



The Value of Deep Listening – to Yourself and Others.

When was the last time you paid attention to what your body was telling you, or you actively listened to others? Are you perhaps an expert in distraction and numbing your feelings, potentially risking future issues when you can no longer ignore reality? According to a [recent study](#) conducted by Ohio State University sociologists, members of Gen X and Y (1981–1996) are aging badly. This is seemingly due to increasingly sedentary lifestyles and the consequences that come with it, as well as rising drug and alcohol consumption. The inactive, deskbound lifestyle is affecting many of us while we work and “play” behind a screen for several hours per day, over many years. Find out why it pays off to listen deeply to yourself and those you have relationships with.

Listening deeply, and in a non-judgemental way, is a true skill that is valuable on so many levels. It’s something that can be learned. If you can conquer the skill of global (holistic) listening* – especially to your own body, your partner, kids, friends or team members – and remain acutely mindful and able to listen deep within so that you are able to “hear” with all your senses, you will not only have an advantage in life, but also health benefits over the years. Being able to listen well helps you navigate life and relationships. By picking up on subtle clues you can easily build rapport and convey respect, and this can often mean the difference between success and failure in business or private relationships.



I’m sure you have had experiences where you sensed that there was something else going on while listening to someone else. Their words might have been saying one thing, but they did not match the messages you intuited from gestures, eye movements and active listening. It often leaves us puzzled and struggling to trust or follow the lead of the person.

Another example is when a private or work relationship eventually comes to an end. After an honest assessment of the situation, you can finally admit that you pretty much knew from the start that this relationship was unlikely to work out. Perhaps your desire for the relationship to work (for example, with a new friend) was louder than your inner dialogue.

This can be triggered in any connection, including your relationship with a new boss. [Over 75% of Americans](#) say that their boss is the most stressful part of their workday. Traditional leaders often forget that to be successful, their skill sets need to include social awareness (empathy and organisational awareness), self-awareness and self-management, and an understanding that leadership is about moving and inspiring others, rather than just being hands on with their immediate team (risking micromanagement).

As Brené Brown says, ‘A brave leader is someone who says I see you. I hear you. I don’t have all the answers, but I’m going to keep listening and asking questions’.

**[Global Listening](#) offers the means to meet needs in human relations – personal, organizational, intercultural.*

Look Within

What are you feeling, and do you distract or numb your emotions? Look inside yourself and listen deeply while contemplating the below.

1. Do you feel ongoing exhaustion (a depletion of mental or physical resources)?
2. Are you often displaying cynical detachment (a depletion of social connectedness)?
3. Have you got a reduced sense of efficacy (a depletion of value for oneself)?
4. Do you overindulge in alcohol or other substances, too often?
5. Do you use work as a distraction (overwork)?
6. Do you mindlessly scroll online to keep your survival brain calm and avoid anxieties?
7. Do you tend to over-exercise to manage your fear of e.g. aging?

As a coach, I suggest that you stop, take a break, and think about the stressors that cause these feelings. Try to be fully aware of what is going on and how you are dealing with it. The answers lie within you. To uncover them, you will have to listen deeply and remain acutely mindful so that you're able to listen to your body. Over time, and perhaps with the addition of external support, you will gain clarity and might uncover something about your life or relationships. With the right intervention, issues can be managed in time – before they become a real problem.

A self-care and self-compassion practice, such as a 10-minute meditation session, cooking a nice meal, or [a mindful breathing exercise](#), has been found to correlate strongly with reduced levels of reported exhaustion the following day. The [findings](#) by Yu Tse Heng and Kira Schabram support the notion that self-care is not self-indulgent; on the contrary, taking a break and focusing on yourself is one of the best ways to combat exhaustion and burnout.

When feeling cynical and alienated, focusing on being kind to others can help you regain a sense of connectedness and belonging in your community. Compassion to yourself and others is like a muscle – it can be trained. In fact, researchers have found that compassion meditation training can actually rewire neural systems in the brain. Breath training, appreciation exercises, yoga and movement practices have also been shown to be effective tools in cultivating compassion.

Furthermore, part of your reason for reading this might be that this is the exact physiological journey you're on. So, while you're experiencing physical discomfort, find comfort in knowing you are on the right path and are taking the correct steps — whether it's with sleep, your relationships or anything else in life you're trying to improve.

I am here to listen and support you so that you don't get caught up in your emotions, and to help you achieve your goals.

Iris – Your Transformational Coach



I-YTC is about maximising and sustaining the wellbeing and performance of individuals and organisations in harmony with their environment.