

BOOK 1 · THE TRANSFORMATION SERIES

B O O K C L U B D I S C U S S I O N
G U I D E

Shut The F***k Up

The Art of Powerful Listening in a World That Won't Stop Talking

L i s t e n i n g · S e l f - B e t r a y a l · S h a m e
· A n g e r · C o n n e c t i o n

by Jazmine L. Ramzy

"The most important conversation you will ever have is the one you keep interrupting."

How to Use This Guide

This guide contains 41 questions organized into thematic sections, plus 5 experiential exercises designed to move the conversation from your heads into your lives. You will not get through all 41 questions in one sitting — and that's the point. Use the questions that pull at something. Skip the ones that don't. Come back to the ones that made someone go quiet.

This guide works best when the group has agreed to three things: radical honesty, generous listening, and confidentiality. What is shared in the room stays in the room. What is heard in the room can change a life.

A N O T E T O T H E F A C I L I T A T O R

Book 1 is where everything begins — and where the most resistance lives. Some members of your group will feel deeply seen by this book. Others will feel quietly called out. Both responses are exactly right. Create a container of radical safety before you begin: what is shared in this room stays in this room. The questions that feel most uncomfortable are the ones most worth sitting with. Go slowly. The book is about listening — let your discussion model that. When someone finishes speaking, pause before the next person responds. Practice the thing the book is teaching.

Opening: The World That Won't Stop Talking

- 1 Before you read this book, how would you have described your relationship with listening — both listening to others and listening to yourself? Has that self-assessment changed?
- 2 The book opens with the observation that we are more connected than ever and lonelier, angrier, and more divided than ever. Do you recognize that in your own life? Where do you feel it most?
- 3 What made you pick up this book? What were you hoping to find — or hoping to finally name?
- 4 The book argues that the noise we create — the scrolling, the talking, the performing, the busyness — is often armor against something we don't want to hear. What are you using noise to avoid right now?
- 5 Share one moment from the past week when you were physically present in a conversation but mentally somewhere else entirely. What were you actually thinking about? What did you miss?

Part One: The Self-Betrayal Beneath It All

- 6 The book defines self-betrayal as the act of ignoring your own truth to maintain peace, approval, or the comfort of others. Where in your life are you most consistently betraying yourself right now?
- 7 The book traces the origin of self-betrayal to childhood — the moment we learned that our authentic needs, feelings, or desires were too much, too inconvenient, or too risky. Can you identify your earliest memory of making yourself smaller to preserve your place in a relationship?
- 8 Self-betrayal is quiet. It sounds like 'I'm fine,' 'It doesn't matter,' and 'Whatever you want.' What are your personal versions of those phrases? What do you say when you mean something completely different?

9 The book argues that the more we betray ourselves, the less we can hear our own intuition — because we've trained ourselves to override it. How loud is your inner voice right now, on a scale of 1 to 10? What has been turning down the volume?

10 Who in your life has the least access to the real you? What would change in that relationship if they finally met you?

Part Two: The Envy-Shame-Anger Pipeline

11 Walk your group through the pipeline as the book describes it: self-betrayal leads to disconnection, which leads to comparison, which leads to envy, which curdles into shame, which explodes as misdirected anger. Has your group seen this cycle operating in your own lives? Share a recent example — as honestly as you're able.

12 The book's most radical reframe of envy: you are not envious of THEM. You are envious of the version of yourself you are not allowing to exist. When you read that, what — or who — came to mind immediately?

13 Shame, the book argues, is the emotion we will do almost anything to avoid feeling — including destroying relationships, people-pleasing compulsively, and attacking others. What does shame make YOU do?

14 The book identifies five masks shame wears in conversation: defensiveness, blame, attack, withdrawal, and contempt. Which mask does your shame wear most often? Give a specific, real example.

15 The anger you discharge 'harmlessly' — road rage, social media contempt, cruel self-talk, snapping at people who didn't cause the problem — is never actually harmless, the book argues, because YOU always hear it. What is your version of displaced anger? What is it actually about?

Part Three: The Listening We've Lost

16 The book makes a distinction between hearing and listening — hearing is passive reception, listening is active, present, full-body engagement. When was the last time someone truly

listened to you — not waiting for their turn, not offering solutions, not half-distracted? What did it feel like?

17 The book talks about cross-cultural listening — the ways different cultures, generations, and family systems communicate in entirely different languages of silence, directness, touch, time, and formality. Where have you misread someone's communication style as rudeness, coldness, or aggression when it was simply difference?

18 Technology, the book argues, has fundamentally rewired how we attach to each other — replacing depth with speed, presence with performance, and vulnerability with curated content. How has technology changed YOUR ability to truly listen — to others and to yourself?

19 The book presents 'emotional pacing' — the ability to sit with feelings without rushing to fix, resolve, or distract from them — as one of the rarest and most healing capacities a person can develop. How comfortable is your group with emotional pacing? What happens internally when you sit with an uncomfortable feeling instead of escaping it?

20 The book's central question: what if the reason you feel so unheard is because you've stopped listening to yourself? How does that land for each person in your group?

Part Four: The Transformation That Listening Makes Possible

21 The book follows seven characters across different generations, races, and family structures — all learning to listen in their own way. Which character's story felt most like your own? What specifically resonated?

22 The book argues that real connection — the kind that heals, that sustains, that makes life worth living — is only possible when we stop performing and start listening. Where in your life are you performing connection instead of experiencing it?

23 What relationship in your life would most transform if you became a genuinely different listener in it? What would have to change in YOU first?

24 The book ends not with arrival but with beginning — with the recognition that listening is a practice, not a destination. What does your practice look like going forward? What specifically are you committing to?

25

What has this book asked you to stop doing? What has it asked you to start?

26

What is the one thing from this book you most want your group to hold you accountable to in the weeks ahead?

Experiential Exercises

The best book clubs don't just talk about the book — they live it, together, in the room. These five exercises are designed to create exactly that: moments of genuine transformation that happen not in solo reading but in collective experience. Choose the one or two that feel most alive for your group, or work through all five across multiple sessions.

Exercise 1 of 5

◆ THE LISTENING ROUND

One person speaks for 90 seconds without interruption — about anything real that's happening in their life right now. Everyone else's only job: listen. No nodding encouragement, no 'mm-hmm,' no preparing a response. Just receive. After each person speaks, the group reflects back in one sentence: 'What I heard you say is ____.' Not interpretation — reflection. Do this for every member. Then discuss: how did it feel to be fully heard? How hard was it to only listen?

Exercise 2 of 5

◆ THE SELF-BETRAYAL INVENTORY

Give everyone 5 minutes to write their answers to: Where am I saying yes when I mean no? Where am I saying 'I'm fine' when I'm not? Where am I making myself smaller than I actually am? Share as much as you're comfortable sharing. Notice the themes across the group. Discuss: what is the self-betrayal protecting? What would it cost to stop?

Exercise 3 of 5

◆ THE PIPELINE TRACE

Each person identifies one current resentment — toward a person, a situation, or themselves. Then trace it backward through the pipeline together: What is the anger about? What shame sits underneath it? What envy underneath the shame? What self-betrayal underneath the envy? By the time you reach the root, the conversation will have completely changed. Let it.

Exercise 4 of 5

◆ THE SILENCE PRACTICE

Set a timer for 3 minutes. The entire group sits in complete silence together — no phones, no fidgeting, just presence. When the timer ends, each person writes one sentence about what came up in the silence. Share. Discuss: what does silence reveal when you stop filling it? What do you hear when the noise stops?

Exercise 5 of 5

◆ THE ACCOUNTABILITY PAIR

Before leaving, each person pairs with one other group member and makes one specific, concrete commitment: one way they will listen differently — to themselves or someone else — before the next

meeting. Exchange numbers if you don't have them. Check in on each other mid-week. At the next meeting, the first question is: how did it go? The book is about listening. The accountability pair is the practice.

Until the Next Book

Book 1 is not the beginning of a reading journey. It is the beginning of a listening one. Your group just spent time doing something the world rarely makes space for: honest, witnessed, unhurried reflection. That is rare. That is precious. Between now and Book 2, practice one thing: when you notice the urge to fill silence — with words, with your phone, with anything — pause. Just for a moment. And listen to what was trying to get through before you interrupted it.

T H E T R A N S F O R M A T I O N S E R I E S . B O O K C L U B G U I D E S

Book 1: Shut The Fk Up**

Book 2: Listen To Everything

Book 3: You, Inc.

Book 4: The Investment

Book 5: You, Reborn

Book 6: The Currency You Trade In

Book 7: Listen Everywhere

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