**Listen**

when I ask you to listen to me, and you start giving me advice,

you have not done what I have 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 on my feelings.

when I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problems,

you have failed me (strange as that may seem).

listen – all i asked was that you listen – not talk or do, just hear me

I can "do" for myself

I am 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.

when you accept as a simple fact that I feel what I feel, no matter how irrational

then I quit trying to convince you and get down to the business of understanding what is behind the irrational feeling

and when that is clear, the answers are obvious and I don’t need advice

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

so please listen and just hear me

and if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn and I will listen to you.

Ralph Roughton, M.D.