

# Loss and Hope Listening Skills

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## What Do We Need to Listen to in Ourselves ?

thoughts & feelings

attitudes & behaviours

values & beliefs

abilities & limitations

fears & prejudices

hopes & expectations

hurts & disappointments

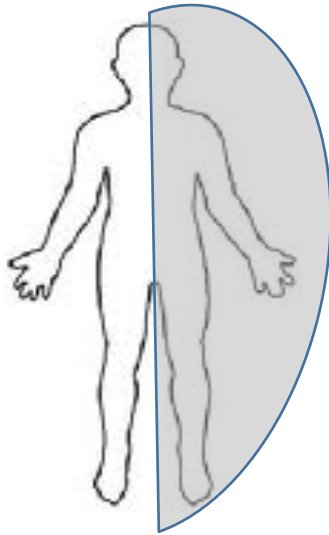
health & energies

doubts & uncertainties

past & present experiences



### Barriers to Listening: Shadow



**How can I meet the loneliness of another, if I run from my own?**

**How can I meet the despair of another, if I run from my own?**

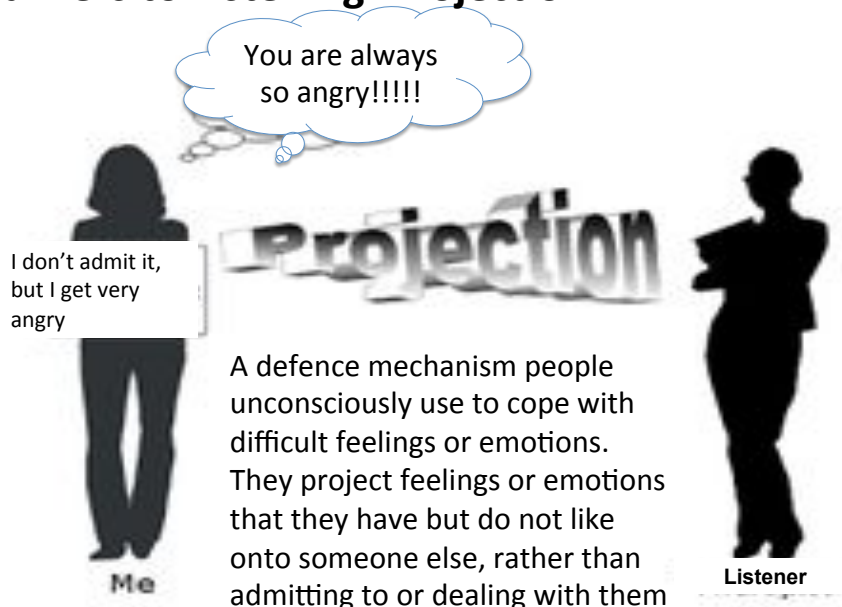
**How can I meet the doubt, confusion, shame, in another, if I run from my own?**

**How can I meet the worth of another, if I run from my own?**

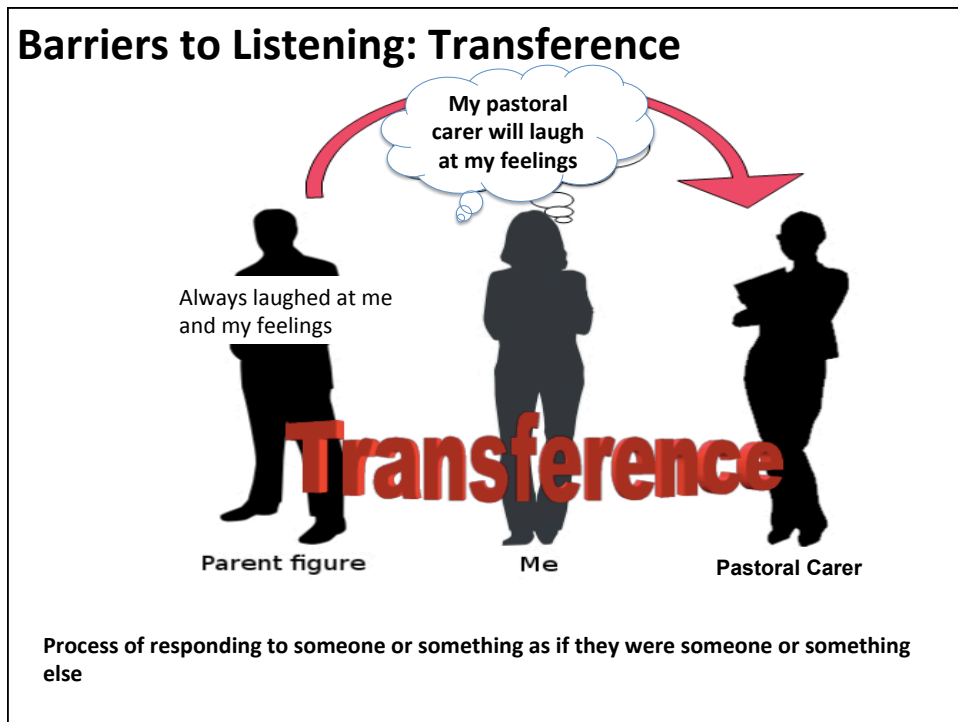
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### Barriers to Listening: Projection



A defence mechanism people unconsciously use to cope with difficult feelings or emotions. They project feelings or emotions that they have but do not like onto someone else, rather than admitting to or dealing with them



### Barriers to Listening: Transference

What was said by the pastoral visitor / carer

“David, I am afraid I won’t be able to visit you next week ”

What is heard or thought by David:

- “You don’t really care about me.”
- “I must have done something wrong – you don’t like me.”
- “You’re just like my Dad, abandoning me when I need you most.”
- “God and no-one loves me”

## **Barriers to Listening: Transference**

**Reaction from David**

**“Well. If you don’t want to come to see me any more, don’t worry I’ll be fine.”**

**What the pastoral carer / visitor heard or thought:**

**“I’ve upset him. I’m not meant to do that, I’m meant to be showing care and love.”**

**“I should not make mistakes.”**

**“Perhaps, my Mum was right all along ,  
I always get it wrong.”**

**“I have to make it right.....”**

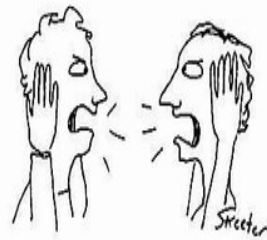


### **The pastoral carer / visitor now has a choice:**

- He decides that he has to keep the peace at all costs and gives in. **ACTING FROM THE PAST**
- He gets angry because the sense of failure that he has grown up with has surfaced again. **ACTING FROM THE PAST**
- He addresses the real issue and brings some rational understanding into the situation, gently challenges reaction of the other and his own. **ACTING IN THE PRESENT**

## Why is Listening Important?

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Dialogue

search ID: batn79

Modern conversations are often described as “a dialogue of the deaf”

“Answering Before Listening is both STUPID and RUDE”  
 Proverbs 18 v13  
 The Message Bible

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## Good Listening - Sympathy v Empathy

**Listening with Empathy:** the individual enters fully into the world of the other and truly tries to comprehend their thoughts and feelings.

Sympathy	Empathy
How awful. Poor you.	I understand this has been a great loss for you.
Let me do that for you.	How can I help you with that?
I feel so sad for you	This seems to have made you very sad
Makes it known that you are aware of another's distress and that you have compassion for them.	Not only expresses compassion but also shows a deeper level of understanding, trying to get alongside “into the other's shoes”

“I know how you feel.”

“I feel your pain.”

Are neither sympathy nor empathy – just wrong

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## Listening to Content

Listening is hard! *You must choose to participate in the process of listening.*

**LISTEN to -**

- **THE FACTS**
- **THE EXPERIENCE**
- **THE FEELINGS**
- **THE THOUGHTS**
- **THE BEHAVIOUR**

### Scenario

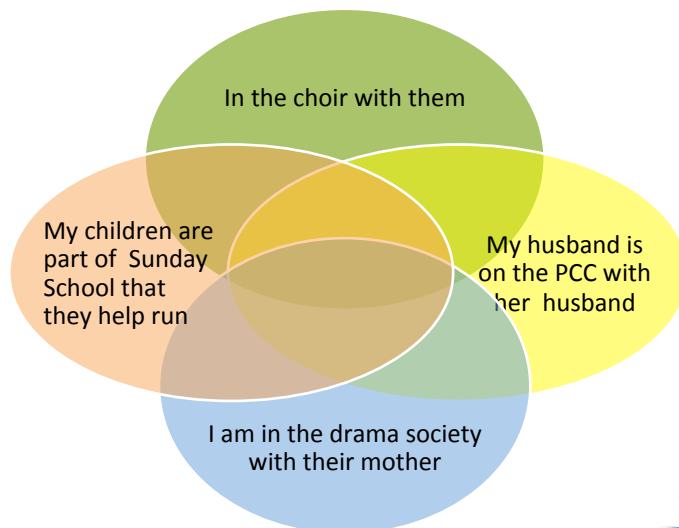
I am worried about my memory. I've really been struggling to concentrate and recall important details and yesterday I missed a prayer meeting that I was meant to be helping to lead.

Everyone said it did not matter, but I felt terrible for letting them down.

I know I've had a lot on my mind over these last few months, but my mother had dementia and I'm concerned it might be hereditary.

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## Complicated Relationships – Boundaries & Confidentiality



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## Grounding Techniques

- Speak calmly & give assurance that they are in a safe place in the “here and now”
  - Say “you are in”, “your name is”, “my name is”, “you are in a safe place as an adult”, “it is July 2020”
  - Get them to re-enforce “My name is....., I am in....., It is April 2019”.....
  - Encourage calm, physical movement - stand up, sit down, have a drink of water
  - Get them to focus on concrete, safe objects – count the window panes, look at the clock, etc.
  - Count backwards from 10, taking steady breaths
- Once they are back in the here and now, probably best not to continue ministry, they will be emotionally exhausted, but just pray a quiet blessing



“In the darkest times following my son’s suicide, it was not words or answers that I needed, but the loving presence of another.”

Rick Warren