

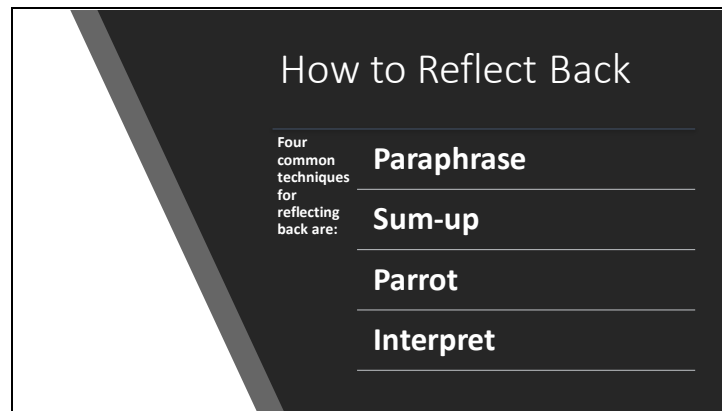


In the last lesson we talked about active listening as being the best way to make sure you have understood exactly what the speaker was trying to say. The question is, how do you tell them what you've heard?

In this lesson we introduce four different types of reflecting back.

Which one you use depends on the situation, the person you're talking to, and how well you understood what the person has shared.

Becoming an Active Listener
Lesson 3: Reflecting Back

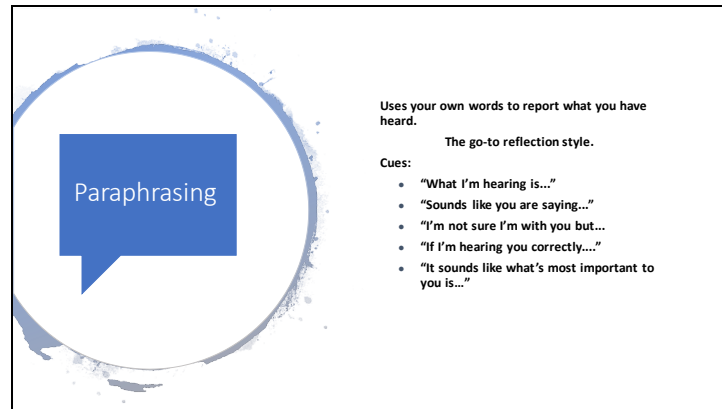


We'll spend the rest of this video on the four most common techniques for reflecting back and when to use them:

- Paraphrasing
- Summing-up
- Parroting
- Interpreting

Becoming an Active Listener

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Paraphrasing uses your own words to report what you have heard.

If you can translate someone else's words into concepts that make sense to you, then paraphrase and get their agreement that you heard correctly, you can be pretty certain you understood them.

Paraphrasing should be your go-to reflection style.

You can let the speaker know you are about to paraphrase what they've said by starting with phrases like:

"What I'm hearing is..."

"Sounds like you are saying..."

"I'm not sure I'm with you but..."

"If I'm hearing you correctly..."

"It sounds like what's most important to you is..."

Example of Paraphrasing

- A proponent of stronger gun laws says:
- Children are dying. Every week, some kid gets killed by a family-owned gun.

Here's an example of Paraphrasing.

A proponent of stronger gun laws says:

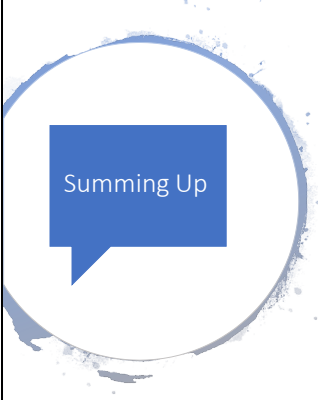
Children are dying. Every week, some kid gets killed by a family-owned gun.

Some possible ways to reflect back what you heard might be:

- It sounds like you are worried about children and statistics you've heard about accidental gun deaths are one of the reasons you believe we need stronger gun laws.
- You want stronger gun laws because of the children who are getting killed by family owned guns. Is that right?

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Paraphrasing multiple ideas *and* the relationship between them.

Best when the speaker shares more than one idea.

Cues:

- "It sounds like two things really matter most to you . . ."
- "Are you saying that on one the hand... but on the other hand . . ."
- "I think I've heard several things that seem to be important to you, first____, second____, third____."

Summing up is paraphrasing that captures multiple ideas and the relationship between them.

Use summing up when the speaker shares more than one idea.

The cues you use with summing up include an indication of how you see the different ideas relating to one another.

- "It sounds like there are two things really matter most to you . . ."
- "Are you saying that on one the hand... but on the other hand . . ."
- "I think I've heard several things that seem to be important to you, first____, second____, third____."

Example of Summing Up

- A supporter of free speech says:
 - I know you all support our first amendment rights, but what are you doing about it? You stand by idly as Antifa thugs attack anyone who doesn't agree with them. They're on your side and you let it happen. How is that protecting first amendment rights?

Here's an example of summing up.

A supporter of Free Speech:


I know you all support our first amendment rights, but what are you doing about it? You stand by idly as Antifa thugs attack anyone who doesn't agree with them. They're on your side and you let it happen. How is that protecting first amendment rights?

Here's one possible way to sum up what you heard:

So on the one hand you understand that the liberals in this room support first amendment rights but it's confusing to you that they aren't showing this by managing Antifa, who you see as an element of their side. Is that right?

Becoming an Active Listener

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Adding your understanding of the speaker's emotions or logic when paraphrasing.

Acknowledges the speaker's internal state.

Cues:

- "To me, it sounds like you are <emotion> because ..."
- "So, you're saying that you believe <x> because <y>?"

Interpreting refers to paraphrasing or summing up what the speaker said and adding your interpretation of the speaker's emotions or the logic they used.

If the speaker comes off as emotional, acknowledge the feelings.

- "I get the sense that you might be feeling angry about the way. . ."
- "To me, it sounds like you are frustrated with...."

If speaker presents facts or statistics to support their opinion, call attention to them. This provides insight into how they "connect the dots."

- "So, you're saying that you believe x because of the statistics you heard around y?"

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Example of Interpreting

- An opponent of entitlement says:
- These people on food stamps all have a nice phones and probably cable TV. Why? Why do they deserve those luxuries? They aren't even paying for their own food!

Here's an example of Interpreting

An opponent of entitlement says:

These people on foodstamps all have a nice phones and probably cable TV. Why? Why do they deserve those luxuries? They aren't even paying for their own food!

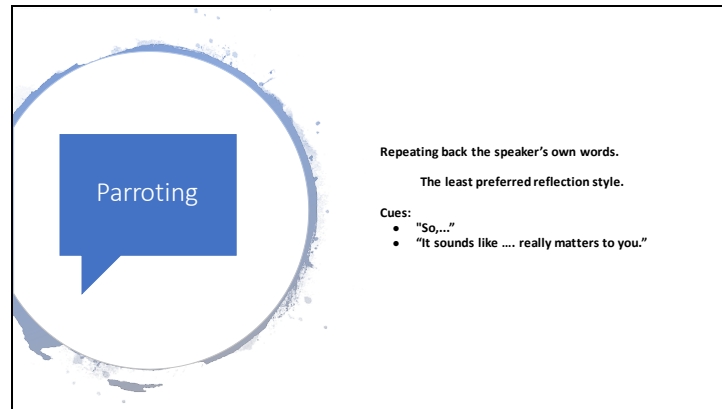
Some possible ways to reflect back what you heard might be:

It upsets you when you see people on food stamps with cell phones and other luxuries that you have to work hard to pay for. Is that right?

It sounds like it riles you up to see your tax dollars subsidizing a luxurious lifestyle.

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Parroting uses the speaker's own words to report what you have heard.

If the term "parroting" sounds less than positive, that's because we want it to. It is the least preferred reflection style.

The pro is that the speaker knows you heard exactly what they said.

The con is that you and the speaker may not be sure you truly understood the meaning behind the words.

The cues for introducing this type of reflecting back are the same as the ones you would use for paraphrasing. The rest of your reflection should contain the speaker's own words.

- "So, you think..."
- "It sounds like really matters to you."

Example of Parroting

- A member speaking against the electoral college says:
- As President Carter pointed out, Trump's presidency is illegitimate. He did not win by a majority. We need to get rid of the electoral college. It's unfair and archaic.

Here's an example of parroting:

A member speaking against the electoral college says:

As President Carter pointed out, Trump's presidency is illegitimate. He did not win by a majority. We need to get rid of the electoral college. It's unfair and archaic.

One possible way to parrot what you heard:

So, you agree with President Carter that Trump's presidency is illegitimate because he did not win by a majority and you think we need to get rid of the electoral college because it is unfair and archaic.

Becoming an Active Listener

Lesson 3: Reflecting Back

When You Get Triggered

If you find yourself responding emotionally to what someone said, say so.



Pause and let them know that's what you're doing:
 "Wow. That really pushed my buttons. Give me a minute to process...."



Ask for more information:
 "I'm not sure I'm understanding you correctly, but I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XXX. Is that what you meant?"

One of the good things about active listening is you don't have to agree with the speaker to reflect back what you've heard and verify that you got the message they wanted to send.

It's not always easy, though. At some point, you are likely to be emotionally triggered by what someone says.

If what the speaker said was out of line, don't bother reflecting back.

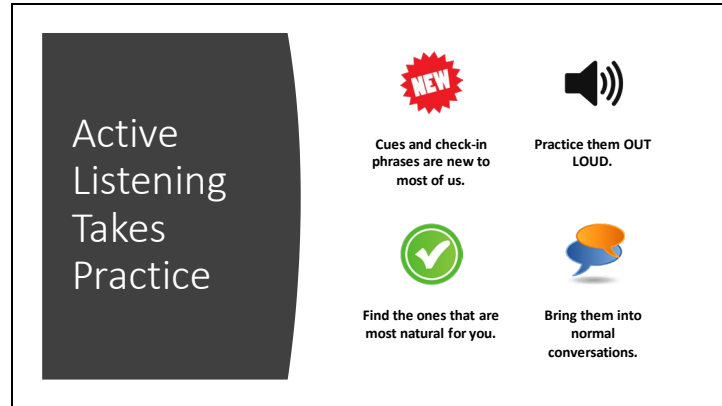
On the other hand, if it's just that you feel passionate about the topic and the speaker's words pushed your buttons, here are some things you can do:

- Take a minute to process – but let them know what you are doing:
 "Wow. That really pushed my buttons. Give me a minute to process...."
- Give them a chance to clarify or explain:
 "I may not be understanding you correctly, but I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XXX. Is that what you meant?"

There is nothing wrong with being honest about your feelings and your emotional state. Turn the fact that you got triggered into a teaching moment by modeling owning your reactions rather than fighting back or blaming them.

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Active Listening Takes Practice

It is especially important to practice inserting cue up and check in phrases like the ones I've just mentioned into your conversation

As you work through the activities in this module, PLEASE practice out loud. If you write an answer, also say it a few times.

I know that sounds crazy, because, well, they're just phrases, but the more comfortably these phrases the roll off your tongue, the easier it is to reflect back what you hear.

My experience has been that once my brain got programmed to say phrases like:

Let me see if I heard you correctly....
What I'm hearing is....

the easier it was to listen attentively. It was almost as if that practice programmed my brain to fill in the blanks that followed!

Find your personal favorites. The ones that feel most natural to you.

Then bring them into your day-to-day conversations. Unlike some new communication skills that only apply in certain situations, like at meetups, there is almost NO situation where using these phrases is inappropriate.

Becoming an Active Listener

Lesson 3: Reflecting Back

When You Didn't Get it Right

Tell	Decide	Parrot back	Ask
In most cases, the speaker will tell you if what you reflected back didn't match what they had hoped to communicate.	If it didn't match, decide whether to:	Parrot back what you heard (if you had paraphrased, summed- up, or interpreted.) or	Ask them to repeat what they had said.

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If it didn't match, decide whether to:

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