



Pestalozzi

From the remembrance of the Holocaust to the prevention of radicalisation and crimes against humanity (PREV2)

What a better world it would be if we were listening to each other

by

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Brief description:

“The way of being with another person which is termed empathic...means temporarily living in their life, moving about in it delicately without making judgments.....to be with another in this way means that for the time being you lay aside the views and values you hold for yourself in order to enter the other's world without prejudice...a complex, demanding, strong yet subtle and gentle way of being.” (Carl Rogers)

Empathy – the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully committed in an objectively explicit manner - (Merriam Webster)

“Enemy is one whose story you have never heard” (Gene Knudsen Hoffman)

THE GENERAL THEME OF THE TU is **emphatic listening**. It's based on the ideas that:

- ✓ Openness to cultural diversity, views and beliefs is the key to creating a more democratic society.
- ✓ Peace making process is based on people identifying themselves with other people's sorrows and joys, on connecting rather than the opposite, separating.
- ✓ Nothing can influence a person's behaviour in a more dramatic way than his own experience and feelings.
- ✓ Enhancing emphatic skills is necessary for professional and personal development.
- ✓ Empathetic skills can be acquired through understanding and training.

Expected outcomes

- ✓ Disposition to be emphatic to enhance living and acting together in society,
- ✓ Readiness to strive together for mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue,
- ✓ Willingness to work together and become actively involved,
- ✓ Aptitude to evaluate situations and issues to look for solutions with all parties involved.
- ✓ Developing analytical and critical thinking.
- ✓ Knowledge and critical understanding of yourself.

Activities:

Activity 1	Storytelling to a “deaf” person	▶30 minutes
Activity 2	Reading and listening	▶35 minutes
Activity 3	Getting into somebody’s shoes	▶20 minutes
Activity 4	“Freedom writers”	▶40 minutes
Activity 5	Role play	▶40minutes
Debriefing /evaluation		▶20 minutes

Background and context

The unit is focused on enhancing awareness of the impact of emphatic listening on communication and as a result on solving conflict situations and peace making process. It reveals the role of a teacher in initiating a change in a society.

The unit is planned in a way to introduce some efficient listening techniques and train them through special activities and finally shows the impact of a teacher’s dedication to developing democratic competences in their classrooms.

The Unit could easily be adjusted to a teacher training course to develop empathy as a professional competence or as a competence necessary for building up a democratic society. All the activities suggested can easily be used separately or in a different cluster depending on time limits or participants’ needs.

Activity 1. Story telling to a “deaf” person

Duration: 30 min

Expected outcome:

- ✓ self-awareness
- ✓ critical thinking

Methods / techniques used

- ✓ Split into pairs,
- ✓ Listen to your friends story
- ✓ Reflect on your feelings and emotions aroused during the conversation

Practical arrangements:

- ✓ free space for the participants to communicate in pairs

Procedure:

Step 1 (5 min):

- ✓ Split the participants into 2 groups.
- ✓ Tell one group to share with their colleagues why they decided to participate in a seminar dedicated to the remembrance of Holocaust. Tell them to do their best to touch the heart of the listener.
- ✓ Tell the other group to go out of the room and explain their task to them. They are supposed to listen to their partners showing no interest in all possible ways: interrupt, use mobiles, be silent, and make no eye contact...

Step 2: (5 min)

- ✓ Invite the participants to find a partner from the other group and start talking.
- ✓ When the conversation is fading in most of the groups, it's time to stop the activity. Usually it takes about 5 minutes.

Step 3: Debriefing/reflecting (20 min)

- ✓ Ask the participants to sit in a circle and start the discussion. Encourage them to reflect on how they were feeling when their partner was not listening to them.
- ✓ What made them feel especially ignored, angry, upset? (no eye contact, no questions, too many questions...)
- ✓ How did it affect their ability to do the task?
- ✓ How often do you feel switched off while listening? Why?
- ✓ Ask them how often they say “I don't want to listen to you. I don't want to hear about it.” In the classroom? At home in the family? Watching TV? Listening to a politician? (“I am a teacher of English not his Mum.” Recollect the Sunflower”, the confession of a Jewish soldier.)
- ✓ How important is the ability to listen to another person or to you in our everyday life?
- ✓ Why do we people often fail to understand what another one says?

Activity 2: Reading and listening

Duration: 35 minutes

Expected outcome:

- ✓ Listening skills
- ✓ Analytical skills
- ✓ Critical thinking

Methods / techniques:

- ✓ Reading the article about active listening and match the paragraphs with the subheading. (appendix 1)
- ✓ Discussion

Resources: article appendix 1

- ✓ video (Please pass the butter) **appendix 1**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkSwXL3cGUg>

Instructions/procedure:

Step 1: (5 min)

Before reading it would be a good idea to make an introduction:

- ✓ Retired FBI hostage negotiator Gary Noesner and Mike Webster describe active listening as being a “powerful tool” for hostage negotiators “to stimulate positive change in others.” The New York City Police Department’s Hostage Negotiation Team (NYPD HNT) also emphasizes the importance of a negotiator utilizing active listening skills during a crisis and hostage incident.
- ✓ Mediators have described active listening as being one of the top methods to build rapport with the people they are helping that are involved in a dispute. Research has further demonstrated that rapport as well as building trust and displaying professionalism skills used by effective mediators. Building trust and developing rapport are closely linked while professionalism is as well. Professionalism is described as possessing the appropriate skills and using them based on the context of the situation.
- ✓ Therefore, active listening when used properly and effectively, displays professionalism, develops rapport, and builds trust. This transcends the world of mediators and hostage negotiators. While reviewing the skills below, one can easily see how when employed in your professional and social setting, it can contribute to you being a more effective communicator.

- ✓ Active listening skills are the primary vehicle through which the perpetrators' emotions can be diffused and their rationality increased.
- ✓ In front of you, you will find eight techniques of active listening that are taught by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Crisis Negotiation Unit (FBI CNU) to their special agents and other law enforcement officials from around the world.

Step 2: (5 min)

- ✓ Ask the participants to predict what kind of instructions will be given? Listen to them and write their answers on the board.

Step 3: (5 min)

- ✓ Give instruction to participants to read the article about active listening and match the paragraphs with the subheadings. (appendix 1)

Step 4: (5 min)

- ✓ After reading: Discuss the answers in your groups.

Step 5: (5 min)

- ✓ Before listening: Give the instruction to watch the video and say what kind of recommendations from the list that you read Amy followed?
- ✓ Watching: encourage the participants to make notes while watching and not rely only on the memory.

Step 6: Debriefing (10 min)

- ✓ Did the instructions given help Amy to get the point and understand her friend?
- ✓ Ask the participants if they have been in this sort of situation themselves?
- ✓ Is there any difference between empathy and sympathy? (It's the key question for understanding the sense of emphatic/compassionate/deep listening)
- ✓ How should we listen while we are full of anger, denial, rejection, hatred...?
- ✓ Is emphatic listening a spontaneous action or a conscious one?
- ✓ Gene Knudsen Hoffman said: "The enemy is one whose story you have never heard." Do you agree with that statement?
- ✓ Encourage the participants to express their own points of view on what makes us deep/com -passionate listeners?

Activity 3 Getting into somebody's shoes

20 minutes

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ Ability to feel and connect with another person adjusting our own views,
- ✓ Developing openness to cooperation.

Methods/techniques:

- ✓ watching a video
- ✓ discussion
- ✓ roleplay
- ✓ debriefing

Resources:

Video 2: Empathy Exercise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w13LC6DLMn8>

Procedure:

Step 1 (5 min)

- ✓ Pre-watching: Ask the participants what's the difference between sympathy and empathy, reaction and response?
- ✓ Then ask the participants to watch the video and answer the following questions while watching and listening:
 - What are the 4 main qualities of empathy?
 - What does it mean to connect?
- ✓ Encourage participants to make notes while listening.
- ✓ Get feedback from the participants. Emphasise that in order to connect with others we need to connect with our own feelings.

Step 2 (5 min)

- ✓ Invite the participants to practise connecting :
Ask the participants to line up according to the colour of their T-shirt, jumper or a shirt so that the person with the lightest top stands at the beginning of the line and the person with the darkest one at the end of the line.
- ✓ Then ask the participants from one end to meet with their counterpart at the other end of the line and make a pair.

- ✓ Then ask the pairs to find space in the room for them to stand together and ask the person with the darker T-shirt, top, jumper to copy the partner's pose.
- ✓ After a few minutes switch the roles, do the same.

Step 3 (5 min)

- ✓ Ask the pairs to group with the pair nearest to them and split into new pairs. Ask one participant to imagine/experience an emotion. Ask the partners to observe attentively and guess that emotion.
 - Switch the roles, do the same.

Step 4 Debriefing (5 min)

- ✓ Stand in a circle with all the participants and encourage the discussion.
 - Was it easy to copy your partner's behaviour?
 - What were you experiencing? Did you feel different with different people?
 - What did you discover about yourselves?

*Getting into another person's shoes. Is it worth doing?

Activity 4. Discussing the clips from the film “Freedom writers”

Duration: 40 minutes

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ Openness to cultural otherness and other beliefs, world views and practices
- ✓ Valuing human dignity and human rights
- ✓ Analytical and critical thinking

Methods/techniques:

- ✓ Arrange the chairs in a way that people can see each other and see the screen at the same time. A semi-circle is a good option.

Resources:

Video clips from the film: “Freedom writers” (Appendix 4)

Video 3: I hate white people.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsasdXtM5eg>

Video 4: You are the heroes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjGIJPE8B8I>

Procedure:

Describe briefly the film: Freedom Writers (2007) starring Hilary Swank, Scott Glenn, Imelda Staunton and Patrick Dempsey.

It is based on the book The Freedom Writers Diary by teacher Erin Gruwell who wrote the story about her own teaching practice in Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California.

It is a true story about a white teacher Erin Gruwell who starts working with a very special class of freshmen: African-American, Latino and Asian teenagers. At her first lesson they had only three things in common: they hate her, each other and school. They have low academic results and are labelled unteachable and lost.

The teacher does a lot of things to plant seeds of hope in their minds: inspires them to read, invites interesting people to talk with them, goes to museums, lets them speak and read about their painful experiences. She is the first person who listens to their stories and she is the first who can see true personalities in them. It creates a change. Many of them become the first ones in their families who have a diploma.

Erwin Gruwell was also the founder of “Freedom writers”, the organization whose overall purpose is to:

- ✓ Create opportunities for students to reach their full academic potential and aspire to higher education
- ✓ Publicly and systematically promote an educational philosophy that values, upholds, and honours diversity.
- ✓ Inspire students to realise their roles as vital members of their communities

Speaking about the role of teachers in society, it is worth mentioning that Erin Gruwell had not always wanted to become a teacher. She wanted to go to law school but after the Los Angeles Riots in the early nineties, she changed her mind. She decided that she could do so much more that was proactive in a classroom than reactionary in a courtroom.

Step 1 (10 min)

Give a task to participants before they start watching the first clip.

Watch the first video and answer the following questions:

- ✓ How would you describe the class and school where Erin Gruwell works?
- ✓ What happened during the lesson?
- ✓ Why did she ask the students to close the books?
- ✓ How did the students react?
- ✓ Who do they hate and why?

Video 3: I hate white people: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsasdXtM5eg>

- ✓ Ask the participants to answer the questions given in small groups with the participants they are sitting next to.

Step 2 (10 min)

Before watching the second video, give the participants the following questions.

- ✓ Who is invited to the meeting? What is the woman famous for?
- ✓ How are the students listening to the speaker?
- ✓ Do you think it's important for youngsters to have heroes?

Watch the video:

Video 4: You are the heroes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjGIJPE8B8I>

- ✓ Ask the participants to answer the questions given in small groups with the participants they are sitting next to.

Step 3 (20 min) Debriefing

Ask the following questions in a plenary

- ✓ Have you ever been in similar situations?
- ✓ As teachers, what can we do to change students' attitude to studies, to people, make them more tolerant, cooperative, creative, kind?

- ✓ As teachers, what can we do to change the environment, we teach in, students learn in and make it much friendlier and favourable to mutual development?

- ✓ Can listening to /speaking about the Holocaust and other cases of mass killings and genocide, change the consciousness of youngsters, their attitude to themselves and others? Why, why not?

- ✓ What kind of impact can it have on students' further development?

Activity 5 Life situations

40 minutes

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ Responsibility for our thoughts and feeling and actions we carry out,
- ✓ Developing openness to otherness,
- ✓ Readiness for understanding and cooperation.
- ✓ Emphatic listening skills

Methods / techniques

- ✓ Role -play game: act out situations according to the roles in your cards.

Resources:

Role play cards (Appendix 5)

Procedure:

Step 1 (5 min)

- ✓ Divide the participants into seven groups according to the number of people in the group.
- ✓ Ask them to read the task from the card carefully, discuss with their group members what they are going to do as a roleplay and make an outline.
- ✓ Participants rehearse the scene and the dialogue.

Step 2 (20 min)

- ✓ Ask the participants to role play their situations. While they are role playing ask the other participants to follow attentively and be ready to reflect on how they would respond in this situation.

Step 3 (15 min) Debriefing

Encourage discussion in plenary

- ✓ How were you feeling?
- ✓ How would you behave if you were in the shoes of another group?
- ✓ How should they have behaved? Think of another scenario?
- ✓ Does theory differ from practice?
- ✓ Have you experienced any situations of the same kind in your life?
- ✓ What is the role of the teacher in these situations?
- ✓ Why is it important?

Activity 6: Evaluation

20 minutes

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ Participants will evaluate the level of satisfaction with the training

Methods /techniques used:

- ✓ evaluation tree

Procedure:

The participants are asked to answer the following questions by sticking a red leaf, a yellow leaf or a green one on to the branches of a tree drawn on the board.

- ✓ The training has helped me understand the benefits of listening to each other in the classroom.
- ✓ The activities have helped me to reflect on my everyday classroom practice.
- ✓ Methods used in the training, such as role play has enabled me to experience situations that are relevant to my work in the classroom.

The green one will identify that they truly support the idea.

The yellow one will mean that they have doubts.

The red one denotes that the idea is illusive.

Recommended sites, books and films:

Books:

The Power of Empathy 2000 by Arthur Ciaramicoli (It's about how empathy helps to attract and maintain love.)

Compassionate listening (internet) by Gene Knudsen Hoffman (an exploratory sourcebook about conflict transformation)

Films:

Freedom writers 2007 (a young teacher inspires her class of at-risk students to learn tolerance, apply themselves, and pursue education beyond high school.)

Paradise 2016 (Paradise follows three people whose paths cross during a terrible time of war: Olga, a Russian aristocratic immigrant and member of the Russians Resistance; a French collaborator; and Helmut, a high-ranking German SS officer.)

Sites:

<https://sites.psu.edu/emplab/>

<https://sites.google.com/site/teachingempathy/what-is-empathy>

List of resources:

Appendix 1: Active listening handout: Seven Active Listening Techniques Used by Hostage Negotiators

Appendix 2: Pass the butter, please

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkSwXL3cGUg>

Appendix 3: Sympathy/ empathy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np5BiHxMllw>

Empathy exercise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w13LC6DLMn8>

Appendix 4: Freedom writers Video 1: I hate white people:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsasdXtM5eg>

Video 2: *You are my Hero*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjGIJPE8B8I>

Appendix 5: Role - play cards

APENDIX 1: ACTIVE LISTENING HANDOUT

Seven Active Listening Techniques Used by Hostage Negotiators

Match the subheadings and paragraphs:

- a) Effective pauses
- b) I-messages
- c) Open-ended questions
- d) Emotional labelling
- e) Minimal encouragement
- f) Paraphrasing
- g) Mirroring/ Reflecting



1. Sounds made, especially on the phone, to let one person know the other is there and listening. Such as, “Oh?”, “When?”, and “Really?” They are questions, comments, or sounds that do not interfere with the flow of conversation, but do let the subject know that the negotiator is there and listening. They help build rapport and encourage the subject to continue talking.
2. A summary in your own words of what you were told. Demonstrates listening, creates empathy and establishes rapport because it is evident that you have heard and understood. Usually, paraphrasing begins with the words, “Are you telling me...” or “Are you saying...” Paraphrasing also clarifies content, highlights issues and promotes give and take between you and the subject. It tends to make the subject a better listener.
3. This is often the first active listening skill to be used in a crisis communication incident. It is important to be attuned to the emotion behind the words and facts. Commonly, we all want to get into problem-solving too early. Too early an approach to problem solving is doomed to failure because the subject is often not ready to reason and you have not listened enough to get all of the information you need to assist in problem solving. Common phrases for you to use are, “You sound...”, “You seem...”, “I hear...” (Emotion heard by you). You do not tell people how they are feeling, but how they sound to you as if they are feeling.

Do not be concerned about making a mistake in labelling emotions. The subject will correct you and will often appear grateful for the attempt. Be aware of missing emotions and listen for conflicts in the feelings expressed, especially if they appear inappropriate to the situation. Emotion labelling is not a technique to apply when you are verbally attacked. In that instance, switch to an “I” message (see below).

4. This is the technique of repeating the last word or phrase and putting a question mark after it. This provides very exact responses because you are using the subject’s own words. Reflecting or mirroring asks for more input without guiding the direction of the subject’s thoughts and elicits information when you do not have enough to ask a pertinent question. It is useful when you are at a loss for words and it provides an opportunity for the subject to think about what you have said.

5. The primary use of open-ended questions is to help a subject start talking. Asking open-ended questions encourages the person to say more without actually directing the conversation. They are questions that cannot be answered with a single word such as “yes” or “no”. Open-ended questions get information for you with fewer questions, those that usually begin with how, what, when and where. Note that “why” questions are not asked directly. “Why” questions tend to steer the conversation toward blame and shut down communication. “Why” questions also tend to pass judgment.

Closed-end questions give a feeling of interrogation that makes rapport building difficult. They also cause you to work too hard at thinking up new questions.

6. “I” messages enable negotiators to let the subject know how he is making you feel, why you feel that way, and what the subject can do to remedy the situation. This is a non-threatening approach and does not put the subject on the defensive. “I” messages are used when communication is difficult because of the intense emotions being directed at you. It is also used when the subject is trying to manipulate you and you want him to stop the attempts. Negotiators also use this technique to refocus the subject and when they are verbally attacked.
7. Silence can be very effective on a number of levels. Most people are not comfortable with silence and will fill it with talk. It is to your advantage to keep the subject talking. Silence can also be used to emphasize a point. You can use silence just before or just after saying something important.

APENDIX 5

Card 1. You were checking students' papers in the staff room and bumped into the note at the end of the test: "You are a fool!" How would you feel? What would you do? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group you are working with.

Card 2. You (a student/ pupil) have fallen in love with a teacher. How would you behave? Who would you share your feelings with? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group.

Card 3. Your son wants to take part in a protest demonstration against the discrimination of human rights. You understand that it's not safe and might put his further education at the university under threat, in case he is caught. How would you feel? What would you do? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group you are working with.

Card 4. Your son doesn't want to go to school. What would you feel? How would you behave? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group you are working with.

Card 5. Your friend sympathizes with a pro-fascist group and has begun to take part in their meetings. How would you feel? What would you do? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group.

Card 6. You know that a child in your class is abused by his stepfather, but he doesn't want to admit it. How would you feel? What would you do? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group you are working with.

Card 7. One of the students in your class is handicapped. The children bully him in spite of your agreement with them not to. How would you feel? What would you do? Think of a possible scenario and role play a sketch with the group.