

# Deep Listening: Practice Lab

Welcome

# Agenda

- Framing and Safe Space Protocols
- Deep Listening Session Recap
- **Topic 1: Non-verbal Affirmation**
  - **Exercise 1.1** Group Sculpture
  - **Exercise 1.2** Modeling Non-verbal Affirmation
  - **Wrap-Up and Question**
- **Topic 2: Internal Distractions**
  - **Exercise 2** Listening with Distractions
  - **Wrap-Up and Question**
- **Topic 3: Difficult Conversations**
  - **Exercise 3** Stop and Rewind-Difficult Conversation Improv
  - **Wrap-Up and Question**

## Framing Statement:

Through the Inclusive Interpersonal Skills series, the Library Diversity Council is attempting to create a space in which attendees can learn and further develop inclusive interpersonal communication skills with their peers. Participants will learn to communicate and connect in healthier, more emotionally robust ways, even when conflicts and differences arise. This is a peer-led learning series, where sessions are facilitated by members of the M-Library community.

# Safe Space Guidelines

- **Respect privacy and confidentiality -- share stories and experiences as opposed to names.**
- **Treat everyone as individuals -- no one represents a specific group.**
- **Check your assumptions.**
- **Use “I” Statements.**
- **Take Care of Yourself if triggered.**
- **Respect each other’s opinions and ideas.**
- **Listen actively and use empathy.**
- **Give each person a chance to speak. (*Step up if comfortable / Step back for others.*)**
- **Expect non-closure.**

# Session Specific Guidelines

1. This will be uncomfortable. You will probably find you had fun afterward.
2. **You will be practicing deep listening at times, but this session also focuses on working to identify within ourselves those things that impede our deep listening.**
3. Participate as much as you are comfortable, and you are free to vary your participation throughout the session.
4. Respect others and their comfort levels.
5. Let loose. Have some fun and try.



# Deep Listening Recap

- Stop Talking
- Pause before Speaking
- Listen to yourself
- Listen for understanding
- Ask for clarification
- Let the speaker know you heard them
- Be patient and present
- Listen with an open mind
- Pay attention to the environment
- Listen with empathy and compassion



# Topic 1: Non-verbal Affirmation

# Group Sculpture

Need: Sculptors, Models, and Audience

# Rules of Group Sculpture

- 1. Sculptors and Models should be prepared to switch roles throughout activity. Audience can also switch role. Opportunities to do so will be provided.**
- 2. If you are uncomfortable being touched, you can still participate as a model by mirroring the sculptor.**
  - a. Modeling Negotiation-what healthy consent looks like.**

## How to Play

- 1. Models and sculptors in middle**
- 2. 30 seconds to sculpt. We observe. We switch. 30 seconds to sculpt. We observe.**
- 3. 30 seconds to sculpt. We observe. We switch. 30 seconds to sculpt. We observe.**

What does inattention look like?

What does attention look like?



# Modeling Non-Verbal Affirmation

Need: Everyone focuses on providing non-verbal  
affirmative cues

# Wrap-up and Question

What are some unconscious habits or behaviors that may be impeding your attentiveness or are distracting to the speaker?



# Topic 2: Internal Distractions

## 6 Reasons You Tune Out Other People

1. Thinking you have all the answers
2. Hasty Problem-Solving
3. Competitive Listening (waiting to interrupt)
4. Reacting to Red Flag Words
5. Obvious Physical Distractions
6. Your Specific World Problems

Adapted from: <https://www.fastcompany.com/3044890/5-common-reasons-you-tune-people-out>

# Listening with Distractions

Need: Smaller groups sitting facing one another

# Wrap-up and Question

What might be some good strategies to being present in spite of our normal internal stream of consciousness?

# Topic 3: Difficult Conversations

# Stop, Rewind

Need: Actors and “Spect-actors”

# How to Play Stop, Rewind

1. 2 actors needed to improvise scenario- a speaker and a listener.
2. Speaker will improvise the initial context and at cue indicated in scenario, will cease speaking but moving one's mouth as though speaking.
3. At cue, Listener will begin improvising the internal dialogue and mannerisms of a listener.
4. Anyone who wishes to intervene and suggest alternatives just has to say "Stop" and action will cease. They may replace any of the actors and the scene rewinds to suit the alternative.
5. Director will indicate when the scene has ended.

## Scenario 3.1

**Your colleague worked really hard on a project and is very proud of their efforts. Without intending to, you made a “joke” about the project and their work. They are now offended and are about to tell you how they feel.**

Distraction: Competitive Listening and Defensiveness



## Scenario 3.2

**Listener: Your colleague has been having a tough time outside of work. You are under a mountain of pressure and have a meeting in less than an hour. Your colleague would like to tell you their life story. What does attention, deep listening, and a graceful exit look like?**

Distraction: Your Specific World Problems



# Wrap-up and Question

How does one “budget” deep listening or know in which situations it seems the most appropriate?

# Debrief and Discussion

When you are ready to go, feel free to do so

# What we hoped you got from this session

- Practice in Deep Listening
- Ways to demonstrate attention without words
- Practice attending to internal distractions
- Strategies for overcoming the 6 reasons you tune others out
- Practice being compassionate when you don't have the time

Thank you for your attention and  
participation today!

# Theater of the Oppressed

“The theater itself is not revolutionary: it is a rehearsal for the revolution.”

**Augusto Boal.**