

## Listen

When I ask you to 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 on 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 talk or do - just hear me.  
Advice is cheap: 50 cents will get 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 ...

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.

Anonymous