

How am I Listening?

A 3-Step SPIRAL™ Reflective Micro-Tool for Conscious Listening

When conversations become tense, fast-paced, or unclear, we often slip into unconscious listening patterns. We stop receiving the *real data*, and start filtering everything through urgency, assumption, or past experience. This reflective tool is designed to help you slow down and become more aware of how you're listening, to yourself, to others, and to the moment. By identifying your filters and blind spots, you'll develop the power to listen with greater clarity, presence, and influence.

Step 1: Notice the Filter

"Where am I listening from right now?"

- Am I trying to be right, solve, prove, or protect?
- What assumptions do I already have about this person or topic?
- What emotion is colouring my listening (frustration, urgency, judgement, fear)?

Awareness is the first shift. Your filter frames what you hear.

Step 2: Reveal the Blind Spot

"What might I be missing?"

- Am I assuming they think like me?
- Could their words mean something different *to them* than they do *to me*?
- What am I not hearing because I am caught in my own mental noise?
- What do I remember? Is it fact or interpretation?

Insight comes when we question the story we're listening through.

Step 3: Choose a Listening Commitment

"What commitment will I listen from now?"

- I commit to listening as if this person's world matters to me.
- I commit to listening without fixing, just to understand.
- I commit to hearing what's said *and* what's not being said.

Listening is a leadership act. You don't need to control the outcome to be powerful.

"I listen to connect, not correct. I don't need to be right to be real. This person's world matter and I choose to meet it with presence"

Used regularly, this tool brings you back to a place in leadership presence, where conversations become more clear, relationships deepen, and decisions align with reality rather than assumption. Carry this as a mental framework or keep it as a visible reminder.

The more you practice, the more you'll catch yourself mid-pattern and gently return to connection, the true heart of communication.