Social Support Shorts Episode 3: Support Superpower 1 – The Listener

And hello again. This is August and welcome to Social Support Shorts episode three. It's exciting to be here with you again.

Over the last two episodes, we discussed social support, what it is, why it's important, and now I'd like to share with you different categories that social support falls into.

Throughout the next few episodes, I will be inviting you to start thinking about the people in your life who may be sources of these different types of support.

We will take a moment in each episode for you to reflect, so for those note takers out there, please have your pens and paper ready.

I'd also like to introduce you to the Social Support Superpowers Worksheet. That is a tongue twister, Social Support Superpowers Worksheet – got it.

Now, this worksheet, you can download it off of our website where you're listening to this podcast. And when you download it, you'll notice that it is split into each type that I'm going to talk about, and it allows you to place names under each Superpower – and these Superpowers I'll discuss in a second.

And remember, if you want to take time to download and print the worksheet right now, you can always pause the podcast to do so.

I'll also have a little pause after each of the next few sentences to give you some time to jot things down, but for now, let's jump right into it.

So, there are four different types of social support. If you were to search them online, you'd see that they have official names like emotional support, esteem support, instrumental support, and informational support.

Each one is unique, and I like to think of each one as a Superpower. I like to give each Superpower a nickname as well, because we like to have fun here.

The first type of social support we're going to discuss is going to be emotional. That's the official name. I like to call these people whose Superpower is emotional support The Listener – that's their Superpower, they listen.

Have you ever had a time where you really just wanted someone to listen to you talk about your problem? You didn't want it fixed; you didn't want anyone to take action; you just wanted someone to listen.

For example, maybe it's been a frustrating day at work. Or another example, you've been providing care for the individual and they keep asking the same question over and over, and

by the end of it you feel like you've heard that question 400 times. You need to vent. You don't need anyone to solve these problems – you just want to talk about it.

So, you call your friend who you know will listen, and they do it because that's their Support Superpower. They're The Listener and this type of person is really, really important to have in our life because they can help us to just kind of explore the emotions that we're feeling in that moment – you know, what we're feeling about certain events in our lives.

And what I'd like to do is invite you to start thinking about who the Listeners are in your life. Let's take a few seconds now to reflect and maybe jot down some names that may come to mind when you are thinking about the Listeners who are in your life.

If you want more time, you can always pause the podcast, but we're going to start now.

All right, welcome back. You may have thought of a few names. Maybe you just thought of one name or maybe you had a little trouble. Again, any of those situations is okay. That's what we're here for, to explore and improve your level of support.

For those who had trouble, did you also think about any professionals you may have that you work with that provide a willing ear – a doctor or a nurse practitioner, maybe your pharmacist? What about a counsellor? Or an organization such as the local Alzheimer Society? Are you part of a support group? A coffee group even? Book club?

Keep all of these sources in mind as well as we continue through the next few podcasts to explore the other Support Superpowers. The next time is The Cheerleader.

I'm looking forward to reviewing it with you and I'd like to thank you again for taking this journey with me. For now, this is August signing off this episode of Social Support Shorts.