

October is



CONFLICT RESOLUTION MONTH IN COLORADO

Listen. Talk. Work it Out.

About Us

Each year, Conflict Resolution Month in Colorado selects a book that enhances problem-solving skills and/or inspires dialogue. Over 300 copies of the book are distributed across Colorado - to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor; legislators; supreme, district, and appellate court judges; alternative dispute resolution professionals; and various public libraries, including Free Little Libraries.

This Reader's Guide was created to further conversation and inspire connection with others.

Learn more. Get involved.

www.conflictresolutionmonth.org



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**CONFLICT RESOLUTION
MONTH IN COLORADO**
Listen. Talk. Work it Out.

RECLAIMING THE LOST ART
OF TRUE CONNECTION

LISTEN
Like you
MEAN it

XIMENA VENGOECHEA

2023 Book Selection

“ Could there be a more relevant book for our times? While there are plenty of books on persuasion, none tells us how to influence others through the quiet art of understanding. Vengoechea implores us to truly hear other people (maybe for the first time) and is the perfect author of a book on why we should listen like we mean it. ”

—NIR EYAL,
author of *Hooked* and *Indistractable*

Listening, like any communication skill, can be improved, and Ximena Vengoechea can show you how. As a communications expert in online conversations and marketing, in *Listen Like You Mean It*, she reveals the tips and tricks of the trade, including:

- How to quickly build rapport with strangers
- Which questions help people unlock what they need to say
- When it's time to throw out the script entirely
- How to recover from listener's drain

Guiding Questions

ASSESSING:

What type of listener are you? Are you excited, engaged, and curious while conversing with friends, family, and co-workers? Or do you find yourself checking your phone, interrupting, thinking about your next meeting, or just nodding and smiling?

CONNECTING:

"Surface listening," according to the author, is scanning for content, while ignoring or unintentionally missing emotion within communication. "Multitasking, interrupting, projecting, and mentally checking out" are often cues that surface listening could be impacting an interpersonal exchange.

Questions: Can you think of a time when surface listening has impacted a conversation at home/work? How has this impacted your relationships? What relationships or conversations do you feel require the most attention from you?

REFLECTING:

Hierarchy, power, past conflict, fear, and confusion can often lead to avoidance of difficult conversations. These elements can prevent listening for understanding and ultimately, resolution of the conflict. When we are able to put our assumptions, biases, and fears aside and address difficult conversations, often resolution can transform and strengthen relationships, preventing future conflict.

Questions: What factors create barriers for you in addressing difficult conversations? What strategies could you use to listen more deeply to understand the other person's perspective and situation?

TIPS:

1. Be aware of cultural differences: upbringing, values, and life experience can influence interpretation of conversation. Remind yourself that you may be assuming a perceived understanding.
2. Clarify your Intent. Stating clearly your goal for the conversation can mitigate fear and confusion of the unknown.
3. Affirm to your partner that you are listening and care about what they say even if you don't agree.
4. Recognize your own boundaries. Take a break or a deep breath. If the conversation veers onto a path that you don't feel comfortable continuing on, respect your instinct to pause, review your goals or even stop the conversation.

LISTENING MODES:

COMMON LISTENING MODES



Questions: Which listening modes do you use? Does it differ from person to person? At work or home? Would your friends, family and colleagues agree? What motivates you to change your listening mode?

LISTENING TECHNIQUES:

The author notes several strategies to strengthen conversations and to mitigate conflict, such as removing devices from view (phones, even ones not in use, can lead to a sense of disconnection from your converser/listener) and choosing a good environment (noisy restaurants, TV screens, kids and pets all can cause unintended distractions).

Question: What other strategies can you think of that might create a better space for meaningful conversations?