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# Emotional Workshop: Fostering Socio- Emotional Development Through Active Listening



## Objective:

- the participants will learn and practice active listening techniques, understand their socio-emotional impact, and explore how these skills enhance digital storytelling
- explore the relationship between communication, active listening and socio-emotional learning
- learning about active listening and pedagogical approaches

## Key Components:

- understanding how active listening impacts SEI
- learning new active listening techniques
- practising empathy through mindful listening
- connecting active listening to digital storytelling

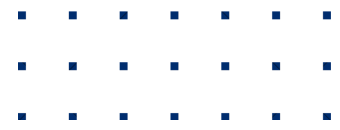
## Duration:

45 minutes





## Workshop Overview



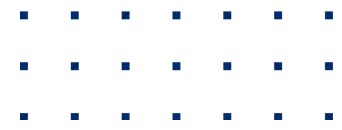
### Welcome to the Active Listening and Socio-Emotional Learning workshop

Over the next 45 minutes we will explore how active listening and socio-emotional skills can increase your emotional intelligence and improve your relationships. This session is designed to help you understand the importance of active listening in fostering empathy, trust and connection with others. By the end of this workshop, you will have practical strategies for implementing active listening techniques, recognising and managing your emotions, and setting clear goals for developing your socio-emotional skills.

- **Introduction (10 minutes).** Active listening is an important skill that plays a crucial role in building relationships, fostering empathy and improving communication. Introduce the definition of active listening and its relevance
- **Pair Activity (20 minutes).** Encourage participants to share and to actively listen to other peer fellow's emotional story and the impact on their SEL
- **Group Reflection (10 minutes):** Participants will discuss their experiences with active listening and its role in building relationships, as well as how socio-emotional dynamics influenced their understanding of shared stories.
- **Conclusion (5 minutes).** Wrap-up of the discussion. Summarise the key points discussed about active listening and its relevance.

# Workshop:

Fostering Socio-Emotional Development Through Active  
Listening and Pedagogical Approaches



## Introduction

Emotions have a significant impact on engagement, work ethic, commitment and success in both educational and professional environments. In the workplace, emotional dynamics affect productivity, collaboration and employee satisfaction. Positive emotional experiences increase motivation and identification, while negative emotions can lead to disengagement and conflict.

Active listening is essential to managing these dynamics. By genuinely focusing on what others are saying, individuals can better understand colleagues' perspectives, foster empathy and create a supportive culture. Research shows that effective listening improves relationships and communication, which are essential for a healthy workplace (Elias et al, 1997).

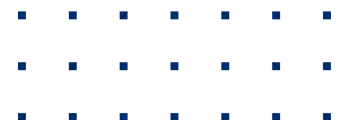
For students: Studies show that active listening significantly boosts student engagement and academic performance. A meta-analysis by Durlak et al. (2023) found that teaching active listening in socio-emotional learning programs improves academic outcomes and peer relationships. The European Commission (2020) also emphasizes that integrating active listening into curricula fosters a supportive learning environment and enhances students' socio-emotional skills.



### 4 things all great listeners know

# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening



### Pair activity

#### Pair Activity (20 minutes)

#### Activity Instructions (5 minutes)

- Pair up with a partner and take turns sharing an emotional situation from your life and/or an important movie and its impact on your socio-emotional learning. It is important that everyone knows what and how much to share.
- Each of you will have 3-5 minutes to express your feelings and thoughts, focusing on the emotional experience and how it shaped your understanding of socio-emotional skills. Remember to practice active listening by fully engaging with your partner's story. At the same time, be mindful of how others feel and create a safe space to share.

#### Active listening techniques:

Please practice active listening techniques, including:

1. Maintaining eye contact
2. Nodding to show understanding
3. Paraphrasing key points after the speaker has finished
4. Asking clarifying questions to deepen understanding

# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening



### Mindful listening (15 minutes)



Please remain mindful throughout the process. If their mind wanders, gently bring it back to the speaker and the conversation. If necessary, do a mindfulness exercise (5 minutes) if your mind wanders during the listening exercise.

- Both participants start to talk and listen and after they have had their turn, they provide feedback on their listening skills.
- Please reflect on how you felt while listening and sharing, emphasising the emotional aspects of communication.
- Socio-Emotional Reflection:
  - Please identify and discuss emotions they experienced during the exchange. Questions could include:
    - How did the mindfulness exercise affect your ability to listen?
    - What techniques helped you feel more engaged in the conversation?
    - How did it feel to share your emotional situation, and how did the active listening of your partner influence that experience?

# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening



### Group Reflection (10 minutes)



At the end of this exercise ask the participants to come back together to discuss insights and feelings about the exercise.

The participants should discuss the overall experience.

Questions like are to be asked:

- What did you learn about the importance of active listening in building relationships?
- How did your understanding of socio-emotional dynamics change your perception of the stories being shared?
- How can these skills enhance your SEL?

Connect to digital storytelling:

Please discuss how the skills learned can be applied to their digital storytelling.

Emphasise the importance of understanding characters' emotions and perspectives to create compelling stories.

# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening



### Conclusion (5 minutes)

Optional, 5 minutes

- Wrap-Up:
  - The educator summarises the key points about active listening, socio-emotional learning, and their relevance to SEL and digital storytelling.
  - Try to practice these skills in their daily lives and apply them in their upcoming projects.



# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening



### Instructions for Teachers

**Objective:** To explain to participants the benefits of socio-emotional development, communication and its importance in education.

Benefits of SEL and active listening:

- Improved academic/work performance
- Builds trust and safety at the workplace/ in the classroom.
- Enhances empathy and emotional understanding.
- Reduced behavioural problems

**Duration:** 45 minutes

#### Materials Needed:

- Handouts with active listening techniques (e.g. eye contact, paraphrasing, summarising, asking clarifying questions)
- A timer
- Access to digital storytelling tools (e.g. Canva, Adobe Spark)
- Whiteboard or flipchart

### Workshop step by step

#### Step 1. Introduction (5 minutes)

in this section the main concepts and expectations and learning goals of the exercise are explained

Strategies:

- Create a safe space for sharing.
- Model active listening behaviours.
- Use structured activities like active listening exercises in pairs or small groups, allowing practice and feedback.





# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening

### Step 2. Pair Activity (20 minutes)

Mention common challenges that can occur during the exercise:

- Resistance from participants/students
- Time constraints

Solutions:

- Gradual integration of techniques: Some pedagogical approaches that promote active listening skills in participants include cooperative learning, peer teaching, role-playing, discussion circles, think-pair-share, mindfulness practices, feedback sessions, digital storytelling, debates and discussions, and structured reflection.
- Short, focused exercises to start

### Step 3. Activity Instructions (5 minutes)

- Pair participants: Pair participants with someone they do not know to create a comfortable environment for sharing.
- Encourage expression: Invite participants to openly express their feelings and thoughts about the emotional situations they share, emphasising the importance of vulnerability and active listening.
- **Mindfulness exercise (5 minutes):**
- **Breathing:** Guide participants to take a few deep breaths, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth, focusing on the sensation of their breath as it flows in and out.
- **Body scan:** Conduct a quick body scan, starting from the feet and moving up to the head, encouraging them to notice any tension and consciously relax those areas.
- **Present moment:** Ask participants to bring their attention to the present moment, letting go of distractions and preparing to listen attentively to their partner.



## Workshop:

### Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening

#### **Step 4. Group reflection (10 minutes)**

At the end of this exercise ask the participants to come back together to discuss insights and feelings about the exercise.

Ask them questions such as:

What did you learn about the importance of active listening in building relationships?

How has your understanding of socio-emotional dynamics influenced your perception of the stories shared?

In what ways can these skills enhance your socio-emotional learning?

#### **Step 5. Conclusion (5 minutes)**

Summarise key points: Wrap up the session by highlighting the key points about active listening and socio-emotional learning (SEL). Emphasise how these skills strengthen relationships, foster empathy and improve communication.

Relevance to digital storytelling: Discuss the importance of these skills in the context of digital storytelling, noting how understanding emotions and perspectives can create more compelling narratives.



# Workshop:

## Socio-Emotional Development Through Active Listening

### Follow-Up Activity at Home:

Motivate participants to practice active listening and socio-emotional skills in their daily lives. Suggest that they incorporate these techniques into their upcoming projects, reinforcing the value of empathy and connection in both personal and professional settings.

### Tips for teachers:

- **Model active listening:** Show genuine interest by making eye contact, nodding, and responding thoughtfully.
- **Create a safe space:** Make sure everyone feels comfortable sharing, with respect and confidentiality at the core.
- **Use mindfulness:** Kick off or wrap up classes with mindfulness exercises to help participants/students focus and be present.
- **Structured discussions:** Use formats like think-pair-share or fishbowl to ensure everyone gets a chance to speak and listen.
- **Watch pair dynamics:** Make sure everyone gets their turn to share.
- **Encourage reflection:** Get participants reflecting on their listening experiences through journals or group talks.
- **Give feedback:** Offer constructive feedback on active listening, pointing out strengths and areas to improve.

# TOOLS



## Mindfulness Exercise



The goal of the video is to provide a quick mindfulness exercise designed to help individuals regain focus and enhance concentration, making it particularly useful for studying or team settings. Narrated by Headspace teacher Kessonga Giscombe, this meditation aims to guide viewers back to their tasks without succumbing to distractions.

[LINK](#)

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### **Other pedagogical approaches to pair activity:**

cooperative learning methods like :

- think-pair-share/simple jigsaw
- discussion circles
- peer teaching
- role-playing
- feedback sessions
- digital storytelling
- debates and discussions
- and structured reflection



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