

Hand in Hand Parenting with Madeleine Winter

Listening Partnership – Try It For Yourself

Find someone, and ask them if they will listen to you for a while, and then you can listen to them for the same amount of time. Explain that it is:

1. Different from a conversation.

- ♥ In a *Listening Partnership* your job is to assist them to tell their story, not “make friends” or get information, or tell your own story or give helpful hints.

2. Share the time: Take Equal Turns.

- ♥ Everyone needs a chance to tell their story. With good listening, every person who cares for children will find something they want to talk about. Listening well to others will also give us new perspectives on our own stories and experiences.
- ♥ Some people like to talk a lot and others don't, but everyone has something important to say and can benefit from being listened to.
- ♥ It may feel uncomfortable at first, but over time we learn to use this listening time (just like children will learn to use the Listening Tools we offer them). If you can't think of anything else to say, tell your life story! As we do this kind of listening more regularly, we start to notice more things we want to talk about

- ♥ Use a timer – it means that you don't have to keep track of how much time you have, and you don't have to work out when to interrupt someone's turn when time is up.

3. Just listen with respect, warmth and interest. Don't interrupt. Don't give advice.

- ♥ Know that it is enough that your listening will allow your partner to talk things through and to sort and learn from their own experience. When they listen to you, they will do the same for you.

4. Keep it Confidential.

- ♥ Strict confidentiality makes it safe for everyone to talk about anything they need to. Don't refer to anything anyone said while in a Listening Partnership - not in conversation with them afterward, not in your own turn being listened to, or to anyone else. This makes it safe to eventually say things which feel embarrassing or could be criticized, or talk about things we are not sure about.

You can find more information here: <madeleinewinter.com/resources/listening-partnership/>