



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

Mental Health  
First Aid Canada



## You are Listening to Me When...

### You are not listening to me when...

- You do not care about me, and you cannot care about me until you know something about me to care about.
- You say you understand before you know me well enough.
- You have an answer for my problem before I have finished telling you what my problem is.
- You cut me off before I have finished speaking.
- You feel critical of my grammar, accent, culture, or way of doing and saying things.
- You are communicating to someone else in the room.
- You are dying to tell me something or want to correct me.
- You are trying to sort out the details and are not aware of the feelings behind the words.
- You sense my problem is embarrassing and you are avoiding it.
- You get excited and stimulated by what I am saying and want to jump right in before I invite your response.
- You need to feel successful.
- You tell me about your experience which makes mine seem unimportant.
- You refuse my thanks by saying you haven't done anything.

### You are listening to me when....

- When you come quietly into my private world and let me be.
- You really try to understand me when I do not make sense.
- You grasp my point of view when it goes against your sincere conviction.
- You realize the hour I took from you has left you feeling a bit tired and drained.
- You didn't tell me the funny story you were just bursting to tell me.
- You allowed me the dignity of making my own decisions even though you felt I was wrong.
- You didn't take my problem from me but trusted me to deal with it in my own way.
- You gave me enough room to discover for myself why I felt upset and enough time to think for myself what was best.
- You held back the desire to give me good advice.
- You accepted my gift of gratitude by telling me it was good to know I had been helped.

Anonymous