

## A Time You Felt Different

**Empathy** - The ability to see the situation from the standpoint of the other in order to help them succeed.

To prepare yourself for empathic listening, considering the following ideas:

1. Recognize the inherent dignity and value in myself as well as the speaker.
2. Instill a personal desire to want to listen to others.
3. Think of positive qualities of the other person.

This mindset will begin to set you up for a mindful interaction with the speaker.

### Goal:

The goal of this exercise is to enhance empathy. The listener is asked to focus on and perceive the speaker's feelings or step into his or her thoughts.

### Exercise:

- Choose a partner.
- Think of a time when you felt different.
  - It can be when you were a child or as an adult.
  - It may have been work-related, school related, or even family related.
- Suggested ideas:
  - Your first day of high school, jr. high, or college.
  - Moving to a new city or neighborhood.
  - Being the new person in a class.
  - Having a different religious, political, or ideological views than everyone else.
  - Going shopping with friends and having the least amount of money.
  - Being excluded from a group or team.
- Both you and your partner will have five minutes to tell your story.
- Answer the debrief questions.

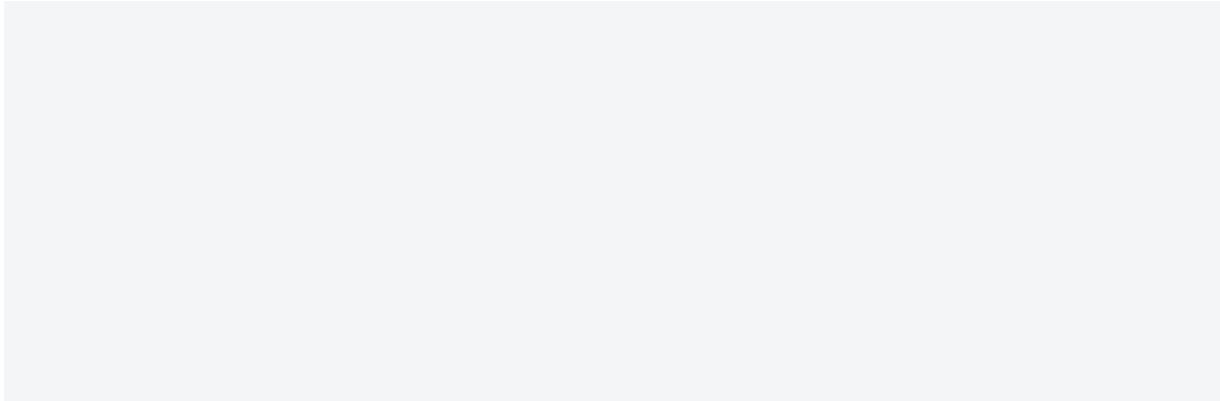
SPEAKER - include in your story:	LISTENER - consider while listening:
How you felt.	Don't interrupt, get comfortable, silence your mind chatter.
What was the most difficult aspect?	Set aside judgments, listen beyond words.
What was your reaction?	Perceive the speaker's feelings.
Was it ever resolved?	Step into their thoughts.
Reflection.	Check your understanding. Offer an empathetic statement: "That sounds really hard."

**Listener Debrief:**

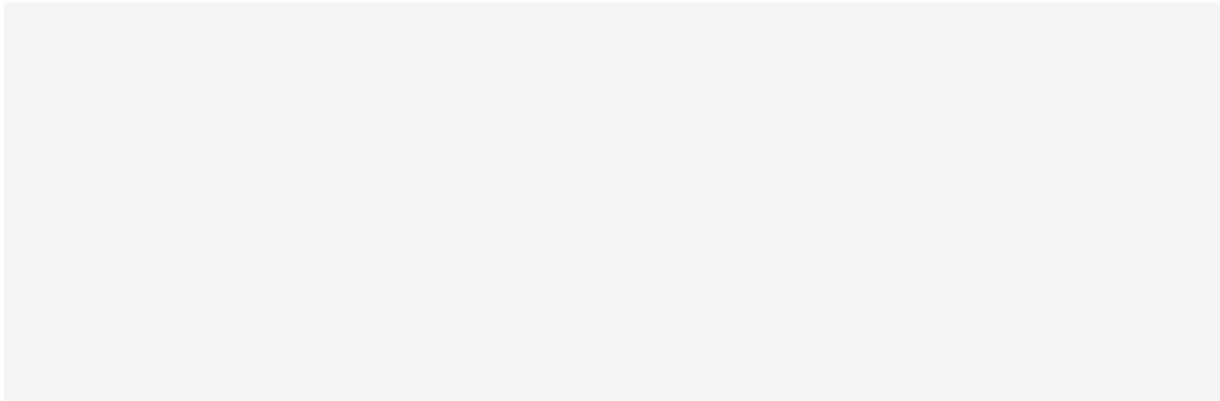
**1. Were you able to set aside judgments?**

**2. Were you aware of your own emotions and thoughts?**

**3. Did you let the speaker know you were listening?**



**4. If you offered an empathetic response, what cues did the speaker give indicating it was well received?**



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