

Pay Attention

What does it mean?

- I am focused - Attend in a close and thoughtful manner
- I am present - Attend to the 'now'
- I am aware - Attend to the environment and surroundings

Attention looks two ways - inwards and outwards.

Inward self-attention - noticing one's own feelings and taking the deep breath before acting from that emotion; i.e. noticing the moment of anger or hurt and breathing before speaking or acting.

Outward attention - being thoughtful or empathetic to others by noticing how they are feeling; being with them here and now and not lost in your own thoughts, judgments or agenda.



Pay Attention

Looks like:

Sounds like:

Feels like:



Pay Attention

Looks like:

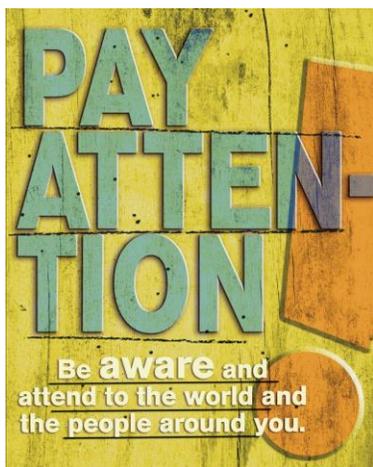
- * looking at the person speaking
- * using appropriate body language
- * staying on task

Sounds like:

- * taking turns to talk
- * positive conversation
- * actively contributing to conversation/activity
- * staying on-topic

Feels like:

- * respectful
- * meaningful
- * supportive



Discussion Starters:

- If you are in a group or with another person and the tool of paying attention is effectively being used, what does it look like? Sound like? Feel like?
- Identify a specific time when you failed to pay attention. How did that impact another person? What were the consequences for you?
- How do you feel when someone is not paying attention to you? Do you let them know? How? What do you say?
- What can you learn from or about others by paying close attention to what they say and how they say it?
- How do you show someone that you are really attending to them? What expressions do you use? What follow-up questions might you ask? What non-verbal behaviors do you show?
- How important is eye contact in your communication with others? Are there differences between how men and women feel about eye contact?

Situations to Discuss:

- "I am not *just* talking with a friend but with *this* friend, who told me several weeks ago that he was concerned about his dad's health and whom I have seen grow more and more preoccupied in the last few days." How will you keep this in mind as you plan time and activities with this friend?
- "I am not *just* reminiscing with an old middle school friend but with *this* friend, who never joined the same high school activities as I, and seems threatened by the friendships I developed in these activities." How will you *attend* to the old friend's needs and reassure this friend of your commitment to *your* friendship?
- "A car is trying to join the traffic flow from the parking lot to your right. Since the traffic is bumper-to-bumper, if everybody thinks of that car as *just* another car, its driver will be stuck forever." Will you *attend* to the needs of this driver? Can people *drive* with civility?
- Adapted excerpt of *Choosing Civility* by Dr. P.M. Forni:

"Several students are walking down the hall. They are laughing, they are teasing one another, and they are loud. As they walk by a closed classroom door, one of them does the unexpected. Only a few seconds ago she seemed oblivious to anything but the microcosm of her giggling peers. But now, as she glances at the closed door, the thought that a class or an exam may be taking place behind it flashes through her mind. Immediately she lowers her voice and hastens to hush her friends. A small act? Yes, but an impressive one nonetheless. What was this girl attending to?

- in her mind's eye she saw what may have been happening beyond the closed door,
- she was able to imagine the discomfort that her group's noisemaking could cause,
- she was willing to act!

This complex process, however, could not have started had she not been giving close and thoughtful focus to the situation and sharpened her antenna."

What are some examples of situations in which you **sharpened your antenna**?

- We may see a classmate in need of a word of encouragement, but it is only if we pay attention that we may do something about it.

What is the difference between **seeing** the classmate and **paying attention** to the classmate?