

# The Infidelity Recovery Institute

## **Listening is an Important Part of Honest Communication**

We all know how good it feels to be truly heard and accepted, and how bad it feels to be ignored or rejected. None of us is born a good listener, but we can all learn to become one. Some key skills in good listening include:

- Making yourself available when the other person needs to talk, not just when it's convenient for you.
- Setting aside your personal agenda so that you can be fully present for what the other wants to communicate.
- Withholding judgement. (You don't have to agree with what's being said, but you need to accept it in order to support full communication.)
- Consciously avoiding the knee-jerk reaction to give advice or offer solutions to problems the other may be describing.
- Responding non-verbally and with short verbal affirmations and/or paraphrases to show you're hearing and understanding.
- Maintaining eye-contact and touching when appropriate to show support and attention.
- Listening to the feelings behind the words and accepting them. (Sometimes they're more important than the words themselves.)
- Listening to what is *not* said. An omission can be a telling clue to the total communication.