

## **Active Listening**

Adapted from Healthy Native Community Fellowship (2012) Guide to Community Wellness Planning. Healthy Native Communities Partnership, Inc: Shiprock, NM. <http://hncpartners.org>

### Helpful Materials

Watch to track time

### Number of Participants

This activity has been done with small groups of people during community health worker trainings.

### Amount of Time

20 minutes

This activity supports participants to develop their active listening skills.

Invite participants to participate in this activity by saying, "Think of a person in your life who inspired or inspires you and why." After participants have thought of a person, ask them to find a partner. Each pair of people decides who wants to be the "talker" and who wants to be the "listener".

The role of the talker is to tell your story to the listener for 2 minutes. The role of the listener is to listen silently to the talker for 2 minutes. As a group, discuss ways the listener can show someone they are listening without using words. Ideas may include using positive body language such as leaning forward, nodding, eye contact...

When the facilitator is ready to time 2 minutes, ask the talkers to begin sharing their story. When 2 minutes are done call time.

After the 2 minute time period, invite the listener to summarize to the talker what they heard.

Next, switch roles and have the talker be the listener and the listener be the talker.

The facilitator times 2 minutes for the new talker to tell their story. After the 2 minute time period, invite the listener to summarize to the talker what they heard.

As a group, discuss how it felt to be a talker or a listener.

Talkers, how did it feel to be completely listened to for 2 minutes?

Listeners, how did it feel to completely listen to someone?

Ask participants how they can relate this to working with people in their community?

When you are counseling, it is helpful to be talking about 10% of the time and listening about 90% of the time. Consider how it feels to tell someone what to do based upon what you think or to invite the person to reflect upon their choices and consider their options. As a counselor you can help by providing appropriate guidance to support their healthy plan of action.