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## WELLNESS SEMINAR

Breaking the Silence:  
Supporting Mental Health in  
Crisis Moments

**09/11/25 | Thursday**  
**@2PM CENTRAL TIME**

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## QUARTERLY WEBINARS

Why You Should Never Use  
Active Listening And  
What Truly Works Instead

**09/25/25 | Thursday**  
**@2PM CENTRAL TIME**

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# Breaking the Silence: Supporting Mental Health in Crisis Moments

By: Courtney Garcia-Echeverria

It's easy to overlook mental health until a crisis arises. Yet, silence around mental health struggles can leave individuals feeling isolated and unsupported. As employees, we all play a role in creating a safe and compassionate workplace where colleagues know they're not alone when difficult moments arise.

## Why Breaking the Silence Matters

When people feel unable to share what they're going through, stress and anxiety can intensify. Open conversations about mental health not only reduce stigma but also foster trust and understanding. Speaking up—or listening with empathy—can be the first step toward someone getting the help they need.

## How Employees Can Support Each Other

- Be approachable and attentive-If a coworker seems overwhelmed, ask if they'd like to talk. Sometimes just knowing someone cares can make a big difference.
- Encourage professional resources-Remind colleagues of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), hotlines, or counseling services available through work or community organizations.
- Practice non-judgmental listening-Avoid trying to "fix" the situation; instead, focus on listening and validating their feelings.
- Model healthy behaviors-Taking breaks, setting boundaries, and practicing stress management can show others that prioritizing mental health is normal and acceptable.



## Moving Forward Together

Breaking the silence isn't about having all the answers—it's about showing compassion. Each of us has the power to create a culture where mental health is acknowledged and supported, especially during crisis moments. A caring environment helps individuals feel valued and strengthens the entire workplace community.



## Conclusion

Supporting mental health in times of crisis starts with empathy, awareness, and action. By checking in on one another, normalizing conversations, and connecting colleagues to helpful resources, we can break the silence that so often revolves around mental health struggles. Together, we can build a workplace that not only values productivity, but also values the well-being of every individual.

**To learn more about this topic, please join our seminal "Breaking the Silence: Supporting Mental Health in Crisis Moments", on September 11th.**

### References

American Psychiatric Association. (2023). "Stigma, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness." Retrieved from [<https://www.psychiatry.org>](<https://www.psychiatry.org>)  
National Institute of Mental Health. (2024). "Caring for your mental health." Retrieved from [<https://www.nimh.nih.gov>](<https://www.nimh.nih.gov>)

# Why You Should Never Use Active Listening And What Truly Works Instead

By: Courtney Garcia Echeverria

While active listening is often praised as the cornerstone of effective communication, there are reasons why it might not always be the best approach in the workplace. Active listening, which involves fully concentrating on a speaker, understanding their message, and responding thoughtfully, can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, or even feelings of being unheard. This is especially true in high-pressure environments where emotional reactions can cloud judgment, and employees may feel their concerns are not genuinely acknowledged.

## Reflective Listening: A Better Alternative

Instead of simply "hearing" what someone says, adopting reflective listening, an active process that emphasizes empathy, clarification, and validation—has been shown to deepen trust and reduce workplace stress. Reflective listening involves paraphrasing and summarizing what the speaker has shared, which encourages a more genuine connection and ensures clearer understanding.

## When Active Listening Falls Short

- Can feel repetitive or mechanical.
- May reinforce biases instead of reducing them.
- Risk of leaving employees feeling unheard (Rogers & Farson, 2015).



## The Role of Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Soft skills such as empathy and emotional intelligence play a vital role in transforming workplace communication. By focusing on reflective rather than active listening, leaders and employees can build stronger relationships, improve collaboration, and create a culture of trust.

## Avoiding Passive Communication

Focusing solely on active listening can sometimes create a passive dynamic where the listener becomes disengaged or overly accommodative, potentially leading to a lack of assertiveness or decision-making. In fast-paced work environments, this approach might hinder timely problem-solving or the delivery of critical feedback.



## Moving Toward Stronger Communication

While active listening can sometimes be beneficial, it is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Moving beyond active listening to incorporate reflective listening techniques empowers employees and leaders alike to communicate more effectively, reducing workplace anxiety and strengthening team cohesion.

For more information, please tune into our seminar **“Why You Should Never Use Active Listening And What Truly Works Instead” on September 25th.**

### References:

- Rogers, C.R., & Farson, R.E. (2015). Active Listening. Educational Psychology.
- Coleman, D. (2013). Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ. Bantam Books.



## WHAT CAN MY EAP DO FOR ME?



### About Our Logo

For decades, enslaved African Americans looked to the North Star for hope, inspiration, and freedom. Neely EAP (NEAP) provides the **hope** that your situation will improve, the **inspiration** to move you in the right direction, and the **freedom** to live your best life.

At Neely EAP, we understand the challenge of balancing work and life stresses while staying mentally healthy. That's why we've partnered with your employer to offer you the following services free of charge:

- 24/7 Hotline, Access to Confidential Services
- Free Short-Term Counseling and Couch Time Check-In (preventive annual counseling session)
- Legal and Financial Assistance
- Work-life referrals for adult care, childcare, pet care and more
- Wellness Trainings & Online Employee Training Vault
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

