Overview

**Theme:** A reflective communication strategy to deepen your understanding of self and others

**Audience:** Individuals, adolescent through adult.

**Conceptual Objective:** Participants will understand how reflective listening can deepen both self-awareness and understanding, build empathy, and improve communication.

**Experiential Objective:** Participants will experience and be able to use reflective listening as a speaker and listener.

**Facilitator Prep:** Review the handout, perform the exercise yourself, and assess your own comfort talking about your own identities with participants.

**Related Content:** This exercise is best when included as part of a broader training on teamwork, group development, interpersonal growth, etc.

Procedure

**INTRODUCTIONS (3 MIN)**

- Facilitators introduce selves, participants introduce self to neighbor. Facilitators explain that the upcoming exercise can be personal, and all should be honored and respected for choosing to or not to participate.

**AGREEMENTS (5 MIN)**

- Invite the group to suggest agreements to create a safe discussion environment. They may include:
  1. Stay engaged (Remove distractions.)
  2. Speak your truth (Talk about your own self, life, and story, rather than those of others.)
  3. Experience discomfort (Stay in the conversation, even when you are uncomfortable.)
  4. Expect/accept non-closure (Some things will remain unclear.)
  5. Ouch! (We may feel hurt by what we hear – please speak up when this happens.)

**OPENING (2 MIN)**

Today we will explore skills for reflective listening, a tool that can deepen both self-awareness and understanding, build empathy, and improve communication. Reflective listening can be helpful for the speaker: They may clarify their own understanding of themselves through the listener’s reflective comments. It can also be helpful for the listener, allowing them to understand the deeper message someone else may be trying to communicate.

This tool may be useful to you in roles as a facilitator, a coach, a leader, or a member of a collaborative group. Our time together will be interactive, and we hope you will leave able to use reflective listening as a speaker and listener.
MIRRORING (35 MIN)
- Form participants into small groups of four. Explain that each person will have 5 minutes to share about a dilemma, challenging situation, or change they are trying to make in their lives. As each person speaks, the other three group members will each take on a different listener role. As they rotate speakers, listeners should also rotate their listening roles.
- Listening Roles:
  - Facts – Listen for the exact details of the situation, such as who is involved, what the setting is, etc.
  - Feelings – Listen for the emotions and the meaning behind the story and the facts, paying attention to feeling and tone.
  - Values – Listen for the values and priorities at the core of the person’s situation.
  For feelings and values, use the accompanying word list.
- Explain that after each person has told their story, the listeners will each have 2 minutes to reflect (or mirror) back to the speaker what they think they heard and verify with the speaker whether they heard correctly either the facts, feelings, or values of their situation.
- Remind everyone that with this technique, we are reflecting “with a question mark.” No one likes to be told how they are feeling if it does not match what they are feeling.

DISCUSSION (10 MIN)
- Have participants turn to one another and discuss, to the extent they’re comfortable:
  - Which role was the easiest for you? Why?
  - How did each feel to reflect to the speaker?
  - What was it like to hear others’ reflections?
  - How was this experience similar to or different from your usual conversations?
  - What did you learn as a speaker? As a listener?
  - In what contexts in your life would this be useful?

CLOSING (5 MIN)
- Going around circle, ask each participant to share one word reflecting how they are feeling now.
- Ask participants to please complete the evaluation for this workshop.

"Reflective Listening" is adapted by Minnesota Campus Compact based on the University of Minnesota Extensions Service’s “Reflective Practice” and the Compassionate Listening Project (http://www.compassionatelisting.org/). The Agreements in this workshop have been adapted from Glen Singleton’s Courageous Conversations. We welcome your suggestions for improving this guide further for future trainings. We also welcome you to use it and adapt it for your own trainings, subject to the restrictions below.

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### Feelings and Values Word List Handout

**Feelings:**
- Adventurous
- Affectionate
- Alert
- Alive
- Amazed
- Amused
- Appreciative
- Astonished
- Carefree
- Cheerful
- Comfortable
- Concerned
- Complacent
- Composed
- Confident
- Contented
- Cool
- Afraid
- Aggravated
- Agitated
- Alarmed
- Aloof
- Angry
- Anguished
- Animosity
- Annoyed
- Anxious
- Apathetic
- Apprehensive
- Averse
- Beat
- Bitter
- Bored
- Broken-hearted
- Chagrined
- Cold
- Concerned
- Confused
- Cool
- Curious
- Dazzled
- Delighted
- Eager
- Ecstatic
- Elated
- Electrified
- Encouraged
- Energetic
- Engrossed
- Enlivened
- Excited
- Exhilarated
- Expansive
- Expectant
- Exultant
- Fascinated
- Cross
- Dejected
- Depressed
- Despairing
- Disgusted
- Disheartened
- Dislike
- Dismayed
- Displeased
- Disquieted
- Distressed
- Disturbed
- Downcast
- Dread
- Dull
- Edgy
- Embarrassed
- Embittered
- Exasperated
- Exhausted
- Fatigued
- Gleeful
- Glorious
- Glowing
- Good-humored
- Gratified
- Happy
- Helpful
- Hopeful
- Invigorated
- Involved
- Inquisitive
- Inspired
- Intense
- Lazy
- Lefthand
- Fidgety
- Forlorn
- Frightened
- Frustrated
- Furious
- Gloomly
- Guilty
- Hate
- Humdrum
- Hurt
- Impatient
- Indifferent
- Inert
- Intense
- Irate
- Irked
- Irritated
- Jealous
- Jittery
- Keyed Up
- Relieved
- Satisfied
- Merry
- Mirthful
- Moved
- Optimistic
- Overjoyed
- Overwhelmed
- Peaceful
- Proud
- Quiet
- Radiant
- Refreshed
- Sleepy
- Sorrowful
- Sorry
- Sour
- Spiritless
- Startled
- Surprised
- Tepic
- Terrified
- Tired
- Troubled
- Uncomfortable
- Unconcerned
- Uneasy
- Unglued
- Unhappy
- Unnerved
- Unsteady
- Upset
- Uptight

**Values:**
- Equality
- Faith
- Family
- Friendship
- Freedom
- Generosity
- Goodwill
- Gratitude
- Harmony
- Health
- Honesty
- Free
- Friendly
- Fulfilled
- Glad
- Humor
- Justice
- Inclusiveness
- Independence
- Integrity
- Justice
- Knowledge
- Life
- Love
- Loyalty
- Morality
- Interested
- Intrigued
- Joyous
- Jubilant
- Order
- Patience
- Peace
- Power
- Professional
- Recognition
- Religion
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Security
- Service
- Simplicity
- Spirituality
- Success
- Trustworthiness
- Understanding
- Wealth
- Wholeness
- Wisdom
- Work
Survey for “Reflective Listening” Workshop

Thank you for taking time to attend this Civic Agency workshop. We are very interested in receiving your feedback. (Alternatively, you may also complete this survey online at http://augsburg.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_06aoPbGjyJ7I7oF).

If you have participants complete evaluations on paper, please scan them and send them to info@mncampuscompact.org.

Your information

Primary Role: Student, Faculty, Staff, Administrator, Community Organization Staff, AmeriCorps/VISTA

Institution (College, University, Organization):

Date:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with the following about your experience with the Civic Agency workshop you participated in</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt welcomed and included.</td>
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<td>I learned about one or more leadership tools or resources.</td>
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<td>The tools and exercises I learned about are valuable.</td>
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<td>I feel capable of using the tools and exercises I learned about.</td>
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<td>I intend to use at least one thing I learned here.</td>
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<td>Other participants in the workshop helped me see things from a different perspective.</td>
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<td>I developed new or deeper connections with others.</td>
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Is there anything you would like to tell us about your experience with the workshop?