

Speaker/Listener Technique

There are three main rules for the speaker:

1. The speaker should speak for him or herself, don't mind read. Mind reading is when you tell someone what he or she is thinking, feeling, or wanting.

An example would be: "You don't care what I want." Instead you could say, "I don't feel cared for."

2. When the speaker is speaking, they should keep their statements short and stop before going on and on so that the listener can keep in mind what the speaker is saying.

3. Stop to let the listener paraphrase what they heard.

Rules for the listener are:

1. Paraphrase what you heard the speaker say in your own words.

2. Edit out their own thoughts during the paraphrase. Don't be thinking about whether you agree or disagree or prepare your response in your head, but rather focus on what the speaker is saying.

After the listener paraphrases what they heard, the speaker can then clarify if the message if it wasn't understood, otherwise they can continue forward with what they wanted to communicate.

Rules for both the speaker and listener include:

1. The speaker has the floor. Even though the listener talks in order to paraphrase, the listener is conveying the speaker's message, so the speaker keeps the floor while the listener paraphrases.

After the speaker has said one to three really important messages and the listener has heard and understood, the floor is passed to the listener and the roles switch.

2. Share the floor so that both individuals have the chance to share their concerns and be heard.

There are three common concerns that come up when using this technique:

1. **It's unnatural.**

2. **It doesn't allow for emotions.**

3. **It's too hard when you are upset.**