

You are Listening to Me When ... (For Consultants)

You are listening to me when	You are NOT listening to me when
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You come quietly into my private world and let me be.• You really try to understand me when I do not make sense.• You grasp my point of view when it goes against your sincere conviction.• You realize the hour I took from you has left you feeling a bit tired and drained.• You didn't tell me the funny story you were just bursting to tell me.• You allowed me the dignity of making my own decisions even though you felt I was wrong.• You didn't take my problem from me but trusted me to deal with it in my own way.• You gave me enough room to discover for myself why I felt upset and enough time to think for myself what was best.• You held back the desire to give me good advice. □• You accepted my gift of gratitude by telling me it was good to know I had been helped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You do not care about me, and you cannot care about me until you know something about me to care about.• You say you understand before you know me well enough.• You have an answer for my problem before I have finished telling you what my problem is.• You cut me off before I have finished speaking.• You feel critical of my grammar, accent, culture, or way of doing and saying things.• You are communicating to someone else in the room.• You are dying to tell me something or want to correct me.• You are trying to sort out the details and are not aware of the feelings behind the words.• You sense my problem is embarrassing and you are avoiding it.• You get excited and stimulated by what I am saying and want to jump right in before I invite your response.• You need to feel successful. □• You tell me about your experience, which makes mine seem unimportant.• You refuse my thanks by saying you haven't done anything.

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada. Mental health first aid Canada: You are listening to me when...
Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/>

Principles of practice for the consultant (Mental Health Commission of Canada):

- **Recognize the importance of an individual approach to recovery.** Respect where he/she happens to be in their journey of recovery. Recognize his/her goals, personal values, beliefs, and chosen path may not be the same as yours.
- **Honour and encourage self-determination** by working *with* the client to co-create and explore options rather than simply providing direction. Empower him/her to take steps forward on their own rather than “helping” by doing it for them.
- **Interact in a way that focuses on the client, not yourself.** Empower the person as he/she explores possibilities.
- **Use recovery-based language.** Focus on the person’s journey to a more hopeful, healthy and full life, not on symptoms, diagnosis, or an objective set by someone other than the peer.
- **Share aspects of his/her lived experience** in a way that is helpful, showing compassion and hope for his/her recovery.
- **Develop an open, honest, non-judgmental relationship** that validates the person’s feelings and perceptions in a way that cultivates trust and openness.