



Can you repeat the part of the stuff where you said all about the things?

This is how you become a good listener

MATILDA

It's nice to be heard, and even nicer to be a good listener for a friend, at least for the friend. Many of us think we are good listeners, but in reality we are not. In fact, many of us are absolutely terrible listeners and don't even realise it. This problem can, however, be fixed.

BE EMPATHETIC

How do you do this? Tell them your story instead to indirectly let them know that whatever their experiences were, yours is worth knowing more. She doesn't know what you went through and you have absolutely no idea what she went through cause you never let her talk, but that's only because you just *know* that your feelings are more poignant, intense, and worthy of discussion. Some might say that

giving advice without fully knowing what is troubling a person is like being a doctor who prescribes medicines without first hearing about the patient's problems, but these are just envious people who don't understand how your profound wisdom can heal all kinds of wounds, even if the wisdom you impart has no relevance to what the person was about to discuss. So if they try to tell you how they feel after their parrot died last week, tell them how you were worried sick about your grades two weeks ago but they turned out fine. It's not the same thing, but yours is simply better and more helpful.

MAKE EYE CONTACT

Stare at their eyes without blinking, and if possible, try to look like you have been hypnotised by Kaa from *The Jungle Book* to show how enchanted you are by them.

To make this easier, you can also think of yourself as Medusa turning people into stone, just not as quickly as you see in the movies. Rather than making them uncomfortable, this assures the person speaking that you are not distracted by your surroundings and all your attention is on them. Just remember to notice when their mouths have stopped moving because in your efforts to look them in the eye, you might not have realised when they've finished speaking.

OVERTALK AND INTERRUPT THE SPEAKER

Some say that you shouldn't do this because apparently this is a sign of disrespect and shows that you disregard how others feel, but really, you are just showing them that you are eager and are trying to help them by ensuring they

don't have to waste their energy by talking too much. Their furrowed eyebrows and poorly concealed scowls may make it seem like they're not happy you interrupted them, but it is important to remember that not everyone expresses emotions the same way. The saying "turn that frown upside down" exists to remind us that smiles and frowns are actually the same thing. So if they huff and snort and stomp away, just know that they may be telling you, in their own special way, that they're super happy to be cut off.

And that's how you become a good listener.

Matilda likes to pretend she is invisible and inconspicuous. Tell her that you can read right through her at matilda.tilda1234@gmail.com



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