

- [Host] And with that, I'll hand it over to our speaker, Peggy.

- Hello and thank you so much for joining.

We're gonna be talking today about why active listening makes all the difference for speech language pathologists.

My name is Peggy Bud, and I am a licensed speech language pathologist, just like many of you. I'm also a certified school administrator and I have 30 years of experience in public education. About 13 years ago, I founded Speaking Skillfully.

My goal was to coach educators, parents, and business leaders on how to effectively communicate.

And one of the things I work on is active listening.

I am also the co-founder, the co-author of "Navigating Special Education, the Power of Building Positive Parent Educator Partnerships".

As well as, I'm a TEDx speaker.

My topic is called "Redefining the Parent Teacher Relationship".

And now, let's begin.

I'd like to start with this quote.

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand.

Rather, they listen with the intent to reply.

What that means is that most people wait for a pause in the conversation and then they start to talk.

That means that what's happening is a lot of monologues are occurring during what are supposed to be conversations and conversations are supposed to be dialogues.

Today, let's think about the learning outcomes that I'm hoping we're going to all accomplish.

The first, building an understanding of the difference between hearing, listening, and active listening as it pertains to being a speech language pathologist.

Number two, gaining a deep understanding about attributes of active listening and how that affects communication, impacts therapy, and actually helps you build relationships, with parents or caregivers, with colleagues, and even with your clients.

And third, I hope you will learn at least three active listening strategies that you can immediately use in conversations.

There, this is the first poll.

The first poll wants to know, have you ever taken a class in active listening? I'm just watching these results come in.

Okay, I'm gonna let them continue to come in, but I'm gonna talk while they are.

And I'm gonna say that what I'm seeing, I'm not surprised about.

Actually, I am surprised that a few people actually said they had a class in active listening.

I didn't know that colleges offered courses in active listening, but maybe you are thinking more about a class like this that you're taking now.

And I'm glad that there's a small number of you that have actually started to learn about active listening.

Most universities do not teach active listening.

And as a speech language pathologist, they do teach things like audiology.

And of course, we take classes in public speaking, and in that they may mention the ability to listen.

As a speech language pathologist, when you take a course in audiology, it's not about listening. It's really about a course on the science of hearing and how that relates to having hearing disorders.

Listening and active listening are not that.

They relate to being able to receive, interpret, recall, and evaluate and respond information that we hear verbally and non-verbally in a conversation.

Okay, now this says I can share the results.

Does that mean if I show this, everybody will see it?

- [Host] I did share them for a bit-

- Oh, okay, fine.

So now let's do the next one, which is, how would you rank your active listening skills? Do you think they're poor, average, or do you think that you are an excellent active listener? Okay, well, I'm not, you know, I'm not surprised what I'm seeing.

Most people think they're sort of average, as far as it comes to active listening.

And yet, what I would say is true is that you are really thinking more about your ability to listen.

And why do people think they're good listeners? Number one, you don't interrupt somebody when they're talking.

We know that.

And if you're a good listener, that's what you do.

Oftentimes, people who interrupt, they say, oh, they don't listen very well, they're always talking over me.

Secondly, a good listener understands that they have to, when listening, have to send some nonverbal messages.

And hopefully when you are listening, you're looking at the speaker, or nodding, and doing that.

So that makes you a good listener.

And thirdly, you say, well, you can repeat what somebody said, oftentimes verbatim.

And that doesn't make you a good active listener, it just means that you heard and remembered.

My husband always says, oh, you are such a good listener.

He really means, what he says is, because I can always repeat exactly what he said.

The truth is, I am a good listener, and not only can I repeat exactly what he said, but I can use what he said and embed it into the conversation and build on it so that we are able to have a conversation, a dialogue rather than a monologue.

Okay.

So what is effective communication? From my perspective, I like to define communication as more than two people talking.

I'm saying something and you are talking, as is in this picture, there's a child speaking and there's a child listening.

And that is communication.

I like to think about effective communication as the fact that while I'm talking, I'm also listening.

I'm listening to the person who is my listener.

I'm watching their nonverbal communication, and I am going to respond.

If they look confused, I'm going to stop talking and ask them a question.

If they look like they don't agree, I'm going to see if I can explain it differently.

That's effective communication.

And as a listener, they're not just listening to me, but they're sending me those messages.

If they agree, they're saying mm-hmm, yes.

They're smiling, they're looking at me, or they're shaking their head and letting me know they don't agree or maybe even looking angry and annoyed.

And that also sends me messages and helps me understand how that conversation needs to proceed.

That's what it means to be an effective communicator.

Many, many years ago, there was a psychologist, his name was Albert Mehrabian.

And Dr.

Mehrabian conducted a study about what made effective communication.

And what he was looking at, first, when it comes to verbal communication.

And what he was looking at was that he talked about three aspects of communication verbally.

One are the words we say.

Most of us spend a lot of time, when we're planning a conversation, as to focusing on what words we're gonna say.

There are two other really important aspects of that conversation.

The vocal part of it, how we deliver that message, our rate, our volume, tone, all of those things play into how we communicate.

And thirdly, our non-verbal communication, our overall appearance, our facial expressions, hand gestures, all of that plays in.

What Dr.

Mehrabian found was that if your words, your vocal communication and your nonverbal communication, don't send the exact same message, what happens is you remember only the nonverbal part and the words become about 7% of what you remember of the conversation.

And so I'm sharing that with you because I want you to understand that we have to think about, when we're having an effective conversation and when we're listening, the part that is played by visual.

I'd like to share a study that was done.

That study was done in a college class where the professor said to his students, you know, I have a friend who's gonna be stopping by and because she's in the building, and she'd like to just meet my class.

A little while later, there's a knock at the door and the woman's invited in, and the professor says, I want you to meet my dear friend, Mrs.

Baker.

I've known her for years.

She just wanted to see my class and say hello.

A brief conversation is had, and she leaves.

Another few weeks go by and he says, you know, I have another friend that is gonna be in the building.

She's delivering some food to a meeting.

And she wanted to stop by.

Little while later, knock at the door, in walks this woman, she's dressed like a baker, she has on a white coat and a big hat, and she even has a little flower on her face.

And she, she says, oh, you know, I just finished bringing all these goodies up for this meeting.

I just wanted to say hello.

And she leaves the professor a little goodie, and she goes.

A few weeks later, the professor says, you know, I wanna ask you a question.

Over the last couple weeks, I've had some visitors come in.

Can anyone remember the name of my friend who stopped by? Guess what? Not one student remembered her name.

And then he said, you know, I had another friend to come by.

Can anyone remember what she did for a living? And almost all, 75% of the hands went up.

They remembered she was a baker.

Why did they remember? Not his words, they remembered what they saw.

Visuals help us be an effective, active listener.

And that is so important.

They also help us remember what we hear when we're listening.

Because most listeners, as I said, they're not listening to the words.

They're more importantly playing what they're gonna say, around and round in their head, as the other person is speaking because they wanna say what they wanna say.

Think about times that you're in meetings where everybody has an idea and they wanna say it.

Or think about times when you're having some conflict and somebody wants to get their point across.

They're waiting for a pause in the conversation, rather than being an active listener, which would lead to more effective conversations and reduce conflict.

Did you know that you actually only remember about 25% of what we hear? Now, when we immediately finish a conversation, we probably remember at least 50% of what was said, but that's immediate.

If we wait 24, 48 hours, what happens is we've got that 50% of what we heard.

And guess what? We're only gonna remember 25% of that 50%.

So now we're down to 25% of what we heard.

As far as active listening, my guess is no matter what all of you thought, most of us don't engage in very much active listening, but rather just engage in listening.

What happens is that when we are listening, we are often impacted by noises around us, distractions.

How many of you have been on a Zoom call and realized that they were mowing your lawn that day or blowing the leaves now that it's fall, and you can't hear a thing? You are distracted.

The other person can't hear that, but you can.

And it's distracting you from listening to what is being said.

I know it's happened to me.

We also, when listening, get distracted in our own thoughts.

And when it comes to children or parents who have children with special needs, there's a lot of emotion involved.

We oftentimes start listening to our own emotions, which impacts our ability to really successfully and effectively listen to what's going on.

Okay, I said I was gonna tell you the difference between listening, hearing, and active listening. Let's start with hearing.

What is hearing? Hearing is the physiological ability to have sounds projected through the ear, probably something you learned in audiology class.

So those sounds bombard, the molecules bombard the airways till eventually it hits your ear. That's what hearing is.

And I'm sure most of you, when you log onto a Zoom call, that's not a webinar and you're talking to somebody, one of the first things you say is, can you hear me? What you wanna make sure is, is your microphone and audio on on your computer? Is my sound and my microphone and audio working on my end so that we can hear each other? Until we hear, we can't actively listen.

We can't listen.

We first have to be able to hear.

So of course we have to be able to hear.

But too often, people confuse can you hear with are you listening? I'm telling you that the difference between hearing and listening is not, they're not synonyms, they're different.

So let's think about, the Sprint commercial did the same thing.

Remember the guy and he had the phone up to his ear, and he said, can you hear me now? Can you hear me now? All he wanted to know was that when he spoke into his phone, that you could hear it on your phone.

That's not what we're talking about when we're referring to active listening.

So let's go to the next thing, listening, because we have to listen before we can actively listen.

What does listening mean? Listening means the ability to understand the words that are being said, to actually understand the message, to make meaning of what is being said.

So if you are hearing somebody speak in a foreign language, you're not understanding it.

So you're trying to listen to them.

And maybe you're getting a little bit of their message from their nonverbal communication, but you're not understanding the words they're saying.

So it's hard to really listen.

And then part of listening is responding.

And you can't respond if your brain doesn't even understand the words.

And now, we're what we're here today to talk about, active listening.

Active listening means all of those things, you have to hear, you have to understand.

And it also means that you have to be fully engaged in what the other person is saying.

You have to listen with your whole body.

You are not multitasking.

You are listening.

You are listening with your eyes, you are leaning in, and you are really hearing their verbal, vocal, and nonverbal communication.

And when you respond to what they say, you are responding by building on what they have said.

Not waiting for that pause and then saying what you want to say.

That's not an active listener.

You might have heard that they stopped talking, but you weren't really building on what they said.

Also, being an active listener is hard work because it means being able to focus out all that extraneous stuff I talked about, making sure that you focus out distracting sounds.

You focus out the thoughts that you're having in your head, that you are thinking about because of this conversation or the emotions that you're tied up with.

If you're actively listening, you are engaged in that conversation and those words and building on it.

And we're gonna be talking about strategies that you can use to do that.

An active listener is looking for data.

Because if you hear data, that will help you understand and process what's being said.

Actively listening can impact our ability also to remember, because we've not just heard the words and processed the words, but we've engaged in a conversation of using those words.

So let's think about this.

Active listening and you, the speech language pathologist, it's a skill.

It's a skill that we have to hone and practice.

It's not innate to be an active listener.

Most of us are born with the ability to hear, thankfully.

And most of us learn very quickly the rules of how to listen.

Remember, not interrupting, focusing on everything the person's saying, being ready to respond, to listen.

Also, as a speech language pathologist, know that actively listening means that it's something that you can use, not just professionally as a speech pathologist, but the skills that we're talking about and the importance of actively listening is something that you will use in all aspects of your life in order to have effective conversations, whether it's professionally or with your friends, with your family, with your children.

Being an active listener can help you have more meaningful conversations.

Active listening.

As a speech language pathologist, remember, active listening means that you're going to hear what is said.

You need to understand what is said.

And then you need to be actively engaged in what is said.

That is the importance of being an active listener.

And it can and will, I promise you, change the trajectory of many conversations if you are actively engaged in what is going on.

Because what are you doing? One, you are building on what has been said.

Two, you are actually demonstrating engagement in that conversation.

And three, you are letting the other person know that you have not only heard what they said, but you are valuing it.

And let's not confuse valuing what somebody says with agreeing.

Active listening does not mean that you have to agree, but it means that you have to hear and value.

Active listening and the speech language pathologist.

It means that you are going to be able to build communication partnerships.
And those communication partnerships are so important.
As a speech pathologist, being a communication partner with parents or caregivers, depending on the age of your client, as well as being a partner with your colleagues, is going to definitely affect teaching and learning.
And that's why active listening will improve teaching and learning.
It will help you understand who your client is, how they're performing, what they need to learn.
It will drive all of that.
And lastly, if you are building a partnership and you are working to improving teaching and learning with your students, you are going to be building trust.
And that's what active listening does.
It leads to trust with everyone involved in the conversation.
Now, I know it's what you've been waiting for, active listening strategies.
The things that I'm gonna talk about, you can do as soon as we leave this webinar.
It's gonna take a lot of time and practice to really be good at it, but you can try it.
So let's see where we begin.
Look at this dog.
He looks like he's listening, doesn't he? I just love him.
I wanna pat him on the nose.
Okay.
Yet, he does not have the ability, he might have the ability to hear and to look, but he doesn't have the ability to perform some active listening strategies.
Let's talk about two important ones.
Summarizing or paraphrasing.
That's how we build on a conversation.
Somebody says something, so pause.
I'm going to talk.
I need to make sure that, I want them to know that I really heard what they said and understood what they said.
So either, I can summarize, and that just means using their words, but shortening it, tell what their point was, and then build on it.
Or I can paraphrase.
And when I paraphrase, I'm going to actually use my own words, but the meaning of what the person said.
Since we are building on what other people are saying, we have to make sure we understand.
So it means that we can't do it if we don't understand.
So another part of this is asking for clarification.
Remember, there is no such thing as a silly question.
If you didn't understand something, if you want a better example, ask the person, whether it's your colleague, whether it's the parent, whether it's a student.
Make sure that you don't just respond because then they're not gonna feel like you really heard them.
They aren't gonna feel what they said was valued if you didn't understand.
And yet you could understand by just asking for clarification.

That means asking questions like not only what, but why and how.

All of that is important.

Next strategy.

I'm talking about asking questions.

What does that mean? Well, to have a good conversation and to be an active listener, we have to ask open-ended questions.

Now, as speech language pathologists, we ask a lot of closed questions to our students.

A closed question is a yes or no question.

Well, if our student has a limited language understanding or limited communication, our first step is to maybe get them to answer yes or no.

And so that's the question we ask them, and that's the response we want.

Would you like a cookie? Yes or no? That's what they're gonna tell you.

Would you like me to read you a story? Yes or no? Those are closed questions.

They're great in teaching therapy.

Another kind of closed question is giving somebody a choice, or asking them, is this a pen? Let's see if I can get it, there it is.

Is this a pen or a toothbrush? That's a closed question.

They only have a one word response.

So what's an open-ended question? To the parent, tell me why you think your child is frustrated when talking to his friends? To your colleague, explain to me how the student is performing during story time or during circle time that's being impacted by their communication.

Those are open-ended questions.

Describe, tell me.

You want them to open up and give you a paragraph.

And that's means that now you have something to listen to, something to understand, to gain and to value as you're having this conversation.

Again, it's not just about listening.

It's about how we respond.

What we need to do is always remember that when we're listening, we usually, I could guess, we usually say yes when somebody is talking.

We oftentimes start our conversation, yes.

Sadly, so often what we do is we say, yes, but.

And what does that do? It shuts the conversation.

Because now what you've done is you have negated whatever I said.

You said yes, and I'm going, oh, I'm so glad I like what I said.

And then you said, but, and then now it's no longer valuable.

What you need to practice, and this takes a lot of practice because we all use the word but too much.

Say yes and.

Build on what they said.

And that will change the trajectory of your conversation.

It will help the other person know that you heard and valued what they were saying.

And now you wanna add to.

Remember, active listening is building on that conversation.

And that is so important.

We don't wanna shut down the conversation.

We want to confirm what was said and build on it.

I love this picture because it makes me think about how people view things.

And what we're talking about is perspective-taking.

To be an active listener, we have to be able to understand the other person's perspective.

We need to be able to hear what they're saying, why they're saying it, why they feel that way, why they believe that this is the best way to service their child.

Why this is the best approach.

Whatever it is, we have to understand their viewpoint.

If we actively listen and understand another person's perspective, we are definitely going to avoid a lot of conversations that end up in arguments.

And we don't want to do that.

Perspective-taking allows you to stand in the other person's shoes.

Look at that picture.

Think about the fact that the person who sees the world through their own perspective is the the top view.

The bottom view is how we're seeing it.

What we're seeing, how they see it, what they're doing with their camera.

We can see their perspective and look at the world of how they're looking and what they're seeing things.

That is so important.

Learning to listen to parents, learning to understand, from their perspective, why they see their child frustrated, why they see their child struggling.

Listening to your colleagues who want you to do something a certain way or move in a certain direction.

Why do they think that? Understanding what their perspective is.

If I understand your perspective and you understand my perspective, what it's going to do, it's going to open up a world of possibilities and perhaps allow us to come up with new and creative ideas or solutions or ways to move forward that would not happen if we didn't understand perspective.

And of course, it helps to reduce conflict in a conversation.

When using these strategies, as I said, when people are talking, there's the give and the take, and we are going to be taking turns.

I want you to do something.

I want you to start to think about, why am I talking? Before you speak, why are you talking? And keep this sign in mind.

Wait.

Wait until you have organized your thinking.

Wait until you are able to build upon, or summarize, or understand the other person's perspective so that you don't say yes, but, and you say yes and.

And understand.

Another thing I want you all to do is to remember to stop.

When I say that, what do I mean? I want you to stop, take a breath, listen and observe.

Remember, listening isn't just hearing those words and understanding them, but it's seeing, seeing how the person is looking, how the person is sounding.

What are their facial expressions? What are their body language? Observe everything.

That will make you a better active listener in order to then proceed with the conversation.

Listening is not agreeing.

There is a big difference.

And please don't think that if I listen to you, we're gonna shake hands and say, yeah, I heard you.

Okay, let's move on.

No, listening is really a process of doing what the old Greek philosopher said, we have two ears and one mouth.

So we wanna listen twice as much as we speak so that we can gather information.

And if we are actively listening, we're going to have more productive conversations.

And again, productive conversations have to mean that we're going to agree because we may end up coming up with new and better solutions or more creative solutions by listening to each other.

Active listening also improves conversations, whether it's with your students, your colleagues, or families.

And it leads to new possibilities.

So in summary, listening, of course, is the other half of talking.

And active listening means that you hear, you listen, and then you use all of those active listening strategies to have a really meaningful, and powerful, and effective conversation.

No, active listening takes work.

You can't be multitasking when you do it.

Looking on your phone, checking your email, watching the world around you.

You have to be laser-focused when you actively listen.

And it's tiring.

If you are in a meeting, and you're really actively listening, I guarantee you when you walk out of that meeting, you're gonna go, oh, because you're so focused.

But that meeting should be more productive, and maybe would've been shorter, and maybe had less conflict.

Again, actively listening does not have to mean you are agreeing.

And lastly, active listening ensures that you are having productive conversations.

And that's because, listening, again, is the other half of talking.

And so I think we're ready for some questions.

Hello?

- [Host] I don't see any, there are no questions right now.

Not yet, anyway.

- Does anyone have a question? Okay, well, I'm glad that, I mean, I hope that everyone has a lot of things to take with 'em.

If you have any questions, please feel free.

You can write to me at peggy@peggybud.com.

Remember that it is always more than what you say, it's how you say it.

And you can also find some answers to some of these questions I've written about active listening and posted it on my Speaking Skillfully website, as well as Navigating Special Education, which has information about my book.

And there's blogs on that.

There's an entire chapter in our book about active listening as well as it being embedded in all aspects of building positive parent educator partnerships.

So with that, I wanna thank you so much for being here today and hope that you can leave and really be active listeners and more productive in your conversations, professionally and personally.

Thank you so much for joining us.

- [Host] All right, we do have, quite a few questions have come in now.

- Oh, okay.

- [Host] The first one, this is from Laurie.

Can you explain the yes and, again? I got distracted by an airplane.

- No problem.

See, I mentioned that.

Ok, yes and, what we want, Aaron, is we want to remember that too often, what we say when somebody says something, the natural tendency is to say yes.

And then more likely, we have a different thoughts.

So we say yes, but, and that shuts down the conversation.

So what I was saying is, when you're responding with that yes, build on what they say by saying yes, and then add and rather than a but, and that will help you have a more productive conversation.

- [Host] All right, next question.

When working with students, where should we start?

- I'm sorry, I don't understand the question.

- [Host] Okay, Lorena, if you have more to that question, please type that in the chat.

I'll jump to the next one then.

How do you start teaching these strategies to the children we work with?

- Okay, I think that first of all, modeling is a great way to teach any listening strategy.

So showing them some of these strategies such as, I would say summarizing or paraphrasing is an important strategy that helps them be listeners and teaching them what that means so that they start to listen to what somebody says and be able to wrap that up into an easy, either summary, whether it's in their words or the other person's words.

And another thing that I think our students oftentimes are reluctant to do is to raise their hands and ask for clarification.

If you're really a good listener, you have to be aware that you might not have understood something, and you should not be afraid to ask another question.

And remember, those questions are not just the what questions, but they're the why and the how questions.

So you keep helping them understand, in order to learn by listening, we may have to kind of unpeel that onion and keep asking more questions.

So those are two of the strategies that I would say you could start with when you're working with your students.

- [Host] Right, do you have any checklists that can be shared about good conversation traits?

- I don't have any checklists on that.

I mean, these are, I would say in our book, and we have a checklist of conversation starters that helps parents understand how to start having a good conversation.

And they're also the reverse.

They're good questions, such as saying to a parent, describe how you see your child's strengths so that you're opening up those conversations rather than asking them a yes, no question, or tell me a strength of your child.

That's a one word.

Oh, my child can do whatever.

So we have some deeper ones of that.

We don't really have any checklists.

We have more the information about the strategies, because active listening is really a strategy rather than something that we're gonna check off.

It's are you using, I would say, these strategies and do you understand them?

- [Host] All right, the next one's a statement, but you may be able to add to this.

I would like to learn more about how to end a monologue from another person.

- Okay, well, I think obviously modeling is important.

I would say also asking them questions.

If somebody is just giving you a monologue, it might be asking them a question to bring them back on track.

So asking them a question related to where we were in the conversation.

As we know, when we're in difficult conversations or when somebody has their own agenda, oftentimes, they don't answer the question that's asked or they don't participate.

Because all they're doing, remember, is waiting for that pause.

so they can say what they want to say.

So we need to end that by moving that conversation and asking them either an open-ended question or redirecting what we're saying by saying, okay, you're saying that, and, and moving that back.

And I would say there's nothing wrong with saying to the person, you haven't answered my question, or, that's not really what we're talking about.

Let's go back to this and then we can revisit what you're concerned about if you're in a meeting and it's with, I've been in those meetings as a speech language pathologist, and also as an administrator and a consultant.

And let me tell you, they are hard.

They're difficult because parents have their agenda or a professional has their agenda.

So we need to respect that as well as build on and move on by asking those questions and using some of those strategies.

- [Host] All right, the next question, would it be helpful to provide students with question stems?

- Would it be helpful to provide students with what? I didn't hear you.

- [Host] Questions stems.

- Question stems mean like question starters? Of course, if a student is struggling with how to ask questions, of course that's a good teaching strategy, letting them understand what are questions.

It's also another strategy would be to let them unpack what the conversation is and looking at what is a good, I mean, I always like to use the WH question.

So letting them understand, asking a who, a what, a why, a where, a how question is a good way to help them to understand how to ask questions.

- [Host] All right, do you have any tips on how to respond when a parent shares personal information with you? When I don't know a parent very well, it is hard to know how they want me to respond.

When I say personal, I mean emotional experiences or struggles.

- Well, I would say, I know that sometimes we get, some people are uncomfortable getting that personal.

On the other hand, if a parent feels that they need to share something and you need to keep it professional, but use that, and ask those questions.

Okay, you're sharing this how, and finding out how are you seeing this impacting your child's learning? Or how can I help your child so that you kind of move this back? I'm not sure, I can't respond specifically 'cause I don't know the specific question, but I know that there are people who do feel uncomfortable when they get into that personal space.

But think about that as a compliment to you.

They trust you.

And trust is an important part of building a partnership.

So understanding them and understanding where they're coming from is important.

So unless it's really too much information that you don't wanna get involved with, if it's about something that you feel is just outside of your realm of appropriateness, then tell them, I'm sorry, that's really not something that's in my realm.

And maybe you wanna refer them to the school social worker or to a psychologist, if you feel that it's not comfortable in that way.

Otherwise use it to your advantage because it's building on those conversations and it's building that relationship and partnership, which I believe is so important.

When parents came to me and looked at me as someone who they could partner with and they could share some concerns, and they trusted me, that I wasn't gonna be judgmental, that I wasn't gonna be biased, that I was gonna be open, and honest, and listening, it really moved teaching and learning to a different level.

- [Host] All right, next question.

Do you advise when we are speaking with families to use phrases such as, I hear you, I understand what you're saying, I hear your concerns.

Or does this not necessarily reflect active listening?

- Using I statements is always great.

I would say, you want to say, what do you hear? I hear, and then summarize what you hear they're saying.

I hear you can sound like pablum.

Yeah, I hear you, I hear you.

Think about the tone of that.

But if you say, I hear that you are really frustrated with your child's progress because he still has meltdowns every day.

Let's talk about some new strategies that I can offer you, or let's talk about what strategies you're already trying so that we can help.

That's good.

So think about how you say those things.

Again, it's not just what you're saying, but it's how you're saying it and making sure that you clarify and you add on to what they're telling you,

- [Host] Right, there's two more.

What if it seems like someone else cannot take your perspective?

- You know, sometimes, obviously, we do get to a point where we have to say, we're gonna agree to disagree.

And I like to think that that doesn't happen very often.

In our book, we've created what we call the 5C Model of Communication, which begins with conversations.

So another piece of advice, if somebody isn't understanding your perspective, you may wanna go back and really start having, you need to look at more conversations, dig deeper, ask more questions, ask for more clarification, ask to understand so that you let them know you

understand their perspective and find out what about your perspective that they're struggling with.

Because again, it's about that conversation, instead of just saying, okay, we disagree.

Well, you really wanna know why are you not understanding my perspective? What about what I'm thinking are you not understanding or do you disagree with? And then why do you disagree with it? Now you can have those conversations, and I know, I've been in those meetings, I understand sometimes you get to that point and it's just not gonna work.

And especially as the speech language pathologist versus, you may want to bring in another person to that conversation.

If you are feeling that they're not understanding you, excuse me.

Whether it be an administrator in a school, whether it be a colleague, or whether it be I'm a psychologist or social worker, if you run into those battles.

Active listening is not the panacea that it's going to solve every situation, nothing is all inclusive. It's just a big giant step in moving in the right direction.

- [Host] Right, and the last question I have here is similar to one that you, you may have answered.

So if you don't have any more to add, I completely understand.

How do you diffuse someone who is not actively listening?

- Again, if they're not actively listening, you try to bring them into the conversation.

You ask them some open-ended questions and try to initiate them being involved in that conversation.

It's hard if somebody isn't open to actively listening, it's about being open and wanting to do that.

And so you might wanna find out, you know, why.

And you know, sometimes we forget.

Sometimes it's something we said that really shut down that conversation and we don't realize it.

We have a story in our book called "Words actually Shut Down the Conversation" and the story goes, and all the stories, all the case studies in our book are true.

They did happen.

And a teacher recommends, at an IEP meeting, a self-contained classroom.

And as soon as that happens, the parents stop listening.

They're on their cell phones, they look away, they want nothing to do with it.

And it takes re-engaging them.

And once it became apparent that what shut down that conversation and why they weren't actively listening was because they didn't believe their child belonged in a self-contained classroom.

And then once they started having conversations and really got them involved and started talking about what the parents were looking for and why, and the teacher realized, well, it wasn't really that they were recommending a self-contained classroom, they were recommending something different.

And the whole trajectory of the conversation changed.

But words can shut down that conversation.

So if you see somebody not actively listening, you need to figure out what was said and why did they stop listening, and then how can we engage them and move forward?

- [Host] Okay, no, I said that was the last one, but I do have one more.

- That's okay.

- [Host] Does not being an auditory learner affect your active listening skills? I'm thinking of adults and students.

- Obviously, auditory learning, meaning that you have to process information, that you have trouble if you don't have visuals.

But remember, remember the Mehrabian study actually, and and the baker story actually, we hear a lot non-verbally and those non-verbal cues.

What we know even about remembering what we hear, research tells us that what happens when we're trying to pull up and conjure up a memory of something that was said, usually, what we hear first is something non-verbal.

Either we remember the tone or we remember the person's facial expressions.

Sometimes we remember what they were wearing or how they looked.

Or if we're trying to remember who said it, we might be thinking about, oh, the lady that was sitting in the back row with the green jacket.

So sometimes being visual is not really going to impact your ability to be actively listening.

Because remember, listening is listening to words, vocal and nonverbal communication.

- [Host] Alright, that is all of the questions.

Thank you Peggy, for sharing your knowledge and expertise with us.

For everyone here, thank you for attending.

If you would like to earn ASHA CEU for today's session, please remember to complete the assessment.

You will be redirected to that post-session page once the webinar ends.

And there will be a link included in the follow-up email that will go out tomorrow as well.

Here you'll be able to access the survey and the assessment on that post-session page.

The assessment must be completed 80% or better, and will remain open for one week.

Again, thank you everyone for attending and have a great day.