



HABIT 4 – WE CONNECT AUTHENTICALLY. WE CULTIVATE TRUST.

Our fourth Habit of Transformational Leadership reminds us that as **OPTAVIA** Coaches and Leaders, we always come from a place of empathy and compassion for others. As soon as you bring your first Client into our Community, you are a Leader, helping them succeed on their journey. To do that, it's critical to build a relationship through meaningful connections and conversations, being present, and simply listening intently to another.

When most people think about "connecting authentically," they think about what they are going to say or how they will respond. As **OPTAVIA**, connecting authentically means being there for them - listening to them with all of our being. It is a deliberate shift from yourself to another.

As an **OPTAVIA** Leader, when you focus on another person, trust yourself to be present, first. Then, begin cultivating that person's trust by demonstrating to others that you are present by listening and feeding back what they shared with you. This should be done by responding through the lens of what you think "should be," but rather by responding in a way that allows them to feel that you have listened deeply, been there for them, and that you are helping them to feel safe.

To begin practicing* the first part of this habit, find someone to practice with...a mentor, partner, friend, etc.

It seems deceptively easy - simply listen to them in an authentic way...listen for the other person, not to them. Don't respond, just listen.

Reflect back on that experience. Were you present and focused on that person or distracted?
What did they share with you? How did you demonstrate that you were listening for them, not to them?

Now, let's put the second part of this exercise into play. Again, find someone to practice with.

Now, listen for that person and respond in a way that allows them to show up more. To do that, you'll need to ask curious questions. Here are some examples, below. Let the conversation guide you so that it flows and your responses encourage the other person to open up and feel safer as that trust is cultivated.

"Tell me more about..." "What makes this important to you?" "What difference did that make?"

Again, reflect upon that experience. Were you present and focused on that person or distracted? What did they share with you? How did you demonstrate that you were listening *for them*, not *to them*? What questions did you ask during your responses to allow the other person more space? Was trust cultivated during that conversation?
