

Talk and Listen Quiz

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Conversation is relationships' context or home, just as water is to fish and the sky is to birds. Is your talk overpowering and polluted or clear and nourishing? Is your listening focused and present or preoccupied and short lived?

Give a score to the following points:

1= almost never 2= seldom 3= sometimes 4= most of the time 5= almost always

How I Talk:

1. I easily introduce myself.
2. I feel at ease introducing people to one another.
3. I engage in and appreciate small talk.
4. The message I send is usually understood by my listeners.
5. My words are congruent with my body language.
6. I unreservedly say "no" and "yes."
7. When I want a focused discussion, I check to see if it is a mutually convenient time.
8. I share my intention for focused discussions, "I want to talk to you about . . ."
9. When appropriate, I freely express my thinking, beliefs and feelings.
10. When appropriate, I tell others how I disagree.
11. I avoid criticizing others and seek ways to support them.
12. When conversing with a person who has pessimistic tendencies, I hold my own with an optimistic viewpoint.
13. I share my funny, painful, happy, failure and success stories with others.
14. I freely give appreciation, compliments and acknowledgements.

How I Listen:

1. I let others know if and when I have time to *really* listen.
2. If it is not a convenient time for me, I set a mutually agreed upon time.
3. I imagine walking or running in the speaker's shoes.
4. I seek first to understand what someone is saying before I jump in with my point of view.
5. Even when I disagree with the talker, I wait and seek to understand.
6. I check now and then if I am receiving the message that was sent. I say, "Do I understand that . . ."
7. When I don't understand a question or a statement, I say, "I don't understand."
8. I notice others' body language and use it to receive significant information.
9. I notice my own feelings when others talk.
10. I am aware of what is emotionally difficult for me to hear.
11. I effectively ask open ended questions to hear more using *what, when, where, how* and *who*.
12. When possible I listen with full attention, compassion and soft eye contact.
13. I thank people for sharing with me. "Thank you for telling me."
14. After I receive appreciation, a compliment or acknowledgement, I breathe it in, smile and say "Thank you."

How did you do? If you want to improve your communication skills consider putting into action some of the above points, read articles under ***Conscious Connecting*** at www.lightheartedconcepts.com and get hold of one or two of the following books:

1. ***How to Talk So People Listen: The real Key to Job Success*** by Sonya Hamlin
2. ***Secrets of Face to Face Communication*** by Peter Urs Bender and Robert Tracz
3. ***Messages: The Communication Skills Book*** by Matthew McKay, Martha Davis and Patrick Fanning
4. ***Communicating Effectively for Dummies*** by Marty Brownstein

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