

This research study examined whether there was an association between high-quality listening behaviors and positivity resonance, a marker of the positive emotional quality of social connection, during conversations with strangers. In two samples drawn from two different behavioral interventions aimed at increasing social connection, we coded listening behaviors in three ways (i.e., verbal validation, follow-up questions, and in sample 2 only, global listening) during a 10 minute, structured conversation (sample 1) or a 5 minute small-talk conversation (sample 2). Positivity Resonance was both behaviorally coded and reported by confederates. We found listening behaviors significantly correlated with behavioral coded positivity resonance in both samples. Additionally, in both studies, people who were randomized to a social connectedness intervention compared to a control group asked more follow-up questions during the conversation. These findings suggest that high-quality listening is important for social connection, with implications for overall well being.