

The Spiritual Journey of Listening

It's All About Relationship

Psychologist's Definition of Listening: The Absence of Thought (For the mystic: Silence)

Initiative + Curiosity x Courage = Listening

Uncommon initiative

To walk toward people who are *different* than me

Remarkable curiosity

Inquiry verses advocacy. That is, genuine interest in the other rather than advocating what I think, believe, feel, desire, care about, etc. My worldview that is *so* important to me.

This requires listening skills, which are immediately learnable, and deepening one's listening skills is the journey of a lifetime. It can be crazy fun, surprisingly rewarding, and soul expanding because people really are magnificent and learning really, really is fun. Perhaps the happiest people are those who are learning about others because that means they are also making connections, that is, developing and deepening relationships. And we all know, "Life is about relationships." Mystically, we "feel" profoundly connected/in relationship (= love). Psychologically, it releases endorphins.

Profound courage

To stay in the conversation and to keep keeping two people in the conversation. Profound courage to stay when there is an ideological difference (remember, the starting place is to walk toward someone who is "*different* than me") or there is the likelihood something will be said that I will take personally.

Thus, "conflict!" That ugly word that we all avoid. So, it requires profound courage to stay in the conversation. To keep two people in the conversation: Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons? Will you respect the (sacred) dignity of every human being?

A way of Listening

That can mature into Real Relationship

That can lay a foundation for Dialogue (community listening)

That can mature into Profound Community that is Harmony

This Harmony includes Wholeness that is harmony with one's self and *with*in one's self. Another word for it is Intimacy.

That *is* Unity

That becomes Oneness

That *acts* to heal the world (the spontaneous leading of the Spirit)