

The Power of
LISTENING
Quick Course



The International
COMPASSION ACADEMY
at the INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR COMPASSIONATE ORGANIZATIONS

COURSE GUIDELINES

The most successful people — personally, socially, and professionally — are excellent listeners.

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Who this Course Is For



While the course includes information about professional relationships, the skills you develop will have a significant positive impact across the full spectrum of your relationships — personal, social and professional.

Personal Relationships

The “Power of Listening” tools you get from this course can be applied in your interactions with those to whom you’re most closely connected: your life partner, children, parents, siblings, and friends. Effective listening skills are essential talents to understanding, caring, and compassion. This is especially important when personal challenges such as conflict, loss, doubt, concern, or physical or emotional pain are experienced by those you treasure most. Effective listening builds trust, strengthens connections, and support vital, satisfying, and caring personal connections.

Social Relationships

By “social relationships,” we’re referring to the nonintimate and nonprofessional interactions you have with others. These include those with whom you come in contact at dinners, in community meetings, when shopping, while taking care of medical issues, as you travel, at entertainment venues, during visits to social media online, when visiting your child’s school, and so forth. When interacting within your social settings, the listening skills gained from the “Power of Listen” course support stronger connections, greater understanding, smoother interactions, reduced conflict, and greater overall satisfaction for you and those with whom you come in contact.

Listening is especially important when personal challenges such as conflict, loss, doubt, concern, or physical or emotional pain are experienced by those you treasure most.

Professional Relationships

Effective listening skills are essential to productive professional relationships. *Harvard Business Review*, *Forbes*, and many other credible sources continue to emphasize that having strong listening skills are indispensable for effective leadership, management, customer service, marketing, public relations, quality medical care, sales, government relations, job promotion, and productivity. The absence of these skills can result in or contribute to misunderstanding, errors, anger, unnecessary conflict, polarization, resentment, illness, job loss, and diminished reputation (for individuals and organizations). Effective listening is crucial for creating a strong, vibrant, and productive organizational culture.

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What You'll Discover in This Course

This course consists of three key elements:

1. The videos, consisting of an introduction and five course modules.
2. Fourteen handouts (including this Course Guidelines document).
3. Continued review and practice on your part.

Video Introduction and Modules

Total course time (including introduction):
00:55:13

Introduction

Video Length: 00:04:35

The Course Introduction provides basic information about the course, and exploration of how the course was developed, why listening is such an important life skill, and information on getting started with the course.

Module 1

Video Length: 00:13:21

The opening module opens with a general introduction and discussion of the importance of listening, then covers Listening More Effectively, The Power of Listening, and Active Listening.

Module 2

Video Length: 00:10:08

This module begins with Listening to Resolve Conflict followed by Active Listening Traits and Active Listening Skills.

Module 3

Video Length: 00:11:25

Module 3 includes continues with Active Listening Skills, adds the LADDER concept and related information and ends with Weak Listening Habits — things you'll want to avoid.

Module 4

Video Length: 00:09:09

The fourth module continues with the discussion about Weak Listening Habits followed by Common Communication and Listening Traits.

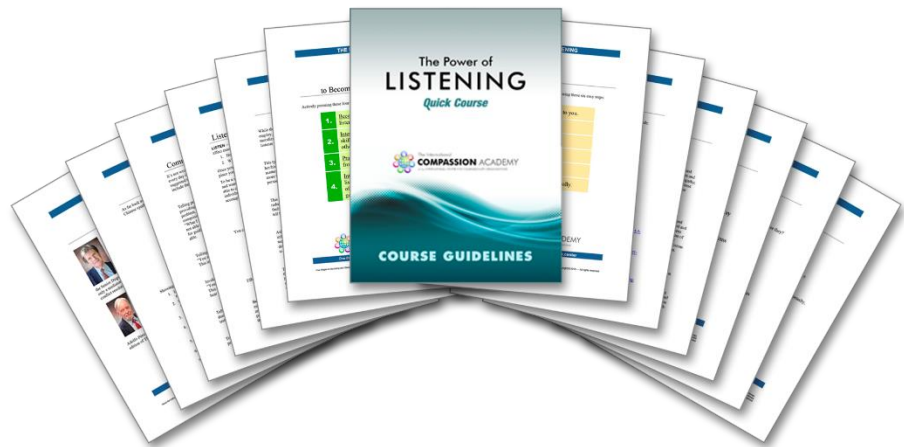
Module 5

Video Length: 00:06:35

The final module covers Feedback and related topics and finishes with Avoiding the Technique Trap.

A video introduction, five video modules, and 14 handouts (including links to key information and resources) make for a powerful, comprehensive, and practical program of lasting value.

Handouts



The handouts are provided in the Adobe Acrobat format. Acrobat Reader is available for free from the [Adobe website](#). The handouts for the course are:

1. Course Guidelines (the document you're now reading)
2. About the Instructors (Tony Belak and Ari Cowan)
3. A Friend's Plea
4. Active Listening
5. Active Listening Skills
6. Common Listening and Communication Traits
7. Five Ways of Responding
8. Four Stages to Becoming an Effective Listener
9. Just Listen

10. LADDER
11. Links
12. Listening – The First Stage in Resolving Conflict
13. The Power of Listening
14. Why Listening is So Important

Take a few moments to download these handouts — they are yours to keep for your personal use but may not be reproduced for others.

How to Use the Course

Viewing the Video Modules

The course video introduction and modules can be viewed on any device that can go online and view videos, including computers, tablets, and smart phones. The videos may be paused, and you can go back to any point you wish to view at any time, using your device’s video controls.



Using the Handouts

The handouts are in the Adobe PDF format. You will need [Adobe Reader](#), Adobe Acrobat, or other Acrobat-compatible software to open, read, and print the handouts. You can view any course handout online as well as download the handouts onto your device. They can also be printed so that you can highlight sections or make notes.

Getting the Most Out of This Course

Do It Your Way

Different people have different ways of study, practice, and retention. There is no single approach to learning that fits everyone. While we may provide ideas for getting the most out of the “Power of Listening” Short Course, it’s important that you decide for yourself which, if any, of these ideas best suit your learning style and preferences.

Our recommendation is that you try some of the suggestions found here and use those that work best for you and adding your own learning elements.

*The “right way
to do this
course is to do
it your way.*

Viewing the Course

You may find value in viewing the Course Introduction and the five course modules in their entirety, then going back through each module to develop each key point in depth, noticing:

4. The points that are most meaningful to you (often the ones that provide new and useful insights).
5. Points that are new to you and that may require special attention to become proficient.

Be sure to have the handout documents ready as you go through the course, particularly when you're pursuing key points in depth. Don't hesitate to stop the video to review a document or checklist. You can also go back and view video segments that are of interest to you.

Observe

Observe Yourself

When applying the skills you learn in the “Power of Listening” course, take time to notice your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when you're interacting with other people — particularly when you're in a situation that calls for active listening. Make these observations from a neutral viewpoint, avoiding any judgement or condemnation. Simply notice.

Observe the productive ways in which you listen and continue to develop them. Also observe the undesirable elements — they provide you with important points for change.

Make note of your existing proficiency, opportunities for improvement, and the changes that you're making. Noticing this process of refinement can be a source of satisfaction and encouragement.

Observe Those Around You

Pay attention to those you encounter in your life:

1. How do people react to those with good listening skills?
2. How do others react to those with these skills?
3. What can you learn from those with these skills?
4. How do people react to those with poor listening skills?
5. How do others react to those with poor listening habits?
6. What does noticing poor listening skills help you understand your own?

Take time to notice your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when you're interacting with other people.

Also notice family and cultural norms for listening. Our early experience as human beings played an important role in establishing our listening habits.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Viewing the course modules and the handouts only once will do little to develop your listening skills. While the video part of course itself is around an hour long, the skills that we explore require many hours of practice. You'll get the most out of the course by:

1. Going through the video portion more than once.
2. Studying the handouts, including periodic review of them.
3. Making notes — writing out your thoughts and observations can help anchor the course content in your mind.
4. Take one key point from the course at a time and practice it until your proficiency is automatic. Then go on to the next key concept.

Check Your Motivations and Intentions

For some people, checking your motivations and intentions may be the most difficult aspect of the “Power of Listening” course. Your motivations and intentions provide the foundation (or “ground”) for the application of your listening skills.

People are often highly attuned to a devious, inauthentic, or manipulative ground of being. Listening from this ground of being can be very counterproductive. The same is true if others see you as using these skills as a “technique” — an inauthentic and deeply disrespectful habit.

Questions to consider are:

1. Am I developing these skills to get a job promotion, increase my chances for a romantic relationship, become more popular, increase my sales performance, get my children to behave, or to change the behavior of other in a way that best serves me?
- or —
2. Am I developing these skills to become a better person; to impact my personal, social, and professional relationships in a way that benefits everyone; to help foster life satisfaction for me and those I meet; and to become more informed, respectful, understanding, compassionate, and connected — ways that best serves me and others?

Online Evaluation and Survey

Our online course evaluation and survey will be provided to the first group of participants. If you are selected to be on that list, we'll send you and

Your motivations and intentions provide the foundation (or “ground”) for the application of your listening skills.

The International Center focuses on fostering cultures of compassion in government, business, healthcare systems, service agencies, colleges and universities, schools, faith groups, and other organizations worldwide.

email with a link to this confidential online course evaluation and survey. You can then use this assessment to give us your opinion about the course. This will help us to continually make improvements to this and other courses. You can, of course, always [email us](#) with comments and questions.

Comments, Suggestions, Requests

You'll find a place where you can make comments, provide suggestions, or make requests at the end of the confidential online survey. You can also [email us](#) instead of or in addition to entering your ideas, concerns, and requests online.

About the International Center and the Instructors

The Instructors

Information about the course instructors can be found in the "About the Instructors" handout. You can also get in-depth information for [Tony Belak](#) and [Ari Cowan](#) online.

The International Center

[The International Center for Compassionate Organizations](#) (ICCO) is a nonprofit organization¹ registered in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, USA. You can [click here](#) to see a copy of our nonprofit determination letter. The International Center focuses on fostering cultures of compassion in government, business, healthcare systems, service agencies, colleges and universities, schools, faith groups, and other organizations worldwide.

The Center responds to the emerging trend among a broad range of organizations seeking to incorporate compassion as a value and practice in their relationships with their staff, colleagues, board members, customers, and communities. The Center develops practical research, resources, education, consulting, coaching, and conferences.

The ICCO takes a nonpolitical, evidence-based, and public health approach, and assists organizations to effectively improve employee engagement, productivity, staff retention, profitability, and customer satisfaction.

The Center's International Compassion Academy (ICA) is the global online educational portal for the International Center. The *Power of Listening* course is the ICA's first online, on-demand education program.

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The International
COMPASSION ACADEMY
at the INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR COMPASSIONATE ORGANIZATIONS

One the web at: <https://academy.compassionate.center>

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