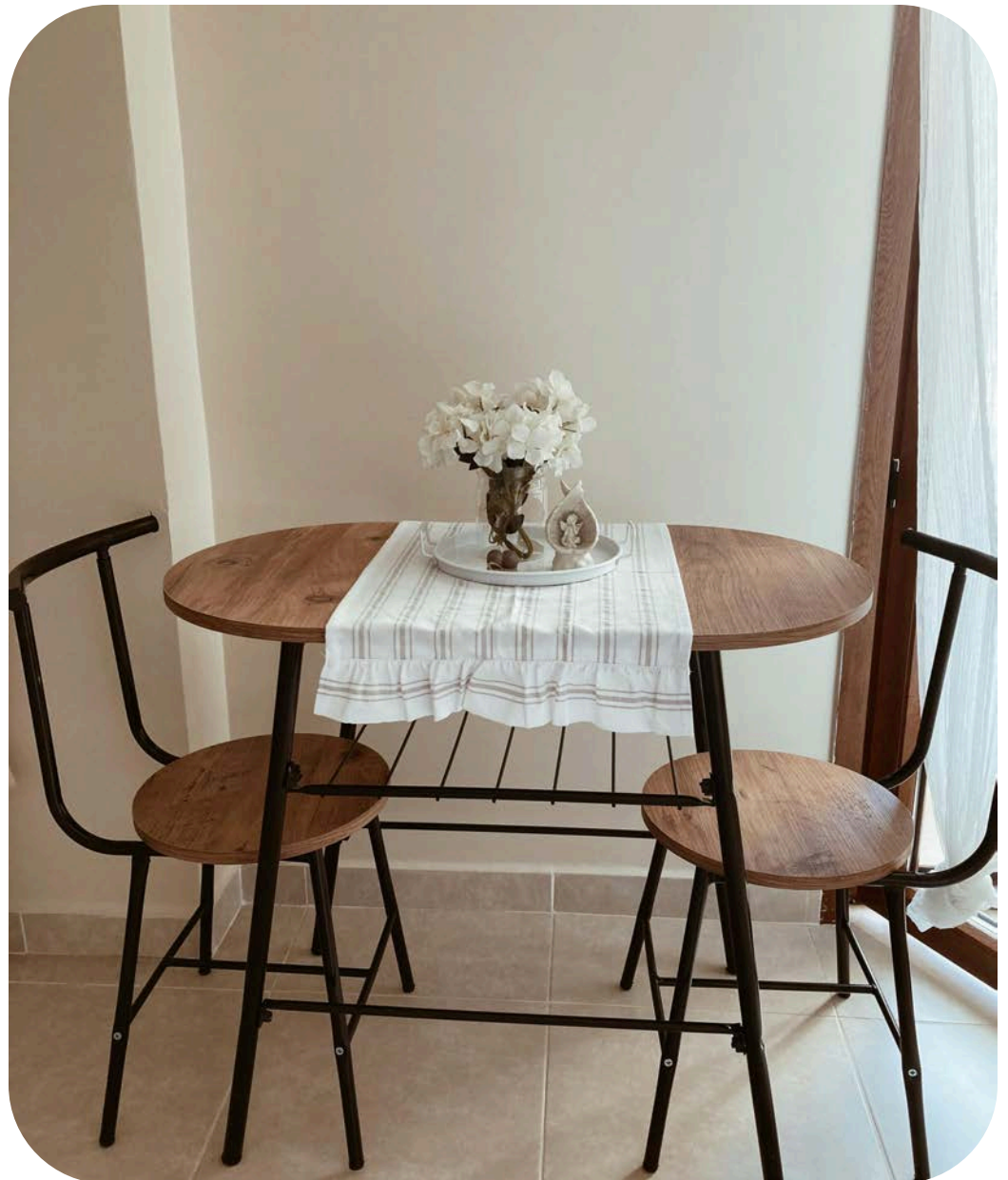

LISTEN:

Learning to Care with Compassion and Confidence

A Six-Session Video Based Study



Presented by
The Church Cares at
the Charis Institute,
Regent University

Welcome to

Listen: Learning to Care with Compassion and Confidence

Every day, people around us are carrying burdens we cannot see. Struggling relationships. Anxiety. Grief. Loneliness. Doubts. Fear. Often, they don't need someone with all the answers—they need someone willing to listen.

The apostle Paul wrote, “Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

The Listen course is designed to help you do just that. Whether you're participating as part of a small group or in a training environment, you'll learn practical, Christ-centered skills that help people feel seen, heard, and loved. Our prayer is that what you learn here will strengthen your relationships, deepen your faith, and equip you to care for others with the compassion of Jesus.

Thank you for saying yes to this journey.

Who is the Listen Course For?

The Listen course is intentionally flexible. It may be used in the following ways:

Small Group Study

The Listen course can be used as a six-session small group experience. Participants learn together, practice together, and become better equipped to care for others.

Volunteer & Leadership Training

The Listen course may also be used to equip volunteers to care for people within a church, including:

- Small group leaders
- Care ministry volunteers
- Prayer teams
- Hospitality and welcome teams
- Pastors and ministry staff
- Elders and deacons
- Sunday school and youth leaders
- Lay counselors
- Outreach and community ministry volunteers

Regardless of the format, the goal is the same: helping ordinary people become extraordinary listeners who reflect the love of Christ.

How the Course Works

The Listen course includes six sessions. Each session includes the following four parts:

Watch Together:

Watch a short video that introduces practical listening skills.



Group Discussion:

Discuss what you learned and how it applies to everyday life.



Pair and Share:

Practice a listening skill with one other person.



Personal Challenge:

Put what you've learned into practice.



Whether you're meeting weekly over six weeks or completing the course during an intensive training weekend, it's vital to make time for participants to practice. Listening is a skill, not just information. Like any skill, it grows stronger through repetition. The more participants practice during the course, the more naturally they'll care for people after the course ends.

Before You Begin

Group Agreement

To help create a safe place where everyone can learn and grow, we agree to:

Honor each person's story. We will treat every person with dignity, compassion, and the love of Christ.

Protect confidentiality. What is shared in the group stays in the group unless someone is in danger or gives permission to share.

Show up for one another. We'll do our best to attend consistently and let the leader know if we'll be absent.

Care without carrying. We'll support one another while remembering that God is our ultimate source of hope and healing.

Receive care as well as give it. We'll be willing to accept encouragement, prayer, and support from one another.

Practice, not perfection. We're all learning to listen well. We'll give one another grace as we grow.

Pray for one another. We'll faithfully pray for the people in this group.

Session Descriptions

Session One: Joining: When Someone Hurts, Show Up

Session Two: Prayer and Boundaries: Knowing Your Role as a Listener

Session Three: See, Hear, Understand: Nonverbal Skills and Curiosity as a Caregiver

Session Four: Listening Like Jesus: The Power of Looping

Session Five: Gracious Goodbyes: The Ministry of Summarizing

Session Six: From Connection to Direction: Helping the Journey Forward

Session One

Joining: When Someone Hurts, Show Up

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ Learn what it means to "join" someone who is hurting.
- ☐ Describe why listening is often more helpful than immediately giving advice.
- ☐ Recognize opportunities to care for someone through your presence.
- ☐ Practice the four foundational behaviors of joining.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Who is the best listener you know? What does he or she do that makes you feel heard?

Watch Together

The Session One video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course.



As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.

My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. In the video, Jim describes “joining” as more than showing up – it means being emotionally and spiritually present with someone in their pain. What do you think keeps us from joining people in that way?
2. Read James 1:19 aloud in your group:

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

Which part of that instruction is more challenging for you? Why?

3. Review the four foundational behaviors of joining:

- Suspend time.
- Be worthy of trust.
- Speak fewer words.
- See the one Jesus loves.

Who in your life might benefit from this kind of presence right now? Which of these four behaviors would make the biggest difference in your next conversation with them?

4. Imagine if every follower of Jesus became known as someone who truly listened and cared well. How might that change people’s experience of the church – and of Jesus?

Pair & Share



After the group discussion time, have every person pair with another group member. One person will be the **Speaker** and the other will be the **Listener**. Use the following guide to practice the four foundational behaviors of joining.

Speaker

Spend 3–4 minutes answering this question:

What’s something that’s been weighing on you lately?

Choose something real but not deeply personal. The goal is to help your partner practice listening. If you are having a hard time thinking of something to talk about, check Appendix A for a list of potential topics for Pair and Share.

Listener

Your assignment is simple: Practice today's four joining behaviors.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Slow down. Invite them to speak.
- Listen carefully and acknowledge what they share... *I understand. That's understandable.*
- Ask one gentle follow-up question... *What was that like for you? How did that make you feel?*
- Resist the urge to solve the problem or share your own story when you are the listener.

After a few minutes, switch roles.

Debrief Together

- Listeners: What felt natural? What was difficult?
- Speakers: What helped you feel listened to?

Personal Challenge

Before Session Two, practice truly listening to someone. Perhaps a family member, roommate, neighbor, or friend. This is another chance to practice the four joining behaviors. At the next session, share one thing you learned.



Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for welcoming us into your family through Jesus. Open our eyes to those who may feel alone or disconnected around us. Give us the patience to listen, the humility to serve, and the compassion to walk alongside others without trying to fix them. Use us to help someone experience your care this week. Amen.

Session Two

Prayer and Boundaries: Knowing Your Role as a Listener

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ Explore what it looks like to pray *with* someone, not just *for* someone.
- ☐ Know our limits as someone who listens.
- ☐ Identify healthy boundaries and when to refer someone for specialized care.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Since the last session, did you practice listening to someone? If so, what did you learn?

Watch Together

The Session Two video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course.



As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.

My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Have you experienced someone praying *with* you? If so, how did it differ from someone saying that they would pray for you?
2. In the video, Pastor Reina made this statement about prayer: “We’re not trying to fix an individual or say the right thing to make God act; we’re walking *with* someone to God.” Why is that distinction important? In what ways does that shape your view of praying with someone?
3. Our role is that of a listener, not a rescuer—that’s God’s job. What are some signs that we’ve moved from caring for someone to trying to rescue them?
4. In the video, Pastor Charles said that part of caring for others is to know our limitations and when to bring in other people or resources. How does that shape your view of what it means to listen?

Pair & Share



After the group discussion time, have every person pair with another group member. One person will share about a current challenge or burden they are carrying (2–3 minutes). The other person should listen without interrupting or offering advice.

After listening:

- Briefly summarize what you heard.
- Ask, “**Would it be okay if I prayed with you right now?**”
- Pray a simple, conversational prayer together. Thank God for being present, mention the burden that was shared, and ask Him for His help, wisdom, peace, or strength.

Then switch roles.

Debrief Together

- What was it like to pray with someone instead of simply saying, ‘I’ll pray for you’?
- What made praying together feel natural? What felt awkward?
- How might praying with someone help them experience God’s presence in a difficult moment?

Personal Challenge



Before Session Three, take some time to pray and reflect on these questions:

1. Is overresponsibility creeping into my life?
2. Is there a boundary I need to set?
3. Do I need to reach out to someone to support me?

Tips on Emergency Care

While it is rare, it is helpful to be equipped in case of an emergency. If you encounter someone who needs emergency-level care, here are three resources for care:

- Call 911 for a medical emergency.
- Call 988 (the Mental Health Hotline) for concerns over self-harm or other mental health emergencies.
- Contact your local church for advice and recommendations on local resources.

Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for inviting us to care for others the way you care for us. Give us the wisdom to listen well, the humility to know our limits, and the courage to pray with those who are hurting. Help us to trust you with what only you can carry. May our presence point people to your presence. Amen.

Session Three

See, Hear, Understand: Nonverbal Skills and Curiosity as a Caregiver

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ See how our nonverbal communication helps people feel seen, heard, and valued.
- ☐ Learn the Three V's and a B to communicate presence and care.
- ☐ Use curiosity to better understand someone's experience.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Since the last session, did you take the time to reflect if over-responsibility was creeping into your life? If so, were there boundaries that you set?

Watch Together

The Session Three video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course. As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.



My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Why do you think providing presence is more meaningful than offering quick advice? Have you experienced the benefit of presence in your life?
2. Review the Three V's and a B.

- Visual – Maintain gentle, steady eye contact.
- Vocal Quality – Keep a warm, empathetic tone.
- Verbal Tracking – Provide brief responses (mmh, ah, ok, I see...) that show you're following.
- Body Posture – Maintain an open and engaged posture.

What did you notice in the demonstration with Casey and Jordan? Which of these comes most naturally to you? Which could be challenging for you?

3. The video described two ways to practice curiosity: asking open-ended questions and having a curious attitude. Why are both important for helping someone feel seen, heard, and understood?
4. What does genuine curiosity require you to give up as a listener?

Pair & Share



After the group discussion, pair up with another participant. One person will be the **Speaker** and the other the **Listener**.

Speaker

Spend 3–4 minutes sharing about a recent challenge or stressful situation.

Listener

For the first 2 minutes, practice good nonverbal communication without asking a question or providing a response.

- Maintain visual connection.
- Keep a warm, empathetic tone
- Provide brief responses to show you are tracking.
- Maintain an open body posture.

After 2 minutes, then try one open-ended question with a curious style of asking.

After a few minutes, switch roles.

Debrief Together

Review the Listening Tips below before you debrief together.

Listeners

- Which nonverbal skill required the most intentional effort?
- What helped you stay curious?

Speakers

- Provide feedback to the Listener.
- Are there any Listening Tips that the Listener could practice?

Listening Tips

It can feel awkward when you start paying attention to your non-verbal communication. But it can be helpful to find one aspect of listening where you might have a poor habit to replace with a better habit:

Instead of...

Looking away while someone is talking

Nodding too much

Interrupting the other person

Slouching or turning away

Speaking with anxious energy

Facial expressions that don't match the moment

Repeating "uh-huh"

A flat expression

Jumping to advice

Saying very little

Try...

Maintain comfortable eye contact

Nod occasionally

Let them speak for a while before responding

Face the person with open posture

Slow down and soften your tone

Show empathy and attention with your expressions

Vary your responses: "I see," "That sounds hard," or "Wow."

Let your face reflect the speaker's emotions.

Ask one more curious question

Use brief verbal tracking like "I see," "That sounds hard," or "Wow."

Personal Challenge



Before Session Four, review the list of open-ended questions below. Look for an opportunity to model curiosity by asking an open-ended question.

1. How do you like to be supported when you feel stressed?
2. How have your priorities or dreams shifted lately?
3. How have you handled challenges recently?
4. What's something you learned about yourself in this experience?
5. What do you wish I would ask you more about?
6. How are you recharging from burnout these days?
7. What's been on your mind lately?
8. Do you have any regrets?
9. What gives you inspiration?
10. What roadblocks are you facing right now that get in the way of your goals?
11. What do you wish more people understood about you?
12. What are you feeling more strongly right now?
13. What do you think God might be doing in your story?
14. What's it been like when you've tried to pray about this?
15. Who is walking with you through all of this?

Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for always seeing us, hearing us, and understanding us completely. While we can't see you, we know you are here among us, leading and guiding our ministry to each other and to those we will be ministering to. Teach us to be a reflection of you to those around us. Amen.

Session Four

Listening Like Jesus: The Power of Looping

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ Understand how looping helps people feel seen, heard, and understood.
- ☐ Practice looping both the content and emotion of what someone shares.
- ☐ Use reflecting, paraphrasing, and clarifying to deepen conversations with compassion.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Since the last session, did you intentionally ask open-ended questions or practice curiosity? If so, what did you notice?

Watch Together

The Session Four video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course. As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.



My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Jesus listened to the disciples on the road to Emmaus before explaining anything. What keeps us from slowing down enough to draw out someone's story?
2. The video described **looping** as reflecting back the **content** and the **emotion** of what someone shares. Why do you think both are important to someone feeling understood?
3. Review the three tools of looping:

- **Reflecting:** Mirror the emotion.
- **Paraphrasing:** Restate the story in your own words.
- **Clarifying:** Gently check your understanding.

What makes responding this way different from immediately offering advice or trying to solve the problem?

4. In the demonstration, what did you notice Casey doing well? Were there any opportunities where you might have responded differently?

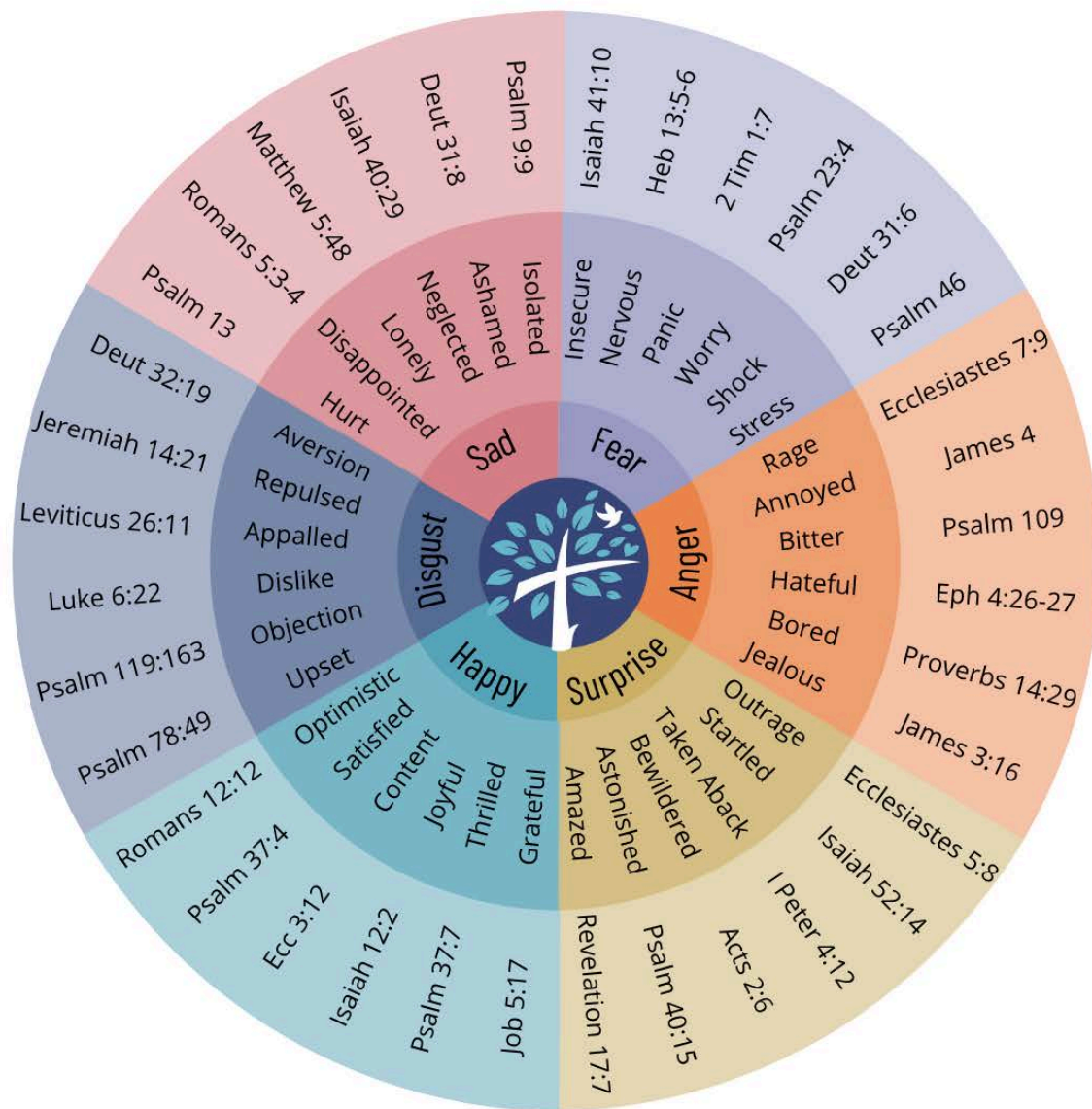
Pair & Share



After the group discussion, pair up with another participant. One person will be the **Speaker** and the other the **Listener**.

Speaker

Spend 3–4 minutes sharing about some of your stressors or a challenge you're facing. Choose an emotion connected to the situation you are sharing. Try to display that emotion when you are talking. To assist you, an emotion wheel is provided below.



Listener

For the first minute, simply listen without interrupting. Practice good nonverbal communication.

Then practice looping by using all three skills:

- Reflect the emotion you hear. "It sounds like you're feeling stressed."
- Paraphrase the content in your own words. "So you're carrying a lot between work and caring for your family."
- Ask one clarifying question to make sure you understood correctly. "When you say it's becoming too much, is it the emotional weight that's hardest, or is it trying to juggle everything day-to-day?"

After a few minutes, switch roles.

Debrief Together

- Which part of looping felt most natural?
- What part felt awkward or difficult?

Personal Challenge



Before Session Five, intentionally practice looping in one conversation.

Afterward, consider to yourself:

- Did I reflect the emotion they were feeling?
- Did I paraphrase instead of immediately responding?
- Did I ask a clarifying question to check my understanding?

Come prepared to share one thing you learned.

Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, help us to slow down and reflect Jesus to those around us. Give us courage to push through any awkwardness so that we can hear what others are saying and feeling. Amen.

Session Five

Gracious Goodbyes: The Ministry of Summarizing

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ Understand why summarizing is an essential part of caring conversations.
- ☐ Use summarizing to confirm, redirect, and graciously close a conversation.
- ☐ Practice ending conversations in a way that helps people feel heard, honored, and hopeful.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Since the last session, did you practice looping in a conversation? If so, how did it go?

Watch Together



The Session Five video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course. As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.

My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. As a caring conversation comes to an end, what's your natural tendency?

- End the conversation too quickly?
- Keep talking because you're unsure how to finish?
- Start offering advice?
- Something else?

2. Review the three purposes of summarizing:

- **Confirmation:** Reflect the main ideas so the person knows they were heard.
- **Redirection:** Gently guide the conversation toward another important area or a natural next step.
- **Closure:** End the conversation with care, often through prayer or follow-up.

What benefits does this approach bring to a caring conversation?

3. Dr. Sells said that if your summary isn't completely accurate, it can actually be helpful for the other person to clarify what they've shared. How does it make you feel to know that you don't have to summarize perfectly?
4. In the demonstration, what did you notice about how Casey and Jordan both summarized to bring the conversation to a close? Was there anything you would have done differently?

Pair & Share



After the group discussion, pair up with another participant. One person will be the **Speaker** and the other the **Listener**. This Pair and Share time will take more time as you begin putting everything you learned into practice. Plan for ten minutes per person.

Speaker

Spend about 10 minutes sharing about a stressful situation that you are currently facing or have faced personally.

Listener

As the speaker shares, maintain an engaged body posture, ask curious questions, practice looping content and emotions.

As the conversation nears its end, practice summarizing through one of the following:

- **Confirmation:** Reflect the main idea so the Speaker feels heard.
- **Redirection:** Gently guide toward another important area or next step.
- **Closure:** End the conversation with care through prayer or follow-up.

After a few minutes, switch roles.

Debrief Together

- Share one thing your partner did well.
- Share one thing that could make them even more effective in the future.

Personal Challenge

Before Session Six, look for an opportunity to practice summarizing in a conversation.

Afterward, reflect:

- Did my summary help the other person feel heard?
- Did I ask if I understood them correctly?
- Did I end the conversation with warmth, prayer, or an appropriate next step?



Come prepared to share one thing you learned.

A Tip for Using Summaries Well

Summarizing is one of the most powerful tools in a caring conversation, but it should be used intentionally—not constantly. Unlike looping, which may happen several times throughout a conversation, a summary is most helpful near the end. It confirms what you've heard, provides a natural transition, and helps bring the conversation to a gracious close.

If you need to end a conversation but aren't sure how, it's okay to set a caring boundary. You might say, "Would it be okay if we closed our time together in prayer?" A warm, respectful ending helps the other person feel cared for while bringing the conversation to a meaningful close.

Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the compassion and grace you extend to us. Help us reflect your love to those around us in how we listen to them. Teach us to listen carefully, summarize thoughtfully, and leave people feeling seen and heard. May our conversations point others to the hope that is found in you. Amen.

Just one lesson to go!

Before we wrap up, we'd love to hear how this experience has been for you. Please take a few minutes now to complete our program evaluation.

As a university-based training initiative, your feedback genuinely shapes how we improve. Every response helps strengthen the way we equip others to care well.



If this QR code does not work for you, visit
www.thechurchcares.com/feedback.

Session Six

From Connection to Direction: Helping the Journey Forward

Session Objective

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- ☐ Understand how to move from listening to helping someone take a next step.
- ☐ Use the four H's to help someone move toward hope and practical action.
- ☐ Encourage others without trying to fix them or support them alone.

Conversation Starter

To begin, take a few minutes to discuss this question:

Since the last session, did you practice summarizing? If so, how did it go?

Watch Together

The Session Six video is available at www.thechurchcares.com/course. As you watch, don't try to capture every idea. Instead, listen for one or two insights you want to remember and record them below.



My Key Takeaways

Group Discussion



After watching the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. We've spent five sessions discussing listening before talking about directing toward next steps. How has this study shaped the way you approach listening?
2. Review the Four H's of helping someone move forward:

- **Hear:** Listen for both the person's pain ("push") and what they're longing for ("pull").
- **Hope:** Encourage trust in God while helping identify a hopeful next step.
- **Hindrances:** Discover what stands in the way of what they're hoping for.
- **Highway:** Identify possible paths around the hindrances as well as other next steps for connection.

Why do you think it's important to move through these four steps in order rather than jumping straight to solutions?

3. Our role isn't to fix people but to invite them toward hope and help connect them with others. How could that perspective change the pressure you may feel when someone asks for help?
4. In the demonstration, what did you notice about how Jordan helped Casey begin moving forward? Was there anything you would have done differently?

Pair & Share



After the group discussion, pair up with another participant. One person will be the **Speaker** and the other the **Listener**.

Speaker

Spend several minutes sharing about a challenge, decision, or situation where you would appreciate encouragement and direction.

Listener

As the speaker shares, work through the Four H worksheet. Remember, your goal is not to solve the problem, but to help the speaker take one thoughtful step forward.

After a few minutes, switch roles.

Debrief Together

Encourage your partner with one thing he or she did well. Share one thing he or she could do to be even more effective in the future.

PLAN & PRAY



DATE: _____

HEAR THE CONCERN

What is the concern?
Be clear & specific.

HOPE

What can change, and
what waits on God?
Make a plan?
What resources? spiritual,
personal, church, family,
city, friends, etc.

HINDRANCES

What will make this
difficult? Plans to respond
to hindrances?

HIGHWAY

Where is God in this plan?
Pray over it.

Personal Challenge



As you complete this course, choose one specific action step to put your listening skills into practice.

It might be:

- Having a caring conversation with someone who needs encouragement.
- Intentionally using the Four H's to help someone move forward.
- Serving in or helping launch a care ministry at your church.
- Looking for another opportunity God places in front of you.

Write down your commitment and share it with someone who can encourage you.

Prayer

We suggest ending your group time in prayer. Here's a prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for walking with us throughout this journey of learning to care for others. Help us continue listening with compassion, loving with wisdom, and trusting you with every conversation. Give us discernment to know when to simply be present and when to gently encourage someone toward hope and a next step. May we reflect the heart of Jesus and help others find lasting hope in you. Amen.

OUR HOPE FOR YOU

May you listen deeply. Love wisely. Be the hands and feet of Jesus in someone's story. May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in him so you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Looking for support as you continue in care ministry?

TheChurchCares.com offers practical resources on a wide range of life challenges you may encounter as a helper. It's your go-to hub for care tools, guides, and encouragement.

7cups.com/thechurchcares is a 24/7 platform where trained helpers and help-seekers can connect anytime. You'll find opportunities to practice your listening skills to people who are hurting, provide care, receive support, and access additional training at your own pace.

Listen Course Speakers and Presenters

**Michelle London**

is a national journalist and the host for the Listen series with The Church Cares. She has worked as a Capitol Hill correspondent for the Christian Broadcasting Network and numerous news organizations.

**Jim Sells, Ph.D.**

Director of The Church Cares, Professor of Counseling, Hughes Co-Chair of Integration, Regent University, author, speaker, and a licensed psychologist.

**Shaunti Feldhahn, Ph.D.**

Best-Selling Author, Speaker, Researcher, Consultant, and Speaker for The Church Cares team.

Listen Course Speakers and Presenters



Pastors Charles and Reina Olmeda **Transformation Church**

Reina is Director of the Mental Health Initiative at the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and a professional counselor. Charles has a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership and is the lead pastor at Transformation Church, as well as a consultant with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.



Steve Rawls

is a minister and Associate Regional Director for Young Life Club. He has a Master of Arts in Religious Studies from Reformed Theological Seminary.



Rachel Stephens, Psy.D.

is a licensed psychologist, professor, and the director of the Doctor of Psychology program at Regent University.

Listen Course Speakers and Presenters

**Jason Scott and Stacie Otey-Scott, Psy.D.**

serve through LiveWell by Dr. SOS, LLC. Min. Jason and Dr. SOS, a licensed psychologist, have developed and led mental wellness ministries for many churches, large and small.

**Jennifer Ripley, Ph.D.**

is co-director of The Church Cares, Professor of Psychology, Hughes Endowed Co-Chair of Integration, Regent University. She is an author, researcher, and licensed psychologist.

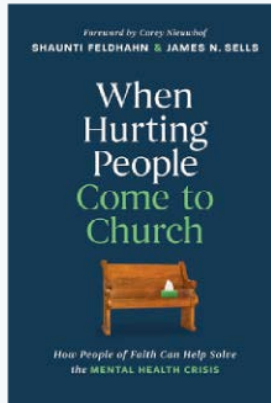
**Joel Ladd**

is an instructional design expert with experience in acting, training medical professionals in listening skills, and leading support group-focused ministries.

**Taylor Lyons**

is an actress originally from Charlotte, North Carolina. After attending school in the UK at the Bristol Old Vic Theater School, Taylor began working in feature films and commercials. She is best known for her work in *Alien: Alone*, *Inlawfully Yours*, and *Truth or Dare*.

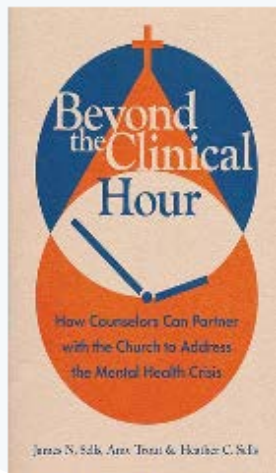
Additional Resources



When Hurting People Come to Church

Shaunti Feldhahn & Jim Sells

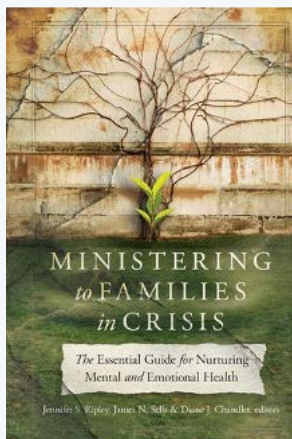
People are hurting at a scale we've never seen. They're dealing with an onslaught of issues like anxiety, grief, mental illness, family troubles, and hopelessness. Pastors and counselors can't see everyone in need. This book can help.



Beyond the Clinical Hour

Jim Sells, Amy Trout & Heather Sells

Psychologists James Sells and Amy Trout and journalist Heather Sells know firsthand the urgency of the situation. In this book, they call clinicians, students, and educators to collaborate with churches and lay leaders to envision and then create innovative solutions in their own communities.



Ministering to Families in Crisis

Jen Ripley, Jim Sells & Diane Chandler (Editors)

Ministering to Families in Crisis provides leaders with an essential shelf reference with various experts explaining different types of problems and strategies for supporting your community's mental and emotional health.

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READY TO BRING THIS MINISTRY TO LIFE?

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Appendix A

List of potential topics to discuss in Pair and Share Time to practice listening:

Great Topics for Practice

- A conflict with a friend
- Stress at work
- A difficult coworker or supervisor
- Parenting challenges
- Feeling overwhelmed by your schedule
- Worry about aging parents
- Balancing work and family
- Financial stress (not an immediate crisis)
- Navigating a family disagreement
- Feeling lonely or disconnected
- A decision you're trying to make
- Difficulty setting boundaries
- A disappointment or unmet expectation
- Managing anxiety about the future
- Adjusting to a life transition

Please Save These for Another Time*

- Suicidal thoughts or self-harm
- Recent death of a loved one
- Active domestic violence
- Abuse that is currently occurring
- Current addiction crisis
- Homelessness or housing insecurity
- Serious medical emergency
- Recent traumatic event
- Active legal crisis
- Anything requiring immediate professional help
- Severe mental health symptoms that feel out of control
- Situations where you feel unsafe
- Anything you are not emotionally ready to discuss
- Any situation where you need more than listening today

***Important:** Saving these topics for another time does not mean putting off needed help. Some concerns require a different level of care than this listening conversation can provide. Please seek appropriate professional, crisis, medical, or emergency support when needed.