

The Official Newsletter of the Global Listening Centre



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Interviews With global listeners

Dr Sandra Woodley
President,
The University of Texas
Permian Basin



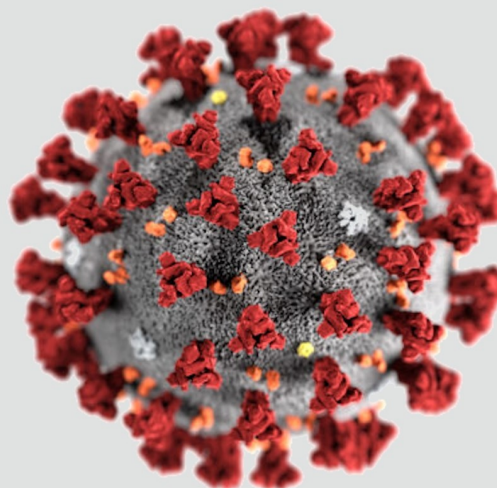
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“Against the doom and disaster of today's dysfunctional world... never has it been so apparent that the world needs listeners.”

—Dr. Andrew D. Wolvin

Tackling the Coronavirus



Contributing to Global Efforts

A Message from the Executive Editor

Dear Readers,

Such a lot has happened in the world since our last newsletter! A global pandemic has forced many of us to stay at home and do our work remotely, while others need to continue to work outside the home in essential jobs. Many jobs that were once thought to be secure are becoming dispensable, and jobs that were once thought to be menial are now deemed to be indispensable. For some of us it has meant caring for sick loved ones or not being able to visit close friends and relatives due to immunity concerns. For others it has meant getting sick or even dying of a virus that the world did not know about just a few short months ago. Here at the Global Listening Centre (GLC) we are doing our part to promote listening, especially *critical* listening, as it is so difficult at this time to distinguish good, truthful advice from made-up facts.



**Professor Rebecca Day
Babcock, Ph.D.**

First of all I would like to thank each of our readers for their appreciation of our first newsletter. We have received great feedback, especially from professors and university students who have discovered the GLC through the mechanism of this newsletter.

Secondly, we are happy to say that our Environmental Listening Campaign was very successful. This three-month campaign ran during the winter 2019-20 season. Many people from around the world, both GLC members and non-members, participated through attending workshops, writing articles, creating art, making presentations, and other listening-focused activities. We have seen some very important articles written by international academic scholars such as "Listening to The Earth" by Katherine Van Wormer and award-winning articles such as "Listening Ecology" by Professor Michael Purdy. We have seen some great artwork related to environmental listening from the world-famous German painter Shahin de Heart, and a number of presentations done by the famous, highly respected professor Dr. Sarajit Basu (Indian Institute of Technology Mumbai, Ex Faculty) from Calcutta. Additionally, the world's No.1 pianist & educator from Argentina, Daniel Levy, wrote an article on "Listening to Resonant Seeds".

What this world is currently going through is unbelievable. It certainly is a challenging global listening experience. Unfortunately, we have had to halt all of our international programs that were announced by our Honorable Executive Chair and Vice Chair. One of the most important of these was the awards ceremony for the Top 20 Global Listeners that was to be held in Bangalore in July, 2020. We hope to re-schedule for next year or as soon as it is safe again for international travel.

Even in this strange and uncertain time, our members continue to contribute in the form of articles, awareness programs, upcoming school and corporate workshops, and our member physicians are, of course, on the front lines caring for patients. In this newsletter you can find an article by one of the pioneers in the field of listening, Prof Andrew D. Wolvin's, "How Risky is Listening in the Present Crisis?" and also some more fascinating articles from other eminent scholars. My interview of Sandra Woodley, President of the University of Texas Permian Basin, continues our series of interviews with university presidents.

Finally, I would like to point out our continuous promotion of the noble cause of listening and our great teamwork as evidenced in this newsletter. Thank you for your support of this newsletter and please continue to send in your news and announcements.

The Global Listening Centre is continuously doing our part in tackling Covid-19.

LISTEN WELL TO STAY WELL.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Day Babcock".

Rebecca Day Babcock, Ph.D.

Executive Editor, *The Global Listener*

Director, Writing Studies, Global Listening Centre

William and Ordelle Watts Professor, UT Permian Basin

Centering Risk Communication on Active Listening



Andrew D. Wolvin
Ph.D.
Director (Academic)
Global Listening Centre

“Pockets of U.S. Still Resisting Urgent Mantra to Stay at Home” read a front page headline in *The Washington Post* on April 3. Indeed, a major challenge of managing the horrific health and economic consequences of the Coronavirus epidemic has been to convince people throughout the world to take seriously the need to social distance. Incredibly, we are experiencing a global crisis which requires an all-out marshalling of risk communication strategies.

Reviewing the research on risk communication, Deborah Glik points out that “people’s responses to events that threaten their health and safety evoke a diverse array of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses” (p. 36). Under high stress, people find it difficult to process information because we are more likely to focus on negative information, distrusting the information and responding emotionally (Ibid.) This leads communication researchers to focus on “how messages are framed, who communicates them, and how they are communicated” especially as linked to media representations of risk (Ibid.)

And dealing with communications about risk complicates the already-complex listening process. Cognitive scientists Schwarz, Newman and Leach (2016) note that, as we are disposed to see and hear what we want to see and hear, we process information by assessing the general acceptance of the information, the credibility of the information, coherence, the supporting evidence of the information, and the compatibility of the information with our beliefs. The result, Peter Wehner (2018) describes, reinforces that “one shouldn’t underestimate the threat posed by this moment . . . the political culture is sick, the nation is increasingly polarized and fragmented, and people’s capacity to hear one another and reason together is deeply impaired.”

Notwithstanding the complexities involved in processing risk communication, the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of listening (Halone, Cunconan, Coakley & Wolvin, 1998) have not received much consideration in the theory and research on communication in and about individual and/or collective risks we face. This gap has led Jim Macnamara (2018), a leading scholar on organizational listening, to conclude that “Despite theorization of the disciplinary practices of public relations and corporate, organizational, government, and political communication as *two-way* communication involving dialogue and engagement with stakeholders and publics, a transdisciplinary literature review of

these fields reveals that little attention is paid to listening” (p. 1).

One major risk communication scholar, researcher Timothy Sellnow (2009), observes that “A central factor of risk communication involves effective listening” (p. 73). To effectively reach listeners, Sellnow and his colleagues offer a message-centered approach which includes involving the public in dialogue about risk and designing messages which are culture-centered, acknowledge uncertainty and unknowns, and are based on credible, truthful information arguments (p. 58). Given these design characteristics of risk messages, it seems essential that those of us who work in listening theory and research must focus greater attention on informing the process of risk communication.

Deborah Newburn, writing in the *Los Angeles Times* on the Coronavirus crisis (2020), cites Edward Jones-Lopez, a University of Southern California infectious disease expert: “There is an explosion of research about this, and what we know about it is changing almost by the hour.” Newburn reminds her readers that “it is possible that the information you read below will be contradicted in the coming weeks or that gaps in knowledge today will soon be filled as scientists continue to study the virus.”

Health communication experts Kreps, Bonaguro and Query (1997) encourage health care providers to be active listeners as “the benefits of listening outweigh the costs” in the delivery of effective health care (p. 298). They also stress that the consumer must be prepared and willing to engage in active listening. Recognizing that listening is central to health care, Mowat, Bunniss, Snowden and Wright (2013) reinforce the point that “. . . listening can be the most effective form of intervention” in medical practice. Illness, they note, “. . . is a significant life event which people need to talk about” (p. 37). And we must recognize that to talk about it requires willing, empathic listeners.

While much of health care should focus on listening literacy, much of health literacy is centered on reading literacy—providing readable hospital discharge documents, prescription medication details, etc. Donald Rubin (2012), a leading expert on listenability, argues that “. . . oral communication about health information is arguably at least as important as written communication,” especially as “it is clear that patients and consumers acquire (or fail to acquire) much of their health information not by reading, but by listening” (pp. 176 -177). Recognizing that patients “. . . may have trouble listening or concentrating when they are stunned by bad news, scared, sick or in pain,” health literacy specialist Helen Osborne (2005) stresses the need for listening as central to health literacy: “. . . providers have a responsibility to communicate health information ways that patients and

their families or caregivers can understand... and take appropriate action. . ." (p. 211). It also is interesting to note that some research on listenability extends to the comprehensibility of police cautions (Eastwood & Snook, 2012), another important dimension of crisis communication.

Listenable messages enable active listening. A leading listening research scholar, Graham Bodie, and his colleagues (2015) have identified verbal and nonverbal behaviors that characterize active listening. Active listening includes a range of verbal behaviors, including asking questions, paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, assumptions, and checking while nonverbal behaviors include head nods, eye contact, and body lean. Media scholar Tanja Dreher (2009) reminds us that active listening extends beyond the individual listener to include a focus and responsibility for change on the part of "the conventions, institutions and privileges which shape who and what" is communicated (p. 445).

Zenger and Folkman's work on listening reinforces the importance of creating an active listening environment for meaningful communication to transpire: The listener creates a safe, supportive environment in which difficult, complex, or

emotional issues can be discussed. Listening scholars Itchzakov and Kluger's research (2018) identifies some best practices that can help us center communication on active listening: (1) Give 100% attention. (2) Don't interrupt. (3) Don't judge or evaluate. (4) Don't pretend to listen. (5) Don't impose your solutions. (6) Ask questions that help the speaker. (7) When you've finished, reflect on your listening.

Clearly, as the Coronavirus pandemic rages on, we need to create a world of active listeners: global listeners who are willing to engage with compassion and understanding so that we have the opportunity to share our perspectives, our questions, our fears with others. And that has started to happen. XieBastida, a 17-year-old climate activist, describes how people have begun to recognize the importance of listening in today's pandemic-ravaged world: "We're able to listen in a way that we haven't been able to before. And I hope that when things go back to normal and it gets noisy again, we can help remember to still listen and help people the way we have now" (cited in Knowles, p. 24).

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“Listening to Music During the Covid-19 Crisis... Works Even in the ICU”



Sytse Bakker
Netherlands

May 12th, on the birthday of Florence Nightingale, stichting MuzIC re-started playing their regular musical interactions after a 3-month lockdown. They played at the Jeroen Bosch Ziekenhuis in Den Bosch (Netherlands)

The violin and guitar tunes played went well with the rising positive ambiance of the ICU.

The first reactions of patients, both Covid-19 and non-Covid-19, were a welcome distraction after a long period of silence.

At the beginning of March, 2020, all the musical activities of stichting MuzIC came to an abrupt end. Covid-19 had entered the Netherlands, and as a precautionary measure the foundation paused their musical interactions at all of their ICU's in consultation with the connected hospitals.

Playing music at an ICU can be an intense experience for both musician and patient. Therefore the MuzIC musicians are trained to play in such an intense environment and circumstances. Different studies show a positive effect of live music on patient. The experience of pain is reduced, there's significant stress relief, and it can cause an improvement of the patient's mood.

Maria Eldering and Sytse Bakker, both musicians and co-founders of MuzIC, started their visit in a regular way after a meeting with the staff of the ICU of the Jeroen Bosch Ziekenhuis. While entering the patient's room they played a soft melody, not known by the patient. It's a specially

composed song which will get the patient used to the sounds of a violin and guitar.

When the introductory music ends, most of the time there will be some sort of reaction by the patient. It can be a raised eyebrow, a wave of the hand, or a vocalization. This reaction leads to a second song. A lot of patients ask for a certain song they want to hear. If possible, the musicians will play a part of the music asked for.

This way of working was not different on the 12th of May, just with more intensity. The Jeroen Bosch Ziekenhuis was the first hospital in the Netherlands to be hit by an overload of Covid-19 patients. The whole staff has been working for almost two months at their peak and the heaviness was almost tangible and perceptible. The patients who were visited by Maria and Sytse were all Covid-19 or Covid-19 related.

At one of the patients' bedside, who was sedated, they played a soft improvisation based on two chords. The patient's heavy breathing went down and one of the ICU

nurses said; "I haven't seen his blood pressure drop so low for weeks." This was a good sign. The patient reacted well to the music played.

In another room, while playing "Roller Coaster" (a famous song in the Netherlands by Danny Vera) all the staff and nurses gathered around the patient and sang along. They even shed a couple of tears. It was an emotional experience for both patient and staff. To end this musical interaction, Maria and Sytse played "Que Sera, Sera." The patient, on his 38th day in ICU, began clapping and singing along. It was such a joyful situation.

As by a request of one of the patients they played "Country Roads" for all the staff and nurses in the box between the Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 cohort. The white (non-Covid-19) and blue (Covid-19) nurses did a hilarious sing-off-contest to celebrate the 'dag van de zorg'.

In the near future stichting MuzIC will be returning to all of their connected ICU's to restart their musical interactions.



Violin and Guitar played in ICU unit at Jeroen Bosch Ziekenhuis in Den Bosch (Netherlands).

"With the gift of listening comes the gift of healing."

—Catherine Doherty

Empathic Listening and the Coronavirus Pandemic



Alan Ehrlich

Director & Chair (Listening Disorders),
Global Listening Centre

Imagine, if you will, feeling ill—headache, fever—you’ve lost your sense of taste and smell, and it is getting a bit difficult to breathe comfortably. After weeks in self-isolation, you’re taken to the hospital which now has a series of triage tents lining the front walk. After navigating the first tent you’re told that you could possibly have contracted the Coronavirus and from that point on, you can no longer have the comfort of your family members with you. The highly contagious nature of this virus means that you will traverse the healthcare system—and your treatment—without your spouse, children, parents, or friends. They must remain outside—you’re now in isolation. Both medically and socially.

In the hospital, amorphous human-shaped forms float in what looks like a sea of blue paper and gloved hands. Where their heads should be, layers of cloth behind a plastic window shield weary eyes, many in tears.

As alone as you may feel, you’re not alone. There is a building full of patients in the same situation that you are. Alone, vulnerable and scared.

As humans, we all have a basic need—an instinct—to connect with other humans and, being in the hospital, there is a stark realization that this virus, this expansive pandemic, has made this need all but impossible to fulfill.

Many of the amorphous blue shapes floating around are nurses, some exhausted from working multiple shifts because of the high number of critical patients. One comes over and peering through the plexiglass shield, simply asks “How are you doing?” and a human connection, a critical, often life-saving human connection is formed.

The simple question “How are you doing?” is a key element in successful empathic listening, or paying attention to another person with compassion, feeling, insight, and emotional identification. It requires connecting at both emotional and cognitive levels allowing each person to both understand and be understood.

The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them —Ralph Nichols.

In these super-stressful, pandemic times, a nurse is not only the front-line in the battle against the deadly effects of the Coronavirus but they are also the front-line human who lis-

tens to your fears, your sense of helplessness, and all too often your final words.

Most of us put little effort or thought into our listening; we just listen. We hear a sound and then, consciously or unconsciously, we process the sound in our brain, recognize it, categorize it—as a bird chirping, an emergency vehicle siren, or lingual information—someone speaking.

But listening is situational. We choose to listen differently in different situations. For example, when we listen to a musical performance we can listen for pure enjoyment, listen to learn the rhythm, structure or melody line, or we can critically listen in the way a teacher might in order to evaluate a student's performance.

In much the same way, we can listen to someone talking and choose to engage with them or just skim over the words they’re saying. We can dig deeper into the topic by asking targeted, subject-oriented questions, or we can focus on the person and engage with them by trying to understand their fears and feelings.

Nurses today have to accomplish both—extracting important factual data (medical history, current symptoms, etc.)—all while knowing that the patient is suddenly alone and needs to have their fears and feelings listened to.

While we have spent a lifetime listening to and extracting pertinent information, many people find that listening to a person’s feelings and fears can be not only difficult, but intimidating. Empathic listening requires that you be non-judgmental, so listen with a completely open mind, do not provide advice or solutions, nor provide reasons why the person shouldn’t feel the way they do.

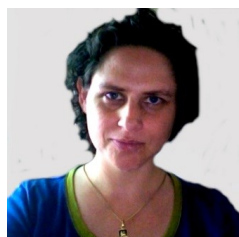
A good empathic listener will provide their undivided attention, listen with all of their senses, paraphrase the person’s feelings to demonstrate understanding, and allow for periods, sometimes long, of silence and reflection.

Imagine, if you will, a nurse standing between two beds. The patient in one is nearing death and is only worried about the cost of treatment and who will pay for it. In the other bed is a patient that just arrived with all of the fears and anxiety of being separated from family and friends and requires that a complete medical history be taken.

The nurse has to demonstrate an incredible level of agility in their listening ability. The lives of their patients are in their hands. In the words of Mr. Rogers :

In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.

Listen to the Facts on Covid-19



Suzi Hall

Ph.D.

Director (Philosophical Listening)
Global Listening Centre

As of the date of writing, the Covid-19 has infected over 5,716,570 people globally, with over 356,131 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University. Most countries are currently in a state of lock-down as we attempt to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Now more than ever it is important to exercise critical listening skills, as we are bombarded through the media with masses of information and misinformation, much of it focusing on the negative. For this reason, it is highly important to listen reflectively and critically to the sources of information, analyze what is said, and judge the quality and accuracy of the content.

In crises such as this current pandemic, critical listening skills can play a pivotal role because they can help us distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information. Only based on valid information can we act as responsible global citizens. We should all keep this in mind during this time. In what follows I will share some common recent examples of misinformation and myths relating to Covid-19, alongside the relevant facts.

- ◆ Coronavirus CANNOT be killed by drinking water over 27°C. The normal body temperature is around 37°C, so if this myth were true, it would mean no one would ever get sick. Likewise, hot climates, hot baths, and using hairdryers or saunas DOES NOT prevent the spread of the virus. Countries with hot climates have reported cases of Covid-19. The virus does not “die” at high temperatures.
- ◆ Drinking water often DOES NOT prevent you from catching the virus.

- ◆ Holding your breath for 10 seconds without coughing or difficulty DOES NOT mean you don’t have the virus.
- ◆ Hydroxychloroquine IS NOT a proven cure. The case for using this anti-malarial drug, commonly used to treat cases of rheumatoid arthritis, as a cure for the Coronavirus is “based on a seriously flawed paper,” according to epidemiologist Gideon Meyerowitz-Katz, who spoke with a reporter from *The Guardian* independent news service. “Other medications that have been promoted as miracle cures for Coronavirus have not held up to closer scrutiny either. Yes, some drugs might improve survival with the disease, but at the moment all we have is theories and hope, not good evidence that one can be cured using fish tank cleaner,” Meyerowitz-Katz said.
- ◆ Some say that we don’t need to wait for a vaccine as the mass of humanity will collectively develop “herd immunity” and thus naturally be immune to the virus. But “Herd immunity” would mean hundreds of thousands of deaths.

For herd immunity to come into effect, at least 60-70% of the global population would have to be infected, which would mean hundreds of thousands of deaths at the least, Meyerowitz-Katz told *The Guardian*.

The best way to prevent the spread of Coronavirus remains:

- To wash your hands with soap and water (or hand sanitizer) regularly, for 20 seconds at a time
- To cough or sneeze into your elbow
- To stay at least 1.5 metres away from other people, and
- To stay at home unless it is necessary to go out.

Medical-grade masks are unnecessary unless you are sick or caring for someone who has the virus. They should be reserved for the use of healthcare workers primarily.

“Listening is human, is communion, is one with being.”

George Perry, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President (Listening in Science)
Global Listening Centre

Chief Scientist, Brain Health Consortium, and Professor of Biology and Chemistry, Semmes Foundation.

Distinguished University Chair in Neurobiology, College of Sciences, University of Texas at San Antonio.

Recognized as one of the **Top Scientists in the world** in field of Alzheimer's disease.



The Spirituality of Listening



Kay Lindahl, CLP
Director & Chair (Spiritual Listening)
Global Listening Centre

What is the relationship of spirituality to listening? How does this relationship fit into our understanding of communication? Why is it important?

For over twenty-two years, the premise of my work has been that listening is a sacred art and a spiritual practice. Even though historically these terms have most frequently been ascribed to religion, doctrine, and dogma, modern usage adds spirituality to this definition. The common saying, “I’m spiritual but not religious,” is an example of this expansion in current times.

Spiritual listening is at the heart of all relationships—it’s the antidote to that missing piece, that longing for connection, belonging, and communion which seems to be so common in our culture today. This type of listening creates a sense of community. When we are open, curious, and attentive to others in this way, we discover a deeper, sacred connection; we are in relationship.

To “listen” another’s soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another.

—Douglas Steere

“Listening presence” is another way to describe the spirituality of listening. It’s a way of being in which stillness and attentiveness provide space in which a person can speak and know that they are being heard. It’s from this space that we can listen across our differences. When listening deeply, we recognize the life force or spirit of another, and we find ourselves able to understand each other, even others whose backgrounds or opinions are different from our own.

When two people relate to each other authentically and humanly, God is the electricity that surges between them.

—Martin Buber

Each of us may have our own way of defining a spiritual experience. Most will describe such experiences as those moments when we get in touch with our sense of wonder, awe, and communion; these moments transcend time and space. They often take your breath away. Spirituality connects us to something beyond and greater than ourselves as individuals. It’s an un-nameable, unknowable, invisible force that gives shape and meaning to everything it surrounds.

When was the last time you had a great conversation – in which you heard yourself saying things, you’d never said before, and received things you hadn’t thought of – that made your heart sing – and that you remember days and months afterwards.

—John O’Donahue

Some of the most visible examples of spiritual experience occur in nature – a glorious sunrise or sunset, glittering stars in the night sky, the majesty of rock formations, the magical silence of snow falling. We feel them in the arts while witnessing a masterful performance of music, dance, or drama; we can also feel them with people, such as the eyes of a newborn baby, the joy of discovering soul friends, or the sense of connection as the New Year is celebrated across the time zones on our planet.

We can also be touched by spiritual connection in everyday life – when we wake up to what’s right in front of us in the present moment. Such a connection can occur when you’re in the middle of a routine task, and suddenly you know there is something special unfolding – maybe it’s a hummingbird appearing outside your window, the taste or smell of a freshly peeled orange, the feel of warm water as you wash your hands, an unexpected moment of silence. It feeds your inner life, honors something you value, just makes you glad you are alive.

Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.

—Mary Oliver

As we describe these moments it becomes clear that listening occurs in dimensions other than direct communication with others. Spiritual moments are often sourced with our five senses – sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch, as well as our intuitive sense.

This exploration is offered as a series of prompts, to expand the way we think about listening and spirituality. You may want to read through them all first, and then return to add your own experiences and questions.

Listen to your body

What is your body telling you? Is it time to rest, eat, move? Does it need to stretch? Dance? Play? Is it too warm, too cold? Are there aches and pains that need tending to? Think about a time when you were grateful for your body. What was that like? What would it take to feel connected to your body again?

Listen to the earth

What is nature telling you? What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear? What is the land telling you? Notice vegetation, and keep looking. Remember to look upward as well. What are you resonating with?

Think about the distinction between looking at a window – describing it in detail, perhaps, and looking through a window – which opens up a whole new world to experience.

—Mary Sharratt

Listen to your soul

What is your inner voice telling you? Check in with that still place deep inside of you, where you begin to remember who you are, and get in touch with your own deep wisdom. Listen for what wants to be said next. Breathe. Practice patience. Pay attention to the yearning of your soul.

I am listening in a different way. Suddenly all my ancestors are behind me. Be still, they say, watch and listen, you are the result of the love of thousands.

—Linda Hogan

Listen to the silence

What is the silence telling you? What do you hear when you find yourself in stillness? Surrender to the emptiness. Let go. Journal, meditate. What do you notice beyond the silence? Open yourself to new possibilities.

Stillness is our most intense mode of action. It is in our moments of deep quiet that is born every idea, emotion, and drive which we eventually honor with the name of action.

—Leonard Bernstein

Listen to your heart

What is your heart telling you? What do you notice when your heart breaks open? Create a space in which you can unfold. What makes your heart sing?

Listen to your mind

What is your mind telling you? Where are you stretching? What are you being called to learn now? Whose voice are you listening to? What are you reading?

Listen to your emotions

What are your emotions telling you? What are you feeling? Take time to dwell there. Be present. Have a sense of curiosity about the emotion. Reflect on the experience.

Whenever you find tears in your eyes, especially unexpected tears, it is well to pay closest attention. They are not only telling you about the secret of who you are, God may be speaking to you through them of the mystery of where you have come from and is summoning you to where you should go next.

—Frederick Buechner

Listen to your life

What is your life telling you? What are you present to? We each have deep wisdom in us. What if we held ourselves in reverence? Listen to your life, the mystery of it, the ups and downs, and the grace. Be tender with yourself and with others.

Remember that we are human beings, not human doings.

I want to truly live my life instead of watching it go by because I'm too busy to enjoy it.

These prompts begin with the words *listen to*. You might also want to revisit them using the terms “*listen for*” and “*listen with*.” Use this as an opportunity to imagine all the different aspects of listening that we have forgotten or neglected.

This article is being written in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, when most of the world is in some form of shelter in place. We are having a lived experience of how interconnected we are, which gives new meaning to Martin Luther King’s saying that what affects one directly affects all indirectly. I am encouraged by the new meme around why we wear masks. I am wearing a mask to protect you, and you are wearing a mask to protect me. Caring for each other with kindness and compassion. What is all of this teaching us? Are we at a time of deep awakening? Are we being called to find new ways of being human? How are we going to show up?

Our true work is to look after each other, to protect each other and to be of benefit to one another.

—Bill Gates

The following practices are designed to facilitate this new way of being.

Reclaim the importance of timeouts.

Include a certain period of time for rest and restoration each week. Maybe it’s a half day or just an hour or two. Start with something that feels like a stretch, but not impossible. Create space for silence and stillness. Use this to reset your pace, rest your mind. Listen for what wants to happen. Allow yourself to flow with the creative nature of life. You are being called to yourself. The heart of creativity is a calling forth. It is getting in touch with your center, the core of your being. What is yours to do, what is the gift you are being called on to share?

There is a vitality, a life force, a quickening that is translated through you into action. And because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is, nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours, clearly and directly. To keep the channel open.

—Martha Graham

Revisit your relationship with social media.

Take digital time outs on a regular basis. Put your phones away, turn off your computers, go offline. Let go of multi-

tasking in favor of uni-tasking. Try a spiritual practice of silence, meditation, or slow walking, outside if possible.

*Take time to listen to the birds,
the waves,
the wind.*

*Take time to breathe in the air,
the earth,
the ocean.*

*Take time to be still,
to be silent,
to allow God to fill you up
with deep peace and love.*

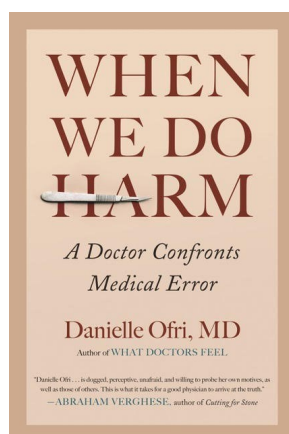
—Mairead Maguire

Invite the great Mystery into your life. Create more space for love and freedom to emerge. Hold space for the patterns that connect. Spirit and soul dimensions are sources which make everything flow in new ways. Slowing down we find our rhythm, our own natural rhythm. Spiritual listening is embodied listening, in which we become a listening presence to all of life.

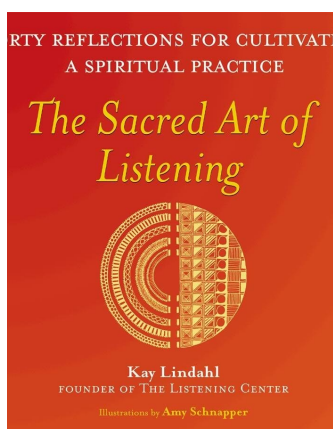
Being heard (listened to) is so close to being loved that most people cannot tell the difference.

—David Augsber

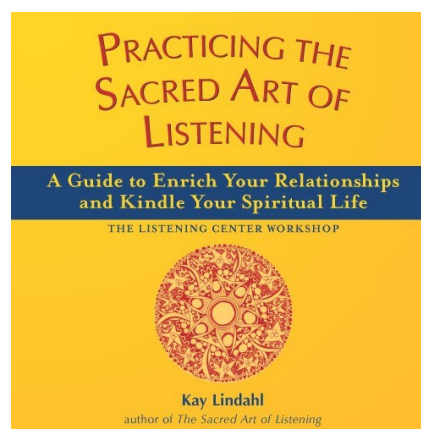
Member Publications



Dr. Danielle Ofri, MD, Ph.D., DLitt (Hon), FACP



Kay Lindahl



Kay Lindahl

Covid-19 Pandemic : Salute to our Frontline Responders



Abdelkarim Kamel

MD, Ph.D.



Danielle Ofri

MD, Ph.D., D.LITT (HON), FACP



Delroy Jefferson

MD, DBA



Jonathan Fisher

MD, FACC



Karl Ekdahl

Ph.D, MD, DTM&H



Lorette Gijbers

Intensive Care Nurse



"Listening ennobles the moment"

Monica Broome

MD, FACP, FAACH, FAMWA



Sunil Wimalawansa

MD, Ph.D., MBA, DSC

How to be a Better Listener

Dr. Jicheng Sun

Director & Chair (Instructional Listening)

Global Listening Centre

如何做一个好的倾听者

孙继成 译

1 请提出有助于洞察力和发现力的问题



2 有益于自尊建构的互动交流



营造安全可靠的交流环境来公开谈论问题或提出不同意见

3 合作共赢的对话



双向互动式的反馈机制

在不刺激对方的前提下向对方提出疑问或异见

4 巧妙地提出建议，



探讨新的沟通路径

5 善于倾听的人，
不像海绵那样只是



一味地吸收别人的观点，
而是要像蹦床
般回弹出自己的独特想法。

倾听水平的等级划分

1 营造 适于讨论的
安全对话 环境

2 排除对话 干扰，
保持眼神交流

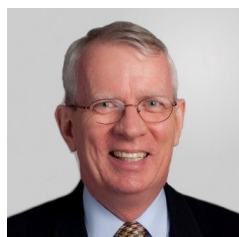
3 理解所讲 内容，提出相关问题，
然后，
再进行 回馈 确认

4 细 察肢体语言，
可 得80%的交流信息

5 理解对话 主题 的情感背景，
争取对话的 情感共鸣

6 帮助别人用不同的角度
来探讨 同一问题

Ethical Listening...Do You Hear What I Hear?



**Kirk Hazlett, MBA, APR,
Fellow PRSA**
Director & Chair (Ethics)
Global Listening Centre

In my current (nearly two decades now!) role as a Communication professor, I emphasize to my students—especially those enrolled in my Public Relations courses—the critical importance of listening to those who have an interest in your organization’s activities and ensuring that their concerns are addressed appropriately.

British philosopher George Edward Moore said it so clearly more than 100 years ago in the preface to his renowned book, *Principia Ethica* [1903]: “It appears to me that in Ethics, as in all other philosophical studies, the difficulties and disagreements, of which history is full, are mainly due to a very simple cause: namely to the attempt to answer questions, without first discovering precisely what question it is which you desire to answer.”

So many of our world’s dilemmas today are the direct result of individuals and countries hearing and acting without listening and understanding. More and more, our leaders seem to be programmed to act immediately without first taking the time to fully comprehend the intent behind the original communication. And, sadly, this all too often leads to what I so often describe as the “Ready...Fire...Aim.” syndrome that is the prelude to armed confrontations and global unrest.

It is our responsibility as reasonably civilized occupants of this planet to embrace the concept of “civil discourse” and engage in constructive dialogue that will lead to understanding and agreement rather than petulant posturing. And it is organizations such as the Global Listening Centre that are ideally positioned to lead the way by calling attention to and demonstrating the effectiveness of active, participatory listening rather than simple hearing.

“Ethics,” as I have advised my former employers and clients, and now my students, for years, is best defined as “doing the right thing for the right reasons.” And “ethical listening” can best be described as the “conscious act of fully comprehending another party’s communication.” It is an active process that requires active participation by both parties. Sadly (again), we are treated on a daily basis to glaring examples by so many representatives of so many different governments of just the opposite. Their goal would appear to be full-on confrontation rather than cooperative conversation.

All is not lost, however, says this eternal optimist. The opportunity is there for all of us to actively encourage in our own interactions with others, whether it be in the classroom or in the boardroom, listening in the pursuit of understanding. But we can’t take a passive approach. We have to proactively demonstrate that our commitment is founded on our deeply-held conviction that listening is the first step in achieving harmony.

Many of my social media followers are well aware of my tendency to make reference to Kahlil Gibran’s *“Almustafa: The Prophet”* on numerous pertinent occasions. One particular quote applies here when it comes to ethical listening from Kahlil Gibran, *“The Prophet”* (1971) - Page 10:

People of Orphalese, of what can I speak save of that which is even now moving within your souls?

Asking the question...then listening to the answer...is the key components to ethical listening.



“The world is full of talkers, but it is rare to find anyone who listens. And I assure you that you can pick up more information when you are listening than when you are talking.”

—E.B. White

Honoring our Members



Prof Sarajit Basu

Ph.D.
Director Environmental &
Technical Listening Division
Global Listening Centre

In our series **Honoring Our Members**, we would like to bring to the front a man of integrity, a great listener, a man of dedication and loved by all in his profession. We are pleased to present, our first Honored Member, Prof. Surajit Basu.

Prof. Basu is one of the most respected figures in the field of engineering in India. He graduated with a degree in Chemical Engineering (JU) and PhD (IIT Mumbai), carried out Post-Doctoral work as Humboldt Fellow at the Tech University, Darmstadt (1972-73), and Tübingen University (May-Oct 1981), Germany.

Dr. Basu was a faculty member at IIT Mumbai for 33 years and held positions as an UNO expert/scientist, a visiting professor at universities around the world, and was a member of the expert panel of India's Prime Minister TCH MISSION OF DRINKING WATER (1998-2002).

On behalf of the Global Listening Centre, Dr Basu has included the importance of listening and taking action in his various presentation on the environment, healthcare, lifestyle, diseases. Like many of today's great scientists, Dr. Basu believes that we are quickly headed for envi-

ronmental, industrial, agricultural and human health disasters if our governments and authorities don't listen and act now. In 2019 Dr. Sarajit Basu was awarded the prestigious **SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION AWARD** from Global Listening Centre. Needless to say that the world needs more people like our Honored Member, Prof./Dr. Sarajit Basu.



Our Honorable Listening Chairman Dr. Chennupati Jagadish from Australia visits Dr. Sarajit Basu at Kolkata (Calcutta) to bow and pay his respects. How humble these great leaders are!



Heather Noel Fedesco

Ph.D.

Dr. Heather Noel Fedesco is a member in our Healthcare Division and presently works as the Assistant Director Center for Teaching and Senior Lecturer Human and Organizational Development at Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Fedesco contributed immensely during the "Joy of Giving Year" campaign 2017-18. She shouldered full responsibility of the campaign and was involved in many campaign activities throughout the whole year. She did hard work and ensured the campaign was a resounding success. Dr. Fedesco also chaired the "Joy of Giving Year" awards committee in the year 2017-18.

Dr. Heather Fedesco strongly believes, "Listening Transforms Lives".

Global Listening Board

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	Divisional Names	Designation	Name
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2	THE LISTENER DIGEST	Editor	Awaiting Decision
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Reflecting on Listening, Interviews with Global Listeners

Our Executive Editor, Dr Rebecca Babcock, interviewed Dr Sandra Woodley, President, The University of Texas Permian Basin.

Rebecca: Thank you for agreeing to do this interview for the Global Listening Centre. Looking at this figure of leadership types, which type of leader do you believe yourself to be in these quadrants, and how does that leadership style affect your listening?

Sandy: When I look at the quadrants it's a little like personality tests and management tests. You can really see yourself a little bit in every single one of the quadrants. For example, when I look at the quadrant where I have a check mark by every attribute, I think, quite honestly, I am most concentrated between the Listening Leader and the Driver. I do end up having a very strong direction and a sense of urgency around accomplishing goals. And I do think that I struggle constantly in my professional career to improve listening. It doesn't come easily to me. I end up talking more than I listen. And I think part of my own professional development over the past 10-15 years has been, I really need to work on making sure that I really do stop and listen and legitimately try to understand all of the perspectives before making a decision. But by nature I'm a decisive person. I genuinely do care about what other people say about what's going on. I want to make sure that I look at relationships as a way to understand the issue and to validate the different opinions. I think the only aspect on the Listening Leader that was questionable to me--I had check marks by everyone except for "may get bogged down in process." I don't tend to get bogged down in process. I think process is really important. So I think that I got most of the check marks by Listening Leader and Driver. If I look at Peacekeeper, certainly I think it is true that I place a high value on relationships, and I do have a caring disposition. At the same time, I am not inclined to do the work for others instead of letting them do it. So that's really not me. Also, I do not necessarily listen to the loudest voice. And I do not avoid difficult conversations. So, less really on the Peacekeeper. When I look at Manager, I do work really hard at keeping things running smoothly. Managing is a lot of what I do. Complying with directives-- I am a rule follower. I want to make sure that we do things properly. I don't think I generally neglect relationships. And I am not a micromanager. So that was a very long way to say I have a little bit of the attributes of all of them. I think I'm really more in between a Listening Leader and a Driver.

Rebecca: But I see you more as a change agent than keeping



to the status quo.

Sandy: Most definitely. I think that's true. And I think I'm probably mid-way between facilitate and top down. That's how I would describe myself. I am sure my husband may describe me differently. And maybe other people will describe me differently. But that is my perception of myself.

Rebecca: Since you've been at UTPB, we have seen a lot of changes and that's what we wanted. So it makes sense.

Sandy: Right.

Rebecca: So give me an example of your leadership style affecting your listening. Do you feel your listening was positively or negatively affected and why or why not?

Sandy: As I said before, I think generally, if I'm honest with myself, I am not as good a listener as I need to be. I am not. I think is not my strong suit. It is not my natural inclination to wait until everyone has talked for me to insert what I think about the issue, and I think that's an area that I genuinely do try to improve. But, I am an extrovert; I have a lot of responsibilities. I think very deeply and thoughtfully about the initiatives of the university, and I have strong opinions. And so, my work professionally with myself is to make sure that I do, or at least I am cognizant, and I think I am aware, that I need to improve what is not a natural inclination to me to get more information before making decisions. And I think I have made some progress in my life at working on that. But I still need more work.

Rebecca: How can you get everyone's opinion when there are thousands of people whose opinions are out there?

Sandy: It's not always practical, but I do think it is important to make sure that there is a way to facilitate dissenting opinions. I consider myself a secure person and a secure leader. I am not threatened at all by someone who thinks differently than me. I am not afraid to be challenged. I genuinely do believe that the way that we make the most progress as leaders of organizations is to really tease out an honest debate about whatever issue is at hand. So when people disagree, I prefer that they disagree respectfully, but I don't get

offended if they don't. If they're not respectful. I think you've noticed. Hopefully you've noticed that about me.

Rebecca: [laughs]

Sandy: I don't take it personally, I think, is really the better way to say that. And so trying to make sure that there is an opportunity for all viewpoints to come together is ideal. I do also think it is important to be decisive enough that you can make decisions and move on. I have seen leaders who are very intent on getting all of the information and listening, and listening, and listening, to the point to where you have a paralysis by analysis and you don't make a decision. You have to be assertive enough get enough information to make the decision, but move forward in a manner that actually is timely enough to get the job done.

Rebecca: That's why you didn't check "get bogged down in process."

Sandy: Because I've got stuff to do. I've gotta move.

Rebecca: It would take too long to check in with each and every person on every issue. Listening obviously is a very complex process, so what aspects do you consider when you listen?

Sandy: It also depends on the decision that is on the table, who is involved in the decision-making process, what the stakes are of the particular initiative that you are talking about, and so I think it really depends on the situation, all of the things that do come into play. When I look at power differences in age for example, I think about how earnest that I try to be in understanding our students.

Rebecca: They are a different generation.

Sandy: They are vulnerable, and they don't have power. Their opinions matter more than almost anybody else's around here, really, because they are who we are here to serve. I do have a very strong sense of justice, in the sense of I want to make sure that I have an opportunity to level the playing field for people or situations where they don't have the power for themselves to speak up or the political capital to speak up. And so it's really important to me to make sure that there's balance in the conversation. Back to

the loudest person in the room. Sometimes the loudest person in the room is right, and sometimes they're not. And most of the decisions that a president makes is not a consensus. You want to understand all of the complexities of

what you are trying to do. But there may be an overwhelming popular consensus for something that really would be detrimental to the university. I am the one that's responsible for that. So I'm not managing by popular vote, even if I do want to understand everyone's opinion. Does that make sense?

Rebecca: Yes.

Sandy: And so I think non-verbals are important too. I find it important in my own dealings with my executive staff, or when I'm meeting with faculty, or when I'm meeting with the STEM academy¹, when there are really very emotional issues at stake, to try to look at the non-verbal cues. I have been in

meetings where you have very introverted people, who are very well respected, very smart, but they will not automatically speak up when you have a lot of loud voices clanging around each other. In those instances, I try to pick up on those non-verbal cues and give a voice to someone that may not speak up on their own, but really might have something very important to say. And at the same time, I think the non-verbal cues of, when someone is getting upset, and they feel very strongly about something, well, I wanna know more about why you are so upset. What am I missing that I didn't know? There have been times where you are in a conversation and someone is getting very upset, and you're thinking, I don't even understand why you're so—but then if I can listen and draw it out, oh well, I didn't know that piece of the story, now I understand why you are so positively impacted by the decision that we'd make here. So I do think it varies based on what's going on and the environment is another important point. If I have a town hall meeting with hundreds of people, it's a very difficult venue to gain knowledge and information about what the group thinks. That environment does not really lend itself to the kind of knowledge that I may need, but yet that town hall meeting may be very important for the people in that room to be able to see me and to be able to hear what I have to say. So in that sense I'm not listening at all.

Rebecca: Well, it's two ways. They have to listen to you, too.



Figure 1. Leadership Archetypes by Shane Safir

¹ The STEM Academy is a charter school on campus. For more info, read here <https://www.utpb.edu/community-impact/impact-stories/2020/03/stem-academy-next-steps>

Sandy: They have to listen to me, and then I try to facilitate later. And I think the STEM academy is an example of that. I mean, we are going through a task force with meetings now to make sure that we can find a positive outcome for the STEM academy to continue, and trying to really listen to what the parents think and what the teachers think and what the students think and what the realities on the ground are about, what we can and cannot do going forward. It's messy; it's complicated. And that's OK. It's like the washing machine method where you agitate on something for a while, and say, OK, well, let's see. And then a month later you go back and revisit, and you learn a little bit more and make a little more progress.

Rebecca: The next question is about active listening. How do you define active listening, what does it entail for you?

Sandy: Well the standard definition of course, is you are listening with of all your faculties, not just not with your ears. You are paying attention; you are not on your phone. You are trying to gain a deeper understanding of what someone is trying to say, I think active listening is facilitated by listening and asking good questions so that you pay attention. Don't ask a question that they just told you that you weren't paying attention to, because we are all guilty of that. I just answered that question! I think those things are important in active listening. I think very few people do it well. To be honest, I think very few CEOs do it well. And I am in that category. I think it is important to continue to learn about listening skills. I am very supportive of the Global Listening Centre. We all have a lot to learn. Particularly in this day and age where opinions and thoughts are so polarized. People consume their information through very biased venues. We all do.

Rebecca: Yes, yes.

Sandy: Like you said before the interview started that you didn't believe in smartphones. Well, I do believe in smartphones. Part of the downfall is that I read through my newsfeed, and it feeds me the things that I click on that I'm interested in. So, I am not getting the complete picture. And the same is true with someone who has a different set of views. So trying to find a way to cut through what is fact and what is opinion, which is difficult these days, and listening to each other, is important.

Rebecca: My students say they pick up their news from international sources. Because they are less biased than US news services. They use the BBC. Supposedly it's less biased.

Sandy: There's bias in all of it. And I think that it's important, even as uncomfortable as it is, to read something that you disagree with, that you know is biased in the other direction, so that it helps you to triangulate. And try to get to facts as opposed to alternative facts.

Rebecca: And why someone would feel that way, because everyone has good will, we hope.

Sandy: And some don't. Let's just face it. People have agendas. There are instances where you're spinning information to the point where it actually is untrue. There are examples of that on all sides of any topic that you can listen to or that you can observe. As a CEO of an institution, I feel very strongly that it's important to make sure, number one, to the extent that we can, that everyone has the same set of facts. If it's not a fact, it doesn't belong in the list of facts. So let's try to get what's verifiable on any topic or issue that we're talking about, and then let's categorize the rest of the information as questions, or opinions, or feelings or concerns. That's when I think you can get to a conversation where people can really listen to each other, and you don't have to debate what can already be verified in another way.

Rebecca: Can you give me an example of when you listened actively, and how you deconstructed a surface narrative?

Sandy: So let's use the STEM academy because I think I've done that well and I've done it not well. I think I have room to improve, and I think I've learned from that. When we went down the pathway of trying to find a long-term option for STEM, I really didn't estimate properly the opinions of the STEM family.

Rebecca: They love their school.

Sandy: And I love their school. But I really thought that they would see the option I presented as a good option because it solved some of the problems that we wouldn't have the ability to solve before, but I was wrong about that. I was wrong about that because but I didn't ask them. That was a mistake. It wasn't done with malice, it was done with good intentions, but it was still a mistake. And so now, I have the opportunity to step back and really work through that the proper way. These are the realities. These are our options. Let's spend time over the next year or two and try to find a solution. A solution must be found. So the answer is not that we're not doing anything. We must do something. But everybody then has the opportunity in a safe way to listen to each other, and participate in the debate, and do so in a way that they can have the confidence that I'm not going to make a decision without consulting. And that's what I did before. I made a decision without consulting. Lesson learned. That was the wrong way to do it. We can still get to a solution that can benefit the university and STEM. Everyone will not agree on that solution. There will still be wailing and gnashing of teeth all along the way until we get to the proper ending. But I think that's a good example of how we hope our leaders are. We hope our leaders are coachable. We hope that our leaders are reflective, and we hope that our leaders are secure enough to admit when a mistake has been made, and then to try to make a remedy. There have been plenty of times when I can look back and say I did that

well. And then I can look back and say, well, that was a train wreck [laughs] over the period of my career. I'll give you another quick example. Early in my career when I was a chief financial officer in Kentucky one of my jobs there was to work with all of the institutions both two years and four years in the entire state of Kentucky and revise their funding formula: how capital dollars are distributed among the institutions, and who gets what kind of money from the formula. You think that's a pretty--a lot of tension in those discussions. So I took an entire year to work with all of the entities and to try to come up with very specific proposals that I believed met the policy objectives and balanced the needs of the institutions. And everybody was a little bit unhappy with it. So that's why I think I did that pretty good. I did OK. Nobody said, "This is awesome!" And no one said, "This is terrible!" It's like,

Rebecca: Yeah.

Sandy: Well, OK.

Rebecca: Compromise.

Sandy: Struck the balance. But it took a long time, and an entire year in subcommittees, when everyone was able to have their say. And so I think that went well. So at different times we have the opportunity to learn from our mistakes, I think.

Rebecca: Do you want to make any statements about any other issues or problems that could be solved by better listening?

Sandy: We talked about that. I think I'm guilty, everyone's guilty about making up your mind about a particular societal issue or have really strong opinions and strong experiences without really stopping and listening to alternative views. Name any topic. Immigration reform, to throw out a big, large topic. It's complex. It's not that every immigrant that comes across the border is a rapist or murderer. It is also true that some rapists and murderers make their way across the border. It's not true that all immigrants are taking advantage of the system and taking jobs from Americans. Many, many, many undocumented immigrants do very important work here. But then the opposite view is true too. Where you do have situations where it can be detrimental. A drain on our systems. How much can we accumulate from these major world crises where you have these--

Rebecca: Refugees

Sandy: Refugees with horrible situations. And so I think the politicizing which is inevitable of these issues is something that can't be avoided, but I think if people in general can take a step back, myself included, and have that uncomfortable opportunity to really consider and examine your own beliefs in light of what someone else believes. I have close

friends and family and people that I respect that feel very different than I do politically. They're not bad people. They're not bad and I'm good; I am not good and they're bad. Just to use politics as one example.

Rebecca: The sides don't listen to each other. I see that all the time.

Sandy: And it's more and more polarized. Even before, but I can feel myself flash up on a flash point that I feel strongly about, and I'm thinking, you know, that is not helpful either, so that is an opportunity. And I think the ability, regardless of the difference of opinion, to use listening as a way to find that Venn diagram where some part in the middle we can agree upon. What are the common themes that can bring us together? We don't have to agree on everything. But there are overlaps, between immigration, or any kind of topic that goes along those lines. There's common ground, and you only do find the common ground if you find reasonable people who are willing to suspend their own strong beliefs enough to listen to a good point that happens on the other side.

Rebecca: Please give an example of a specific problem that you knew had been solved by people listening to each other.

Sandy: There are many examples. I really do hope, using the STEM academy, and continuing with that as an example, where we're going to find a solution that provides all of our objectives. I really do believe that we have the opportunity. Now, again I think the core of that can be met and there will be differences of opinion of whether or not that was the best option when we get to the end. But going through the process, and the complicated process, and sometimes uncomfortable process, of allowing dissenting views to be elevated, I think is an important part of the process. As I've met with parents on the STEM academy and we've had some difficult conversations, and they are angry at me, some of them. Well, I took the time to have small group meetings with them. They could ask me any kind of question, and by the time you get to the end of an hour meeting it's not that you agree on everything, but what you do find is a much better understanding on the part of both. I understand them better. They understand me better. And so I think that is a situation where I think we are making some progress. And it can't happen through memos and emails.

Rebecca: Face to face.

Sandy: Only that personal conversation.

Rebecca: I think we're done! Thank you!

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