



Information about Deep Listening Training

ACDLT Courses developed by Rosamund Oliver

Deep Listening Training is a practical, advanced listening training for anyone using listening in his or her work. It uses experiential and interactive methods aimed at bringing our inherent skills of embodiment, supportive presence and compassionate connection directly into our listening.

Awareness Centred Deep Listening Training, ACDLT®

Deep Listening Training uses the method of ACDLT®, Awareness Centred Deep Listening Training. This method opens deeper channels of hearing within ourselves, as we listen to both the spoken and unspoken communications of the other person. By staying fully present to what is happening, by pure listening, the Listener is compassionately open and responsive to the communication happening. Through the tool of ACDLT® greater compassion, clarity and understanding is brought into the listening situation. This includes as not only listening to the other person or group but also to oneself.

By using the methods of ACDLT® Listeners learn to draw on the power of the natural listening mind, and discover how to respond to this mutual exchange of communication appropriately and effectively. In ACDLT®, participants learn three core skills to enable listening to another person in depth. These are *Embodiment*, *Supportive Presence* and *Compassionate Connection*. Through a variety of specially designed experiential and interactive exercises participants discover their own way to bring these core skills into their listening. Ways of

integrating the ACDLT® method of listening through taking it back into work and life are explored.

Deep Listening Training combines fundamental understandings from contemporary humanistic psychology with contemplative methods, using meditation and reflections. In addition research from neuroscience and psychology is introduced showing how these contemplative methods beneficially enhance communications with others.

Participants from a wide variety of professional backgrounds and cultures report developing greater confidence in their interpersonal listening skills. *Deep Listening Training* resources the Listener, increasing resilience during listening and this acts as an antidote to burnout and stress. Participants find that after learning this method, their listening often becomes easier. A deeper capacity for hearing others is discovered after taking this training.

Deep Listening Training is suitable for all those who use listening in their work and complements and enhances any professional situation where communication is an essential part.

Contact information

Deep Listening Training – ACDLT®

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2. Additional information

Development

Deep Listening Training was developed in Ireland, in 2003 by Rosamund Oliver. Many courses have now been held in Netherlands, Germany, UK, Spain, Israel and France.

Since the first course, over 3000 professional listeners, from all over the world have attended Deep Listening courses. Estimating that each trained Deep Listener listens to another new person each week across two years, then Deep Listening has directly reached at least 350,000 people worldwide.

Accreditation

Over the years, the *Deep Listening Training* has been accredited in Ireland, Germany and Netherlands. Currently GAIA accredits our two-day course for doctors in Netherlands for the following organisations. College voor Accreditatie Huisartsen, for general practitioners, Verenso for elderly care doctors, and NVAVG for doctors of mentally handicapped people. The five-day course is accredited for doctors in Ireland by the ICGP.

Universities and Institutes

Deep Listening Training has been a recognised course at Vrije University, Amsterdam, the Sukhavati Institute Germany and at Haifa University, Israel.

Independent training

Deep Listening Training is an independent, non-religious training and is not affiliated to any other organisation.

Style of training

In *Deep Listening Training* experiential exercises are specially designed to deepen participants capacity for listening with awareness, presence, empathy and compassion. Participants are encouraged to ask for feedback on their own listening abilities through a variety of interactive situations designed to do this.

Training Methods used

- Experiential and interactive exercises.
- Meditative and reflective methods, guided visualisations and contemplations
- A variety of specially designed deep listening exercises.
- Short topical presentations with time for questions
- Interactive question-led discussions building on previous presentations and listening exercises.
- Practical integration of methods for working situation.
- Interactive group work with both large and small groups.
- Time for self-reflection, integration and personal work.

3. ACDLT® Methodology and content

Methodology

Awareness Centred Deep Listening Training, ACDLT®, is based on Three Core Skills which are developed through applying awareness to the listening:

- **Embodiment** - being centred and grounded in our own physical body and space
- **Supportive Presence** - being present and available for the other person during the session
- **Compassionate Connection** - Holding an open, compassionate and safe space throughout the listening session

Listening attitude

Time is taken to experientially explore our listening attitude in the training in relation to the following questions:

- What do we need to understand about the listening relationship as a Listener to listen well?
- How do we stay in good contact with both the other person and ourselves while we listen?
- How can we develop greater resilience as a Listener?
- How can we enhance our listening ability in different situations?

Topics covered during the training

- **ACDLT® model.** Three Core Skills, Embodiment, Supportive Presence and Compassionate Connection
- **Deep Listening exercises** to exploring Listener's own experiences of using Three Core Skills.
- **Listening environment.** Exploring how to hold space for safe and effective deep listening, the influence of environment.
- **Focus and Presence.** Awareness of impulses to offer interventions: handling distractions and disturbances in the deep listening process.
- **Boundaries.** Working with appropriate boundaries in the professional listening relationship
- **Developing depth and wider perspectives in deep listening.** Awareness of the difference between empathy and compassion. Allowing potential to emerge.
- **Resourcing.** Resourcing the Listener; self compassion for the Listener
- **Resilience in deep listening**
- **Recent research on contemplative methods of compassion and meditation.** Validation of the training methods used in *Deep Listening Training* which are designed to enable Listeners to provide more effective support in listening situations.

Learning Objectives for participants

Participants completing *Deep Listening Training* courses based on ACDLT® learn to:

- Develop practical tools to enhance their ability to listen at all levels of communication in a work or clinical situation.
- Deepen existing communication and interpersonal skills.
- Be fully present when listening to another. This supports accurate understanding of the matter spoken of and generates effective professional responses within settings such as those including accompaniment, therapeutic treatment, counselling, advice giving, diagnosis or treatment.
- Develop greater awareness of what is arising in the listening encounter, both spoken and unspoken, giving rise to attuned and empathetic responses.
- Utilise authentic, research-evidenced contemplative practices to support effective listening and communication skills
- Generate embodied compassionate presence while listening, supporting another to confide, disclose or find resolution through listening sessions.
- Facilitate listening to create greater cohesion and collaboration within teams, through greater awareness of group dynamics. Its non-cultural specific approach is suitable for inter and intra-disciplinary team working.
- Have a toolbox of methods to apply to listening when there is difficulty in a listening relationship

- Build greater resilience and confidence in their listening skills, acting as an antidote to exhaustion and burnout.
- Resource the listener psychologically and emotionally to listen effectively, even when they hear expressions of suffering and distress for which there is no treatment available.
- Enhance the skill of self-reflective listening, i.e. listening into what is arising within oneself as a listening professional, which can be used for self-supervision.

4. Origins of *Deep Listening Training*

- Awareness as the main experiential understanding uniting mind, body and being is central to *Deep Listening Training*, which combines contemporary psychology and the contemplative tradition.
- Both approaches have understanding of the innate beneficence of human beings. They also see compassion as the essence of our nature, and as an innate resource to create well-being through listening.
- Drawing on understanding about conscious listening derived from the person-centred framework of Humanistic psychology, *Deep Listening Training* applies the contemplative skills of awareness, mindfulness and compassion to listening.
- In particular the work of the Dalai Lama with scientists at the Mind and Life Institute and the scientific research that has developed alongside these dialogues is a major source of inspiration and referencing for this training.

5. Integration of *Deep Listening Training* into work and life

Capacities and competencies gained through practising Deep Listening Training

- Hold beneficial and constructive listening relationships with others
- Create a safe, confidential communication environment in which others are encouraged to discuss important personal matters, including physically, emotionally and intellectually challenging situations.
- Use ACDLT® core -skills of embodiment, supportive presence and compassionate connection effectively when listening
- Work with diversity; including cultural, social, racial and religious differences
- Combine *Deep Listening Training* methods with other professional communication techniques.
- Hold awareness of the importance of maintaining boundaries in listening.
- Use *Deep Listening Training* to hold short, effective 5-15 minute sessions of listening
- Apply *Deep Listening Training* as a tool within longer listening sessions.
- Have confidence to fully listen and receive at all levels of any communication, combined with an enhanced ability to respond with clarity.

Rosamund Oliver

Rosamund Oliver founded the *Deep Listening Training* in 2003. She qualified as registered psychotherapist and supervisor in 1996 and held a private practice for 10 years. She also trained psychotherapists for five years at the Karuna Institute in Devon. As a UKCP psychotherapist and supervisor, she had a large practice for private clients in North London for many years. She worked in psychiatric care focusing on bereavement with the elderly.

Her education work includes tutoring at St Josephs Hospice, teaching meditation and mindfulness skills, creating a prison meditation project and three years developing the first Buddhist-based psychotherapy training in South Africa. She has done extensive training in meditation since the 1970's with various teachers and schools.

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