

Taking turns and learning to listen – discussing anger issues

In Psychology in the Real World groups discussions often take place in the whole group but sometimes people pair up. They then take it in turns to listen to each other, one taking the role of listener who helps the other think about a particular issue, akin to the role a humanistic counsellor might take. After five to ten minutes they swap over. This is useful as it enables quieter members who are more comfortable in one to one encounters to have a say as well as helps people become better listeners. In most conversations we spend our time trying to persuade others to agree with us. In these one-to-one encounters people are encouraged to really listen and to concentrate on helping the other person to express what they think and feel.

Some guidance is usually given by the group facilitator. Below is an example from a session about anger:

Listen to the person next to you and help them to tell you about a time when they got angry.

Try to get them to think about:

What did it feel like being angry?

Was this troubling in any way?

What were the good things about getting angry?

What were the bad consequences of them getting angry?