

**NORTH LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
DEACON TRAINING**

**LISTEN TO ME**

When I ask that you listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I asked was that you listen, not to talk or do – just hear me.

Advice is cheap: 25 cents will give you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the same newspaper.

And I can do for myself; I'm not helpless. Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness.

But, when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you and get about the business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling. And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.

Perhaps that's why prayer works, sometimes, for some people because GOD is mute, and He doesn't give advice or try to fix things. He just listens and lets you work it out for yourself.

So, please listen and just hear me. And, if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn; and I'll listen to you.

(From NLPC Stephen Minister File with no author give.)

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**LJM**