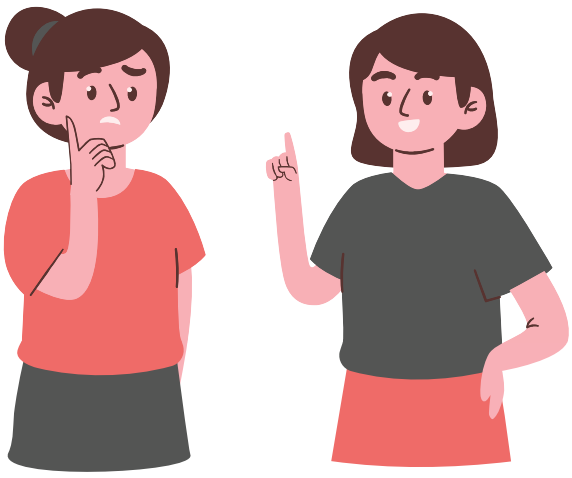
# Listening Skills

There is a difference between hearing, listening, and active listening. Hearing is the passive intake of sound and does not require attention. Listening requires the active use of the brain to interpret sounds for meaning. Active listening is a communication skill that goes beyond hearing just the words. It involves understanding the meaning and context of the conversation. It requires the listener to be actively involved in the discussion.

To learn more, click on the link below:
www.verywellmind.com/hearing-vs-listening-what-s-the-difference-5196734

Why is active listening important? It allows you to connect with your conversation partner in a positive way. It decreases the likelihood of misunderstandings between people by increasing everyone's comprehension of what they are talking about. It helps everyone feel heard and valued.

Click below for more reasons: **www.verywellmind.com/what-is-active-listening-3024343**



Here are some common reasons why active listening can be more difficult for people with autism:

- It may be more difficult for a person with ASD due to difficulty focusing on the conversation.
- Increased distractibility due to sensory differences, including increased sensitivity to background noise.
- Difficulty with multiple sensory channels (Example: Looking someone in the eyes and listening to them at the same time may be difficult.)
- Difficulty understanding the meaning and context in the conversation.
- They may have a language processing disorder.

To find out more about language processing disorders, check out the article below:
**www.additudemag.com/language-processing-disorders-recognizing-symptoms/**

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You can improve your active listening skills by listening to podcasts and other audio choices. Listening to podcasts, internet videos, and audio programs where you understand the level of language being used and that you find interesting is a good way to practice active listening. Start with easy-to-understand material and then gradually increase the level of difficulty.

Listening to things that you find interesting makes it more pleasurable and more likely that you will continue the practice of active listening. Focus on understanding what the conversation is about rather than small details. If you don't understand one or two words, you can often figure it out by context. You can also look up the words later and come back to them. Most podcasts allow you to control the speed of the speaker, allowing you to slow down or speed up as needed. Podcasts usually have pause, fast forward, and rewind functions.

Practicing active listening by re-listening multiple times to the same material can be useful. It can also be helpful to take notes while you're listening to it to increase comprehension. For example, what is the topic, and are there any words that you don't understand? Are there multiple speakers, and who are they? You can also write down interesting words or sentences. To keep yourself from getting bored, vary your listening routine. You can change the time you listen, your location, and/or what you listen to in order to keep it fresh and interesting.

There are ways to modify situations to increase language comprehension as well. If you feel comfortable making your conversation partner aware of difficulties that you have with understanding language, you may be able to improve your language comprehension. You can always ask for modifications to make it easier for you to understand.

Some helpful modifications include:

- Ask to talk about important topics in calmer, less noisy situations when possible.
- If given a task that's important, you can always ask the person to write it down, such as due dates and requirements for work or school assignments.
- You could also ask them to email or text you the information that is needed.
- You can write or type those notes yourself if it doesn't negatively affect your listening ability.
- Another good way of keeping a record is to ask permission to record conversation to keep for your records.