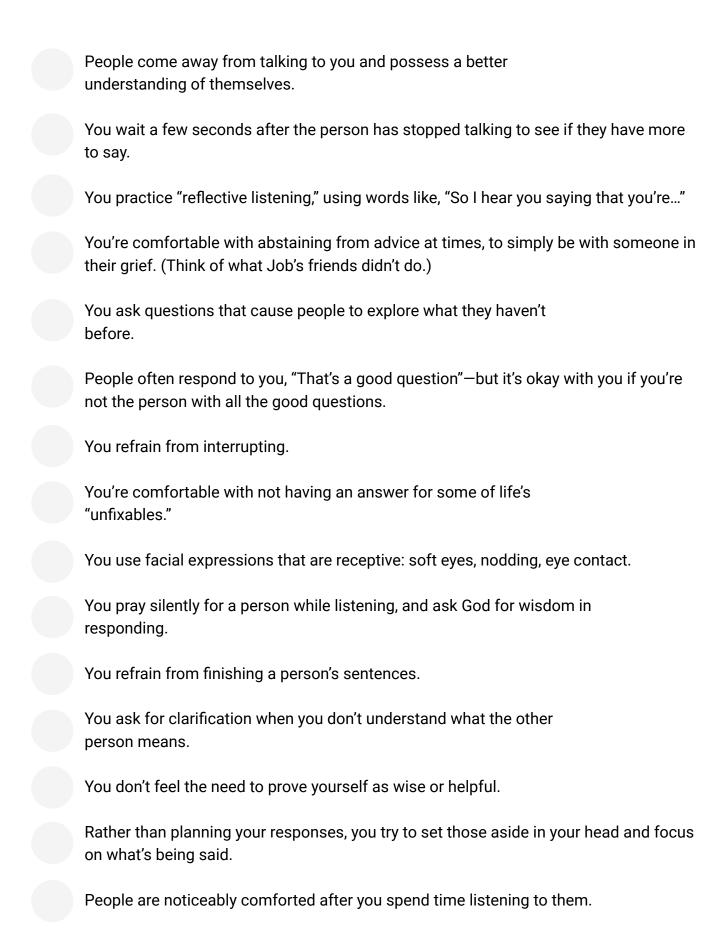
## INSTRUCTIONS

Place a "+" to indicate a strength: "Hey, I'm doing something right! This describes me."

Place a "-" to indicate a weakness: "Nope, I'm not there yet."

If you find a statement neither a strength nor a weakness of yours, leave it blank.

Then, select 3-4 weaknesses you'd like to improve.



Your advice to a person is highly individualized, reflecting back what you've heard them say and steering clear of pat answers and cliches.

You have time in your schedule to listen to friends.

Before offering advice, you offer compassion and understanding: "I am so sorry. That sounds incredibly hard."

You share your own circumstances that relate, but are careful not to refocus the conversation on you, or to indicate your circumstances were worse/harder.

You think of your friend's experience after you've left the conversation, internalizing their struggle. They're on your heart, so you pray for them, too.

More than a problem being fixed, you prioritize that the speaker feels heard, received, and understood.

! BONUS

Have your spouse take this inventory evaluating you as a listener.