



WORKSHOP ACTION PLAN Meeting The Goal Of Withdrawal: Ask Only Questions

Practice this *ask only questions* technique in casual conversation. Most people will think you are only interested in what they are saying! Little will they know that they are helping you become a great listener.

The game plan: Only ask questions during a conversation.

To listen make sure that you:

- Are calm enough to hear and to process what you are being told.
- Realize you don't own the problem (at least not at the time of your listening).
- Refrain from advising or defending your point of view.
- Provide a safe environment for others to speak.
- Seek to understand the other person's point of view, and use questions to clarify your perceptions.

Avoid the traps of listening. Try to not...

- Offer advice
- Give your opinion
- Tell a story of how you went through a situation that was even worse
- Blame the talker for the situation
- Insult someone
- Criticize
- Punish
- Judge
- Diagnose, or
- Interject your own needs, emotions and values into the scenario.

When you finish an *ask only questions* session, review this action plan to see if you avoided the traps of listening. Then think of how you might avoid those traps the next time.