

## Day 11-Empathic Communication

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There are different levels of conversational listening and responses that were brought to my attention by my teacher Jonny Kest, during his teacher training in 2009. I want to share them with you, for they have shaped and molded my perception of teacher yoga every single class I teach, in many ways. The way in which I teach, the way in which I listen and respond, to my students before, after and during class. It is hard to approach a conversation/ interaction the same way once you understand Empathic Communication.

#### Five Levels of Listening:

**Ignoring-** ourselves and not listening to others

**Pretending to Listen-** while still occupied with your own thoughts , judgments or actions.

**Selective Listening-** not hearing every word, but with judgement hearing the conversation from your own reference point, and creating the answer while your are still in the midst of the conversation and the other person is still speaking.

**Attentive Listening-** listening but still at the surface, not as deeply as possible, remaining with your own point of reference. Mimicking students is offensive- try not to say what they say.

**Empathic Listening-** Listening with the intent to understand, without personal agenda, open, receptive, vulnerable to changing your point of view, senses alive- open eyes, ears and heart.

Try to intuitively sense the mood of the student- tense, sad, depressed, scared- 60% body language, 30% tone, 10 % words.

Reflect your emotion: feel and express what someone else is feeling- acknowledge their feelings.

Give oxygen/ space to a place that needs room to breathe.

And most of all- don't try to fix/ solve or advise.

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### The Four Autobiographical Responses

These types of autobiographical responses inhibit empathic listening:

**Judging**-Evaluating, judging, comparing, labeling.

**Advising**-Attempting to fix.

**Probing**-Asking question to find out more before person is finished speaking.

**Interpreting**- Projecting, presuming.

\*Use this exercise to break old habit patterns of the mind.