**CORE PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE LISTENING**

**Below are five core principles of active listening.   
Circle the techniques you think you use on a daily basis.**

**1. Physical Attention**

◆ Face the person who is talking.

◆ Look them in the eye, if it is culturally appropriate.

◆ Notice the speaker’s body language; does it match what he/she is saying?

◆ Can you match the speaker’s body language?

◆ Try not to do anything else while you are listening.

**2. Paraphrasing**

◆ Show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

◆ Check the meaning and your interpretation.

◆ Restate basic ideas and facts.

◆ Check to make sure your understanding is accurate by saying:

• “It sounds like what you mean is...

• “Is that so?”

• “So what happened was. . . Is that correct?”

**3. Reflecting**

◆ Show that you understand how the person feels.

◆ Help the person evaluate his or her feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else.

◆ Reflect the speaker’s feelings by saying:

• “Are you saying that you’re angry/disappointed/glad, because. . . ?”

• “It sounds like you feel. . .”

**4. Clarifying questions**

◆ Help clarify what is said.

◆ Get more information.

◆ Help the speaker see other points of view.

◆ Use a tone of voice that conveys interest.

◆ Ask open-ended questions, as opposed to yes/no questions, to elicit more information.

• “Can you explain what you mean by that?”

• “Can you tell me more about that?”

**5. Encouragers**

◆ Show interest by saying:

• “Really?”

• “Is that so?”

**Discussion Questions**

**Instructions: Respond to the following questions in 3-4 complete and detailed sentences.**

1. What did it feel like to really be listened to without being interrupted? Does that happen often in your life? Why or why not?

2. What made this activity challenging for you? Why? If nothing about this activity felt challenging for you, explain why not.

3. How can using active listening skills help you to build trust with the person to whom you are listening?

4. Why is active listening an important skill for managing conflicts of all levels, from personal to international?

5. What might happen in an international conflict when parties do not feel heard? (Hint: Think about the importance of trust and building relationships when managing a conflict. Remember that active listening allows a person to learn the other person’s perspective instead of assuming that she/he knows what the other person thinks/means/wants.)

6. Share one core principle of active listening you do well and one you need to work on. Explain your responses in detail.