

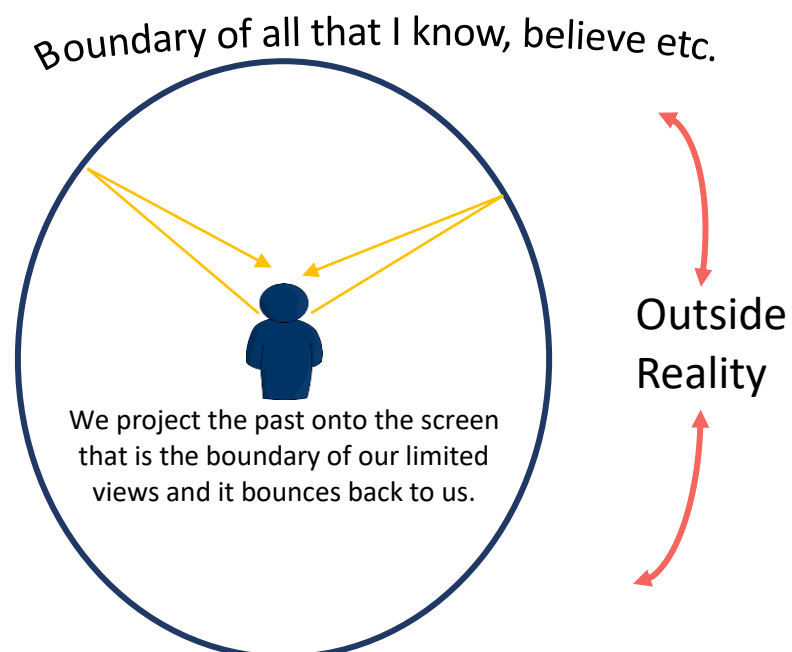
Practice Activities on the U-Process Listening Modalities

Listening is so often an underrated skill, it is critical to all domains of mastery and of invention, as well as of leadership.

To listen deeply is one of the most difficult skills and also one that allows for deep transformation – individually, collectively, in our thinking, doing and being. The four levels of listening that are used in the U-Process really refer to where we choose to place our attention. Let's take each of the levels one by one.

Downloading. Listening from past habits. Listening from what we already know, which has the result of re-confirming what you already know, your already embedded opinions, world views, perspectives, and judgments. In which case there is no movement in this listening. This is the kind of listening that keeps us in place, much like a mouse running in a hamster wheel. We may put in the effort – yet there is no shift. This kind of listening happily keeps us in our comfort zone, caught within a paradigm that is nothing about the present or the future, but is a product of our past.

Attention is placed such that I confirm the already known or accepted



Activity on Downloading

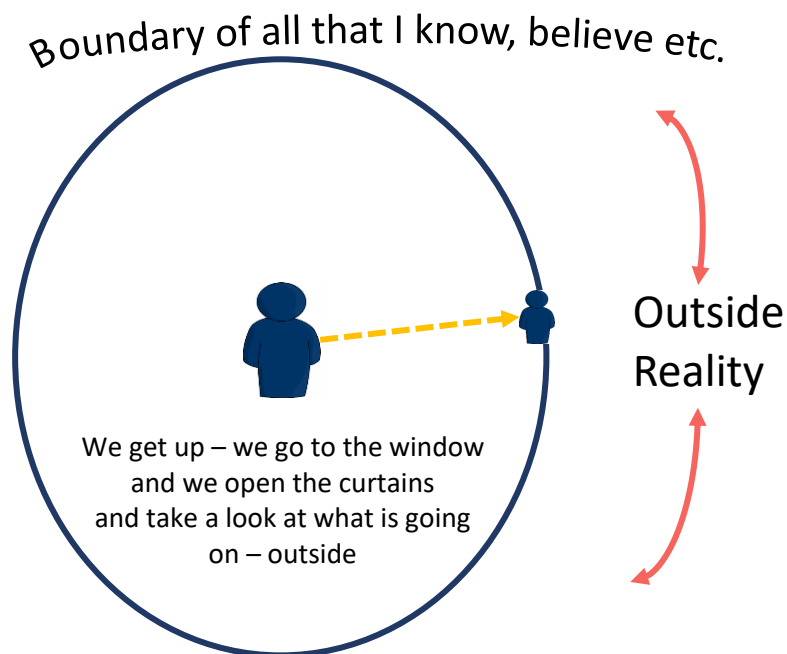
We are going to firstly do a little experiment as a metaphor for this kind of listening. Make yourself comfortable on your chair. Place your hands over your eyes so that you can't see anything external. Make contact with your inner thoughts – just notice them rise and fall, travelling through your consciousness. Disconnect yourself from any curiosity about what is happening outside your hands. If you notice noises, or anything coming in from the outside – just bring your attention back to focusing what is present within the space that is bounded by your hands.

A second thing you can do is a paper activity to experience what it is like to be in 'download'. Think of a current challenge you are facing or could be needed to confront in the near future – it could be a personal or a professional challenge. Take a piece of paper – and make a list of everything that is in your mind about this challenge – positive, negative, or neutral. Do not inquire into 'what if's', hypotheses or conjecture. Merely take note of everything you currently know or belief about the issue, those involved, yourself in relation to it etc.

Downloading is useful – as a mind dump of our current state of understanding and to get out everything we know at this point in time. However, it will not move us on to any solution about the circumstance.

Factual Listening – This is listening from the outside. We shift our position in order to become aware of differences. This requires an opening of the mind to other data and information that is currently not part of our own field. This enables us to discover what is new to us. When we move into this kind of listening, we will discover information, facts, data that contradicts what we would focus on were we downloading. This is because in this listening we consciously choose to step outside ourselves and engage with the outside reality as it presents itself.

When this happens in our normal every day, we will most often dismiss information that doesn't fit our theory or beliefs, this is a natural occurring process that we explored in Phase 1, when we looked at Chris Argus Ladder of Inference. Factual Listening seeks to break open this self-created 'trance'. Dis-confirming data is the root source of innovation.



Activity on Factual Listening

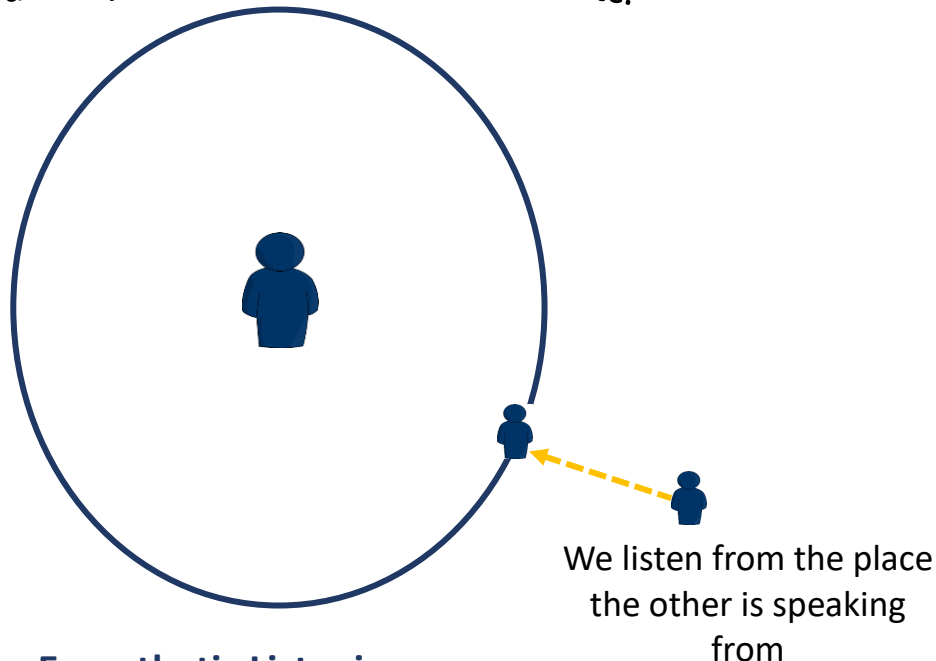
Continuing our metaphor for this kind of listening, we remove our hands from our eyes and notice what we couldn't see before. In order to practice this, we are going to do a little activity around placement of attention. It is a short audio piece, in order to experience this practice, please click on the [Link to the Factual Listening Audio](#)

This small exercise approximates what happens when we open ourselves to factual listening. We notice information that we didn't have in our awareness previously. The scientific method relies upon the ability to stand back, and look objectively at data, and notice discontinuities as well as confirming information – and seeks to make sense of it. For those of us who are in business, and in our personal lives, in real time, whenever we move into debate, play devil's advocate, notice our own judgments and self-talk, or get curious about what else might be relevant? – this is an indication that we are engaging our factual listening capacity.

These first two are not enough when we are in the role of Mentor, because we are often confronted with the complexity brought about by the fact that our Mentee's are human beings with human traits, and certainly they are also not enough when we consider the huge challenges we are facing as society, and globally today. So, we introduce a third listening into the mix – that of Empathetic Listening.

Empathetic Listening – This is a shift whereby we listen from a place of open-hearted communication. It is listening from within and requires us to open our heart to the other, and through that we establish an emotional connection, which enables us to see the world through their eyes, and without judgment. We step into the space that is between us and open ourselves up to a fuller experience of the other, and what they are saying.

Boundary of all that I know, believe etc.



Activity on Empathetic Listening

The activity is going to perhaps seem a little strange. But go with us here. Please find yourself in front of a large mirror. I'd like you to bring to mind a topic that has an emotional content for you. Something that generates sadness, joy, hurt, anger – it doesn't really matter what emotion. You are going to do a 'real play' with yourself. (You may wish to make sure you are alone when doing this activity). In order to establish the connection from openness, integrity, and relational emotional connectedness. Take some time, standing in front of the mirror – to look at yourself, deeply into your own eyes. As you do this, allow your heart to open to this human being who is YOU. Become aware of any voice of judgment or criticism and dismiss this voice in your mind, just relaxing and allowing yourself to truly see yourself and create that bond of openness.

When you feel that yes, you are fully present with yourself. Please start to speak about the topic you have chosen, as if you are speaking with a dear friend, confidant, or intimate partner. Speak openly and honestly and while

you do – notice what happens internally as you listen to yourself from a fully connected place.

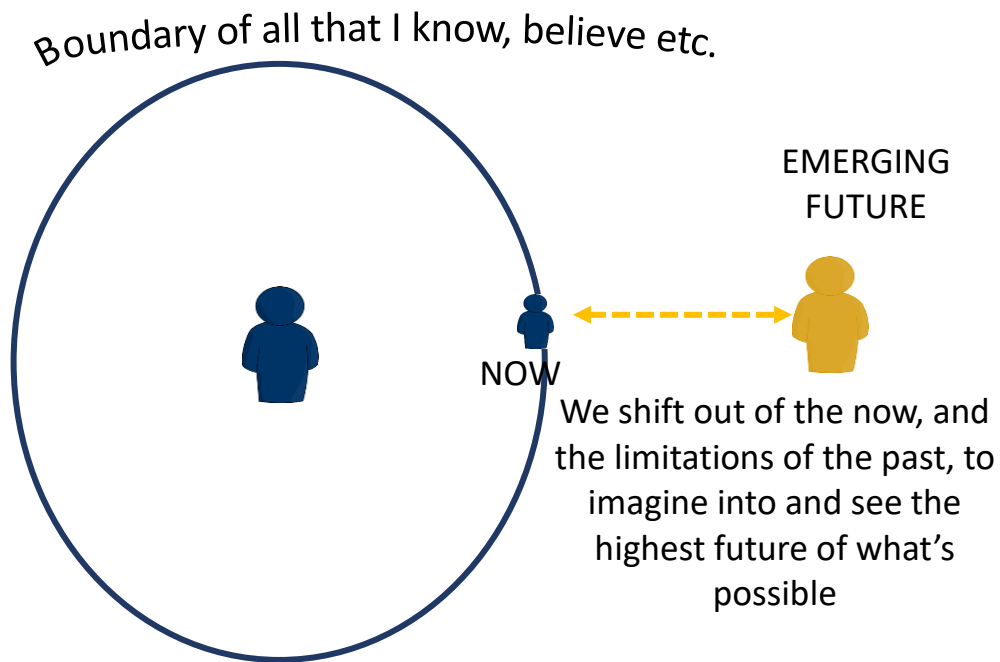
This process is one that can be used to develop self-care and love in tough times, however we are using it here in lieu of having another person present. When you have completed this – just reflect on how it felt to be in this listening space. And the invitation is to begin practicing it when you can – in your daily interactions.

These three listening modalities are well known to us, although it doesn't mean we are proficient at practicing them all in everyday life. The final 4th level is however probably quite new. It is what we refer to as Generative Listening.

Generative Listening - This is the capacity that we have to connect with our open will. That is our ability to let go and let come. It is a shift out of the individual to embrace what is referred to as 'source' the broader field of which we are also part, along with everything else. It involves creating the connection to who we really are and who we really want to be. It is the bigger self that we become present to, beyond our identity or our programming – it is our higher aspects that we allow to come forth to inform us.

We know when we have shifted into the modality when we notice that how we are – our identity shifts to embrace who we really are. As a Mentor in this space, you are listening for the arrival of the highest future possibility for the Mentee, seeing in that person, their tomorrow self – their future emerging self. Paying attention to that insight and actively helping the Mentee to connect with that form beyond their current perceptions of themselves, limiting beliefs, or their past experiences that is their highest future possibility.

To do this we need to have the ability to do 'both/and'. Hold the current reality of the Mentee as they are now, AND also imagining into them in the fullest expression of their future potential and help them to connect with its emergence.



Activity on Generative

We are going to do this activity in two parts. And we recommend that you take yourself as a Mentor as the subject matter. (This is not compulsory – if there is another aspect of your life where you would like to set a personal or professional intention – please select that one). I will give instructions here for taking the role of Mentor as being the subject of setting an intention.

Firstly – select the topic of your intention if you are not using the Mentor. Then follow the following steps.

- Make sure you are in a comfortable and quiet place. Allow yourself enough time for this activity (20 – 30 minutes is good). We are firstly going to undertake a contemplative practice for a period of 5 – 10 minutes. Please don't rush this part.
- Spend a few moments calibrating yourself and settling by focusing on the breath. Make sure you are fully relaxed before beginning. Then
- Bring your attention to the question of your Mentorship/Mentoring Intention.
 - What is it you wish to create as a Mentor?
 - How do you want to be as a Mentor?
 - What is the purpose that will be fulfilled as a Mentor?

- Allow your mind to fully embrace all potentialities and possibilities and if things that seem impossible pop up – don't censor just allow them to be present and notice them.
- Just follow your thoughts where they want to go, as a stream of consciousness
- Become aware not only of your thoughts, but also of images, insights, feelings or whatever else comes up for you whilst you are reflecting and contemplating your Mentoring.
- Now, write down everything that came up during the contemplation. Thoughts, Images, insights, feelings
- When you are complete ask yourself the following question and also listen to your own answers and record your responses
- 'In order to create this future Mentor, I want to create, what do I:
 - Need to let go of?
 - Need to learn?
- Read over what you have written and record any responses you have to what you have imagined and determined.

Now for the second step – this step is the one that enables the 'letting go' and the 'letting come'

- In order to create your intention, and manifest this future Mentor that you have imagined, allow yourself again to shift into a relaxed state and bring your attention to the following questions.
 - What conditions will need to be present?
 - What help might you need – people, resources?
 - Who might partner with you? Or not?
 - How might the specific steps emerge?
- Listen again to what is emerging for you and write these down.

What you now have is a completed creation – that has been generated not through thinking hard and worrying the topic for the answers to appear. But the generative that comes from the possibility of your future Mentor – the Mentor that is within you and awaiting his or her emergence.

In a very practical sense, we are hopeful this exercise will have provided some deeper insights and concrete actions that will support your development through this Golden Key Mentoring Development Programme.