ACTIVE LISTENING

Jason Lagapa
Professional Development Lead, CTL
“Full listening means listening actively, listening accurately and listening for meaning…To listen actively and empathically one has to put aside one’s own concerns in order to be fully with the client”

Esther C.L. Goh
“…lecturing all the time bores me: I usually know what I am going to say…But dialogical methods of teaching help keep me alive. Forced to listen, respond, and improvise, I am more likely to hear something unexpected and insightful from myself as well as others.”

Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*
“Behind their fearful silence, our students want to find their voices, speak their voices, have their voices heard. A good teacher is one who can listen to those voices before they are spoken...”
LISTENING TO A VOICE BEFORE IT IS SPOKEN

It requires “making space for the other, being aware of the other, paying attention to the other….It means not rushing to fill our students’ silences with fearful speech of our own and not trying to coerce them into saying things that we want to hear.”

- Parker Palmer
PRACTICAL STEPS FOR LISTENING

- Give the speaker your undivided attention
- Acknowledge the message
- Look directly at the speaker (with grace and an aim toward understanding)
- Put aside distracting thoughts
- Don’t mentally prepare a rebuttal

- from Doug Specht, *The Media and Communication Study Skills Student Guide*
Providing Feedback as a Listener

- Use body language to show you are paying attention
- Encourage speaker to continue with verbal cues ("yes" and "uh huh," to an appropriate degree)
- Paraphrase comments
- Clarify ideas and statements ("what I’m hearing is"; "Sounds like you are saying")

- Doug Specht
REFLECTION EXERCISE

Please write about a time when you felt particularly heard by somebody else (in an academic setting) or when you listened particularly well.

- What were the conditions and/or practices that made that possible?
- How might you recreate those conditions in your classrooms?
WORKS CITED

