****

**Class Exercise & Assignment: Active Listening**

**Pre-“Active Listening” Class Exercise Reflection**

Prior to the active listening class exercise (below), have students complete the following questions:

Answer each of the following questions with either 1) *rarely* *or* *never* or 2) *frequently or always*:

1. Do you ever pretend like you’re paying attention when you’re not?
2. Do you ever get distracted by outside noises or stimuli when listening to someone talk?
3. Do you find yourself planning what you will say next while your conversation partner is still talking?
4. Do you ever interrupt others?
5. Do you ever finish other people’s sentences?
6. Does your mind ever wander during a conversation?
7. Do you focus on the words being said and conveniently ignore the feelings that lurk below the words?

Once completed**,** have students draft a brief reflection on their results.

**In-Class Exercise**

1. Begin with a discussion about what active listening is and what active listening is not.
* Active listening is being non-judgmental, with the emphasis on *listening* and not solving the issue or problem. It is being attentive and respectful to the person talking. It involves listening closely, paraphrasing back to the speaker what you hear, clarifying what you think you hear, etc. Active listening is not planning your response to what the person is saying. It is not day dreaming while they are talking. It is not solving their problems or giving advice.
1. Divide the class into groups of three and have each group decide who will be the active listener, who will role-play a participant, and who will be the observer. Instruct the role-player of the scenario to “get into” their role. The observer should see if the active listener is employing active listening techniques discussed in class.
2. Have all three members rotate roles until each person has played each role.
3. Reassemble the class and conclude with a discussion about how each student felt during the role-play and the power of active listening in their personal and professional lives.