

FROM THE CREATORS OF FACING THE GIANTS

FIREPROOF



What Women Want: Listen with Your Heart

By Gary Smalley

Tips for Men

1. Make and keep eye contact. Few things assure your loved one that you are listening closely more than making eye contact. Without making it seem like you are staring through her, lock your eyes on hers and listen to what she has to say.

2. Cease all other activity. When your loved one wants to talk to you—when she has something very important to talk to you about and needs your undivided attention—make sure you can do it in an atmosphere free of other activity.

3. Let your loved one know you are being attentive. In addition to keeping eye contact, let her know that you are listening closely and attentively by acknowledging what she's saying through head nods and other signs of attentiveness.

4. Speak occasional words of agreement or understanding. While you listen to your loved one, it is good to interject words that communicate that you understand how that person feels. Simple statements such as, "I can see how you would feel that way," or "I would feel the same way myself" can do much to communicate that you are listening with your heart.

5. Ignore all interruptions. Sometimes a man and his loved one need to get to a place where there is no chance they will be interrupted so they can just talk. When you take the time to listen with your heart, try to do it where you won't be interrupted.

How women say men can become experts at listening with their hearts:

- "Solve problems with me, not for me."
- "Just listen. Give me a chance to voice my inner thoughts and feelings."
- "Listen without offering unsolicited advice or blame."
- "Teach me your problem solving skills."
- "If you don't understand what I'm saying, ask me questions."
- "Offer feedback that says you understand what I'm telling you."
- "Be compassionate as you listen."
- "Resist laughing or mocking me in what I have to say."
- "Offer me advice with humility."
- "Use facial expressions and body language so that I know you're really hearing me."

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