

## Empathetic Listening

Listening is such an important oracy - and life - skill. Yet, we rarely consciously practise it!

Take a look at the resource opposite, which comes from the Samaritans. They are an organisation which uses listening as one way to support people who are struggling to cope.

It breaks down listening into a number of different skills. [You can view it in full here.](#)



**Reflection:** Think of three people you feel *really* listen to you. You might want to think about specific conversations where you know they listened to you. How did you know? What did they say or do to show they were listening? How did it make you feel?

### Activity one

**What does the adjective 'empathetic' mean?**

Have you come across the word 'empathy' before? Look up its meaning if you need to.

**What might it mean to be an empathetic listener?** What would an empathetic listener say or do? Can you add any more ideas to your answer above?

### Activity two

Pair up with someone - a friend, classmate, family member, teacher - and ask them about how they are doing. Have a go at practicing your empathetic listening skills!

**Can you use any of the listening skills on the listening wheel such as:**

- Clarify - 'Do you mean ...?'
- Open questions - 'Why... When... How... ?'
- Summarise - 'So the main things are ... is that right?'
- Reacting - 'That sounds really brilliant/difficult/tough...'
- Or, any of the other hallmarks of listening you have identified?

**Challenge:** Why do you think 'Silence' is in the middle of the wheel? Is silence an easy or hard part of listening?