

[Heard: how to make people feel it](#) (3 min)

[Video of Matt explaining Heard: how to make people feel it](#) (4 min)

When people have a feeling or thought, they want to feel heard. If they don't, they will feel resentment.

So, how do you make people feel heard? By listening deeply and then actively acknowledging what they say (or even better, what their actual thoughts are).

First, get ready to feel triggered (i.e., anger, fear, sadness). Tell yourself that if these emotions come, they are going to give you bad advice. Instead, imagine a glass case around the person that you are talking to. Anything they say is not going to leave that glass case. None of it hits you. (This is a critical step, because if you do get triggered, you will not be able to make the person feel heard. In fact, you will do the opposite.)

Second, ask the person to express what their feelings and thoughts are. Really be present with the person you're listening to. Put away any distractions. Make it your entire intention to listen fully to understand, not to talk/respond right away.

Third, acknowledge what they said by ...

1. If they are trying to give you feedback (or are simply getting angry at you), then ...

Confirm that you heard it correctly by saying, "**I think I heard you say ...**" Summarize what they said or wrote. Then say, "**Is that right?**" If they say, "**Yes,**" you are done.

If they say, "**Not quite,**" ask them to repeat it until you can summarize it correctly.

Once you have correctly summarized what they said, you can even go deeper by asking, "**Is there more?**"

You can keep going deeper and deeper by repeating this process until the person says "No, that's it." If you allow the person to go all the way down to the core issue, they usually have an ah-ha moment that almost resolves the issue on its own.

If you want to go to the advanced level when repeating back, also describe to them the feeling they are experiencing. Do this by feeling the emotions yourself and expressing the thoughts in your head if you were in their situation. Go big here. Exaggerate the thoughts. Use swear words. Remember that they fear you will get angry if they say what they really think (and then become vindictive). So they have toned down their thought when saying it. If you tone it down, even more, they will not feel heard. But, by contrast, if you amp it up, they will likely say, "Well, it's not that extreme." But they will feel heard. And they will be safe seeing that even though you thought they were saying the amped-up version, you didn't get angry.

Example:

- A. What was said or written:
  - a. *"I wish that you wouldn't act in anger."*
- B. What is likely in their head:

- a. *"Goddammit, why do you always have to be such an f-ing bully? Let people talk and at least have the courtesy to not rage at the ones who are telling you what you need to hear while the others cower in silence!"*

Again, say, **"Is that right?"** If they say, **"Yes,"** you are done.

If they say, **"Not quite,"** ask them to repeat it until you can summarize it correctly. Once you have correctly summarized what they said, you can even go deeper by asking, **"Is there more?"** (There is almost always more!)

After the above process is complete, to confirm that you have done it correctly, ask the person: **"Do you feel heard?"**

2. If they are sharing a painful thing that is going on in their life ...

Don't repeat back what they said. Instead, say, **"I imagine that you are feeling ...."** And then honestly try to imagine what they are feeling and thinking. Express that.

**"Is that right?"** If they say, **"Yes,"** you can even go deeper by asking ...

**"Is there more?"** Or even better ...

**"There's more. Please tell me more."** Because there is almost always more!

If they say, **"Not quite,"** ask them to repeat it until you can summarize it correctly. Once you have correctly summarized what they said, you can even go deeper by asking, **"Please tell me more."**

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What if someone won't say what they are feeling or thinking? No worries, you can still make them feel heard. You have to imagine what they are thinking and say that. **"I imagine that you are thinking something like ...."** And then, **"Is that right?"** If they say, **"Yes,"** you are done.

If they say, "No," ask them what their thoughts are. Now that they have seen that you won't get angry, they are more likely to share.

If they still don't share, you can try to imagine their thoughts again. Repeat until they do share and you have reflected it correctly.

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This is the single most powerful tool that I know of to create trust and connection. People want to feel heard. And they can only know that you heard them if you say back their words (or, even better, their thoughts) to them. Oddly, this step is more impactful than acting on their feedback, or helping them solve their problem.

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Conversely, if you feel that someone you are talking to is not hearing you, you can simply ask them: “To make sure that I am communicating well, can you please repeat back what you heard me say.” If that feels too blunt, you can first share with them this document.

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If you want to get good at making people feel heard, here is an [AI Agent](#) that will help you do so.

★ Interested in coaching or software to help implement the Mochary Method at your company? Please fill out our interest form [here](#), or book a discovery call with Nancy Xu [here](#).