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Controlling your thoughts is another part of this that might be tough for some. You might be thinking about your upcoming meeting, your next meal, or what you have planned for the weekend. To keep yourself grounded and in the moment, consider daily or frequent meditation.

You may have heard that listening is an act of empathy. This is true as real listening happens when you're trying to understand a person's perspective through their lenses. To successfully do this, we need to take ourselves completely out of the equation. Meaning, listening with an open mind and no agenda, as people can often sense judgment through verbal or nonverbal cues. This immediately puts guards up, affecting the quality of the discussion. Additionally, listening without our own agendas can help us carefully consider the other person's thoughts. When we listen with an agenda, we tend to only

By listening to learn, you're setting your only goal as discovering more about the person or topic at hand. With this approach, you're more likely to reflect before responding, ask in-depth and valuable questions, and reiterate the conversation in ways that lead to a better understanding and appreciation. Free growth opportunities and education, am I right?!

By being a more effective listener, you will naturally build trust with those around you. Since trust is an activity that is centered around other people (not yourself), it's important to understand the other party. You can only do this by genuinely listening. From there, it's all one big learning opportunity filled with chances to create true connections.