



Life Group Preparation Notes:
Emotionally Healthy Relationships
Session 5 - Listen Incarnationally

In preparation for Life Group:

Watch Vimeo: Session 5. Watch the session at home in preparation for life group.
<https://vimeo.com/332669917> (Password for vimeo link is: EdgeChurch). Make notes as you watch. Share one phrase that impacted you most from the video in group time.

Notes from the video - refer to them when watching the video

Listen Incarnationally.

- **What does it mean to Listen Incarnationally?**
 - **The purpose:** To listen at a heart level with empathy, attuned to the words and nonverbal communication of another person (i.e. so the other person feels felt by you).
- **Speaking:**
 - We speak differently in the new family of Jesus. We speak:
 1. Respectfully
 2. Honestly
 3. Clearly
 4. Timely

In the last few days, when has your speech not been respectful, honest, clear, or timely?
Imagine how you might have done that interaction differently.

- **Listening:**
 - How did the family you grew up in speak to one another?

Group Time:

Worship: Suggested song is “Reckless Love” By Bethel Worship. Listen to the words of the song and pray back to God a phrase that stands out to you.

Pray: Take 2 minutes of silence to “be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10. Then pray prayers of thanks for His presence.

Check-in: Share in a few words a time when you felt listened to. What did the other person do that caused you to feel heard?

Purpose: To grow in my listening skills

Key Principle: We are not able to get beneath the iceberg without sharing feelings.

Introduction: “The Gospels are filled with accounts of Jesus’ interactions with individuals: Matthew, Nathaniel, Nicodemus, a Samaritan woman, Zacchaeus, and many others. When the rich young ruler came up to him, for example, Jesus “looked at him and loved him” (Mark 10:21). He listened. He was present, never distracted or in a rush. He took the time to explore their stories.

Many of us have heard sermons about the need to listen well and to be slow to speak (see Proverbs 17:27-28; James 1:19). But listening does not come naturally to anyone. David Augsburg notes that listening is so closely linked to loving that the two are almost indistinguishable. Most of us did not learn to be good listeners while growing up in our families, but it is a crucial skill that can be learned. It remains one of the most significant ways we can practically demonstrate our love for one another.”

Bible Study: John 1:1-3; 14

Group Discussion:

1. Step into Jesus’ shoes. What feelings might He have experienced in leaving heaven and entering a world so different from heaven? (We refer to this as the Incarnation.)
2. Why did Jesus “enter our world”?
3. In what way is what Jesus did, an example of being a good listener? What does “listening incarnationally” mean to you?
4. How was your family of origin at listening? Speaking?
5. Name one or two obstacles you will need to overcome to grow into a person who listens well.

Check-out and Prayer:

Share what you have learnt or been reminded of in this session about listening well.

Pray prayers asking God to help you in the coming weeks to not only listen well, but to love well.

Application:

- Practice the Listening Incarnationally skill once or twice before the next session with your life group partner.
- I plan on practicing the Listening Incarnational skill: (Pair up with the same person)
With whom? _____
When? _____

Practical steps:

This session wasn't focused on a problem-solving skill, but it is a great tool to help us mature into greater character and maturity - especially when the other person is saying something difficult to hear.

Keep in mind:

- Incarnational Listening might look wooden, but it has a purpose.
- Listening does not mean agreement.
- Notice the listener doesn't get defensive or take things personally.

Guidelines for the Listener and the Speaker:

- As the Listener:
 - Give the speaker your full attention.
 - Step into the speaker's shoes and feel what they are feeling.
 - Avoid judging or interpreting.
 - Reflect back as accurately as you can what you heard them say.
 - When you think the speaker is done, ask, "Is there more?"
 - When the speaker is done, ask, "Of everything you have shared, what is the most important thing you want me to remember?"
- As the Speaker:
 - Speak in the "I".
 - Keep your statements brief.
 - Stop to let the listener paraphrase.
 - Include your feelings. (refer to the list of feeling words below)
 - Be honest, clear, and respectful.
 - It is critically important to help people distinguish a thought from a feeling.
- Share your experience of this exercise with the group next week. What was your experience as the speaker? Listener?
- Print the notes and create a file for future reference. Bring your file to life group each week.

Others:

Watch for opportunities to share with others an aspect that has been meaningful to you from this session.

Feeling Words:

<u>Afraid</u>	<u>Angry</u>	<u>Hurt</u>	<u>Sad</u>	<u>Doubtful</u>
Anxious	Annoyed	Abandoned	Ashamed	Confused
Desperate	Bitter	Cheated	Depressed	Distrustful
Fearful	Defensive	Crushed	Disappointed	Hesitant
Helpless	Frustrated	Defeated	Discouraged	Indecisive
Nervous	Furious	Deserted	Disillusioned	Puzzled
Pressured	Humiliated	Heartbroken	Hopeless	Skeptical
Shocked	Offended	Lonely	Miserable	Uncertain
Terrified	Resentful	Misunderstood	Moody	
Worried		Upset		

<u>Interested</u>	<u>Loving</u>	<u>Happy</u>	<u>Physical</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
Amazed	Appreciative	Comfortable	Aware	Bold
Challenged	Compassionate	Contented	Awkward	Bored
Concerned	Honored	Grateful	Empty	Cooperative
Curious	Sympathetic	Hopeful	Exhausted	Determined
Eager	Tender	Joyful	Refreshed	Distant
Enthusiastic		Lighthearted	Repulsed	Impatient
Excited		Peaceful	Strong	Indifferent
Inspired		Pleased	Tense	Jealous
		Relaxed	Weak	

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