

The Official Newsletter of the Global Listening Centre



Listen to Mother Earth Screaming



Exclusive Painting by
Shahin de Heart



Professor Lynette Louw
Rhodes University, Makhanda,
South Africa. Page 17



Global Campaign

*Celebrate why
listening transforms lives
by participating in the
Global Listening
Centre's "Thank You For
Listening" campaign early
in 2023*

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New Executive Chair



David T. McMahan, Ph.D.

Nominate The Top 25



in the World 2022

Outstanding Listeners Interview



Andrew D. Wolvin, Ph.D.

Knowledge speaks, wisdom listens.

Jimi Hendrix



A Message from the Executive Editor

Dear Global Listeners:

As we launch into 2023, I hope we take a moment to reflect on the events of 2022 that provided us a transition from worldwide pandemic lockdowns to a path forward in our new normal. Children around the world returned to school, families began to vacation, people congregated in their places of worship, and public venues began to fill with music, theater and art. Large groups of fans gathered to cheer on their countries in the World Cup, families reunited to celebrate holidays with family, and employees returned to offices.



Professor Carol
Bishop Mills, Ph.D.

Although 2022 was a year of celebration and return to normalcy, it was also a year in which war continued to disrupt and destroy lives around the globe. Acts of violence took the lives of world leaders, school children, church goers, shoppers, and those out for celebrations. There is global inflation, and mental health concerns are on the rise worldwide. As we engage in life-as-usual, we confront the reality that human connection, caring, empathy, and love – cultivated and expressed through listening – are more important than ever. As we tackle rebuilding “the new normal,” at The Global Listening Centre, we hope that our vision reinforces listening to others to achieve peace since it is at the heart of all we do.

In this issue, we have outstanding articles that will enable you to think through the ways in which we can take seriously the listening we seek to encourage, even in (and perhaps most critically), the most difficult conversations. We present Professor Katherine van Wormer’s thoughtful article on listening in politically and personally charged conversations around pregnancy termination, and Professor Claude-Hélène Mayer’s article on “Listening in Times of Intercultural Conflict and War.” Dr. Annie Rappeport and Professor Andrew D. Wolvin provided the wonderful academic article, “Narrative Listening and the Quest for Peace.”

I’d like to take a moment to thank the 2022 Awards Committee: Dr. Sun Jicheng, Dr. Katherine van Wormer, Dr. Gayle Pohl, Dr. Renee Heath, and special thanks to committee chair, Dr. Karl Ekdahl. And, congratulations to all of the award winners spotlighted in this issue! Their listening contributions are impressive and help spread the mission of listening for peace. We also welcome David McMahan who succeeds Melissa Beall as Executive Chair of the Global Listening Board.

Finally, we thank Professor Lynette Louw for her important reminder in her article, “Thank You for Listening,” that will launch our two month “Saying Thank You Campaign.” Over the next two months, we invite and urge us all to thank those whose act of service, care, and listening are often under-appreciated. A big thank you to our Director and Chief Global Strategist, Mr. Sardool Singh, for creating such inspiring and important listening strategies. Please get involved, in our “The Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World 2022.” Details are on page 21 of this newsletter. As we launch into 2023, we all have the power to make listening and peace central to our personal and professional lives.

We hope this newsletter provides you with the inspiration, insights, tools and role models to help you find ways to make this world better for all of us.

Listening Transforms Lives.

Yours in listening,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'CBMills'.

Carol Bishop Mills, Ph.D.

Executive Editor *The Global Listener*

Director (Academia) Global Listening Centre

Director and Professor, School of Communication

and Multimedia Studies at Florida Atlantic University.

Global Listening Centre Awards 2021-2022

Leadership in Listening Award



Prof. Colette Mazzucelli, MALD,
ED.M., Ph.D.
Past President (Academia), GLC.
Prof. at the New York University, USA.



Jo-Ann Rolle, Ph.D.
Vice Chair (GLC)
President of the National HBCU Business
Deans Roundtable, Dean at School of
Business Medgar Evers College,
City University of New York, USA.



Prof. Paaige K. Turner, Ph.D.
Dean of College of Communication,
Information and Media at Ball State
University. Past Executive Director,
National Communication Association.
USA

Top Outstanding Papers



Prof. Katherine van Wormer Ph.D.
Director GLC.
Prof. Emerita of Social Work,
University of Northern Iowa
Co-Author of The Maid Narratives.
USA



Prof. Donna L. Halper, Ph.D.
Director (Media Ecology) GLC.
Associate Prof. at Lesley University of
Cambridge, Massachusetts. USA



Michele Nealon, Psy.D.
President of The Chicago School of
Professional Psychology, USA.

Significant Contribution



Carlota Barros, LLB., MA.
Singer and Composer.
Luxembourg



Prof. Hal Swindall, Ph.D.
Director (Writing), GLC.
Past Prof. at Jinan University,
Guangzhou. China



Prof. Renee Guarriello Heath, Ph.D.
Chair (Academic Division) GLC.
Co-Director at Civil Discourse Lab at
University of New Hampshire. USA

Global Listening Festival Awards 2022 Outstanding Presentations



Peace and War



Prof. Stacey Connaughton, Ph.D.
President (Academia) GLC.
Prof. at The Brian Lamb School of
Communication, Purdue University.
Director of The Purdue Policy
Research Institute, Discovery Park
District. Director of The Purdue Peace
Project. USA

Listening in HealthCare



Associate Prof. Helen Meldrum,
Senior Vice President (Listening in Science)
GLC. Associate Prof. of Psychology in the
Program in Health Sciences and Industry-
Department of Natural and Applied Sciences at
Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts.
USA

Academic



Associate Prof. Gayle Pohl, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President (Education
Policy), GLC.
Associate Professor at University of
Northern Iowa. USA

Research



Prof. Christine C. M. Goh, Ph.D.
Past Associate Vice Chair GLC.
President Chair Professor of Education
(Linguistics and Language Education)
and Director of the National Institute of
Education, Nanyang, Technological
University. Singapore

Listening and Science



Alan R. Ehrlich
Chair (Listening Disorders)
GLC.

Application



Prof. Ray T. Donahue, Ph.D.,
Senior Vice President (Research)
GLC.
Prof. of Intercultural Studies at
Nagoya Gakuin University, Japan.



Thanks to
Prof. Karl Ekdahl, Ph.D., MD, DTM & H
Chair Awards Committee 2022

Listening on Both Sides of the Abortion Issue: A Major Challenge to Advocates



Katherine van Wormer
Professor Emerita of Social Work
University of Northern Iowa
Co-Author of *The Maid Narratives*

Listening often poses challenges when we disagree with others who have opposing views and different experiences, but the more different we are or more we disagree, the more important our listening becomes. Over the last year, once such issue has become salient for women in the U.S.

The issue of abortion has a special meaning for me because of my personal witness and involvement behind the scenes of a harrowing 1978 trial. A young woman (Marla Pitchford) who had almost died after self-inducing an abortion with a knitting needle was indicted for manslaughter and performing an illegal abortion. The trial took place in Bowling Green, Kentucky. My sister, her primary defense attorney and confidante, won her acquittal after months of meticulous research and preparation. Recently, with the overturning of women's right to an abortion in *Roe v. Wade*, my interest in the case and in the abortion was revived.

An Aside on the Role of Listening in the Marla Pitchford Case

Although the focus of this article is not on this trial (known as the Marla Pitchford case), from the standpoint of today and my work through the Global Listening Centre, I can briefly consider the crucial role that listening played at every step of the legal defense. First, a survey was conducted of townspeople in Bowling Green who had read of the case. Surveyors attended closely to what these people thought on various aspects of the young woman's situation. Meanwhile, the lawyers worked closely with the defendant and consulted with psychologists to develop a full understanding of her state of mind when she plunged the knitting needle into herself. To this end, my sister and Marla had many woman-to-woman conversations. This personal connectedness enabled the defense to effectively convey to the court in dramatic opening and closing statements the intensity of Marla's feelings (when her boyfriend had abandoned her). In her opening statement to the jury, my sister asked the jurors to put themselves in this woman's place and imagine what their feelings would be under the same circumstances. Because the same listening skills had been applied to potential witnesses for the defense, the lawyers knew who to put on the witness stand and the likelihood of their persuading the jury with their arguments. So, as I look back to this example of courtroom justice today, I can see that a major factor in the successful legal defense is through careful and purposeful listening.

Active, Empathic Listening

Just as active listening is a crucial element in the practice of law, so it is an invaluable attribute in other contexts as well. As described in the classic teachings of psychologist Carl Rogers, active listening goes beyond merely paying attention to a speaker; it involves much more than passively

absorbing the words that are spoken, as for example, in a teacher-learner situation. Active, nonjudgmental listening to Rogers was a process that he found to be a highly effective form of communication—in therapy, in conflict resolution, and in ordinary conversation. His videos, produced from the 1950s through the 1970s, provided trainings for counselors in techniques designed to help the therapist grasp the facts and feelings expressed by the client. Through skilled paraphrasing, the therapist as listener, can pick up on positives and reinforce them as a way of eliciting hope. These teachings which Rogers demonstrated in filmed therapy sessions with his clients, he regarded as applicable to his everyday relationships.

Genuineness, unconditional positive regard, and empathic understanding—these are the three components of a therapeutic relationship as singled out by Rogers. These qualities, which are basic to effective listening, are inextricably linked. Empathy, for example, promotes one's positive regard for the other person, but these two traits if not perceived as genuine would be of little or no value. These concepts, which are the foundation for active listening are postulated in the theoretical framework of Rogers' person-centered theory.

Abortion as a Volatile Issue

During the early years after *Roe v. Wade* (passed in 1973) was put into law, most Americans, apart from strict Catholics, seemed to accept the reality of legalized abortion in the same way they did advances in civil rights, gay marriage, and so on. Such was the social climate in 1978 when Marla Pitchford's prosecution became the first case in the U.S. involving the prosecution of a woman for a self-induced abortion. But changes in attitude were slowly evolving along with a surgency in strength of evangelical Christians and a transition in focus, and the arrests of women for suspected damage done to their fetuses, such as through illegal drug use, became increasingly common. Meanwhile, remarkable developments in medicine made fetuses viable at an earlier stage than before; this ability to save infants at ever earlier stages of development gave resonance to the movement to further restrict abortions. Newly available graphic images of fetuses at various stages of development could now be used to arouse strong feelings and beliefs concerning the beginning of life. As a result, many former moderates and pro-choice Republicans aligned with the religious right to campaign in favor of laws banning abortion. This fervor was matched by strong passions in feminists who were ready to fight for women's reproductive freedom. News reports of protest rallies over the issue revealed that there was much shouting and name calling of adversaries on both sides.

Lessons Applied to the U.S. Abortion Conflict

Now we can take the emotionally fraught and divisive issue of abortion as a case in point to see the extent to which active listening skills might apply, might, in fact, defuse the tension.

Emotions are our worst enemy. This is what Carl Rogers said. He was referring to the listener's own emotions, but emotions in the other person too can be damaging. Out-of-control emotions are contagious and tend to escalate in bouts of disagreement. Self-awareness, as Roger suggested, is key to understanding one's emotional responses and gaining control over them. Listening to oneself, he viewed as a prerequisite to listening to others.

Empathy provides the ability to understand another person's experience in the world, as if you were that person. The gift of empathic listening is evident in body language, voice tones, and the words that are used.

Applied to the cultural wars over abortion, (or immigration, police violence, or any other contentious topics) one would want to avoid a heated argument and just enjoy an amiable conversation. It's interesting to know where a friend or family member stands. In a trusted relationship there can be disagreement without animosity. Should the discussion be getting out of hand, it takes only one person to defuse the situation. Humor and empathy go a long way to relieve the tension. Just as violence breeds violence so empathy begets empathy. As the Bible teaches us: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). Both Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King (who encountered a great deal of personal hostility) were inspired by a related biblical theme—that a single light can dispel darkness.

As a case example, we consider the perspective of an individual who strongly believes it is a woman's right to choose whether to end an unwanted pregnancy. This person, let's say, is speaking to a friend who is passionately pro-life, and seemingly gearing up for an argument. The active listener in this situation might respond by acknowledging the friend's concern for infants and children and aspects of abortion that are disturbing to himself or herself. Appreciation of the person's strong religious faith (if it is a factor) might be expressed. Both might agree on the difficulty of a situation in which the possibility of giving life to a baby is not going to be realized. In the ideal situation, the pro-life person will respond in kind with recognition that his or her friend has a sincere concern about the woman's difficult situation in having the child. In any case, the focus would be on finding common ground. The discussion could end, for example,

with both agreeing that if greater financial support was given to a family after the birth of a child, there would be fewer women having abortions.

In the worst-case scenario, the pro-life individual might enter in a tirade against women who have had an abortion or their supporters, viewing abortion in terms of murder. In dealing with such emotionalism, the listener would do well to consider such hostility could be stemming from another source, and with that understanding in mind, choose not to pursue the abortion issue any further. Hopefully, the friend might benefit by getting help in other areas of his or her life that might be closer to the source of the anger.

In the same way that the pro-choice person can seek reconciliation through active listening, so the staunchly pro-life person can recognize the feminist's concern for the health and welfare of women and turn the

focus to their mutual concern for babies after they are brought into the world. Through momentarily putting oneself in the place of the advocate for women's rights, the active listener of an anti-abortion persuasion can show a respect for the other's point of view. Phrases such as "I see where you are coming from" if said in a calm tone of voice can be helpful.

Keep in mind if this approach of empathic listening works for differences over attitudes about abortion, it should work in other areas of highly charged discourse as well, many that arise unexpectedly in conversation. Difficult topics such as immigration, political ties, and gender identity issues have a way of cropping up when the sentiments concerning them are strong or following a report on the news. The three basic tenets of Rogers' theory—genuineness, unconditional positive regard, and empathic understanding—will go a long way toward preventing conflict and enriching a relationship.

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Press conference with Marla Pitchford and Flora Stuart following the not guilty verdict
Photo by Michael Riedinger

The emotional impact of this abortion trial shows on the faces of the witnesses as the lawyer and her client speak to the press

Listening in Times of Intercultural Conflict and War



Professor Claude-Hélène Mayer Ph.D.
Professor in Industrial and Organizational
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Johannesburg, South Africa

*"God speaks in the silence of the heart.
Listening is the beginning of prayer."*

Mother Theresa

The author's voice

I sit with bated breath as I listen to the radio, listening to the sound of bombs detonating in faraway lands.

The deafening tumult of war and intercultural conflict is only seldom interrupted by silence.

How could we best use this momentary quiet?

Which attitude and skill are most significant in overcoming deep socio-political entrenchments and personal resentments?

This presentation will take a closer look at the leadership and skills of selected world leaders from around the globe and provide the audience with insight into accounts of intercultural conflict and warlike dynamics and potential solutions proposed by these selected leaders and their different cultural perspectives.

1. Introductory thoughts regarding intercultural conflict and listening

Intercultural conflict and war are on the rise and often involve complex, easily misunderstood processes and dynamics. These processes and dynamics must be reflected and the views and perspectives of actors and stakeholders must be taken into account. They often include detailed dynamics arising from sociocultural histories and are anchored in politics and webs of relationships, economic interests and socio-emotional entanglements. But how, is the question, can we at least begin to understand these complexities? Which skill is present enough to help unravel the complexities and reach for deeper understanding of all sides of the coin and finally help to form a solution?

1.1 Defining Listening

Listening is a "skill of critical importance in all aspects of our lives" (Sage, 2019, 1) – it helps us maintain relationships, get our jobs done, even figure out our daily tasks. Regardless of how we're engaged with listening, it's important to understand that listening involves more than just hearing the words that are directed at us. Listening is a fundamentally active process.

This process involves five stages: receiving, understanding, evaluating, remembering, and responding (Sage, 2019). Basically, an effective listener needs to hear and identify the speech sounds directed toward them, understand the message of those sounds, critically evaluate or assess that message beyond their own culture, remember what's been said, and respond (either verbally or nonverbally) to information they've received.

This process requires not only attention to detail and the ability to focus, but also the ability to read between the lines and interpret the message in context-specific ways. This is extremely challenging when the actors of communication find themselves in stressful situations influenced by underlying negatively perceived emotions, such as fear or anger.

1.2 Listening in intercultural situations

Listening becomes even more complex, when we find ourselves in intercultural situations of conflict or even war. Intercultural conflict can be understood as a clash in the interests of individuals, teams, groups or states, while war is defined as a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country (Mayer, 2020).

War can be summed up in a few short words by Canadian poet, literary critic and essayist Margaret Atwood (1993): "War is what happens when language fails". When a message is not received, not understood, not evaluated, not remembered, or not responded to, the dread beast of conflict rears its ugly head.

Dynamics of escalation in intercultural conflicts and war times are usually based on the differences of perceptions, feelings and actions between the conflict partners (Glasl, 2011).

Listening in scenarios of intercultural conflict and war – involving different actors of communication from different cultural backgrounds with varying methods of communication, and verbal and non-verbal expressions based on differences in human values and rituals – is challenging, but can open doors to deeper understanding, meaningful exchange of ideas and peaceful solutions.

Historically, in different socio-cultural and national contexts, we find examples of great listeners who made a difference by listening and communicating, particularly in politics during intercultural conflict and war scenarios. Let me provide you with some selected examples of listening leaders.

2. The US-American example of a listener: Abraham Lincoln

One great example of a leader who led by listening is Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), the 16th President of the United States of America, who cultivated personal relationships through patient communication and listening: Whenever Lincoln spoke with someone, he would give them his full attention, listening carefully to every word (Ruiz & Koten, 2017). In doing so, he would develop a deep understanding of their feelings, concerns and motivations. In turn, they would see someone who could be trusted. Lincoln was like this with everyone he met and he thereby overcame numerous socio-cultural barriers and deescalated conflicts. People felt genuinely understood by him, making him a formidable leader, rooted in his personality traits and his deep interest in learning about the perspective, motivations, intentions, feelings and thoughts of the other person.

3. A woman listener: Angela Merkel

Another example of a contemporary politician who was driven by listening skills was previous German chancellor, Angela Merkel, who led a unified Germany for over 16 years. Her negotiation style was informed by observation and listening, always following three rules: taking the outsider's point of view, listen to learn and favor reason and analysis over impulsivity.

Growing up in East Germany, Merkel was aware of the dangers of speaking her mind. She learned to observe and think before speaking, thinking a few moves ahead (Pon Staff, 2021), in anticipation to turn what she has previously heard into an analytical understanding of past, present and future moves.

Strong listening skills are a key aspect of Merkel's negotiation style. One longtime political associate highlighted that Merkel typically speaks 60% less than her conversation partner in discussions. For some Germans, the chancellor's penchant for listening and waiting before acting has proved to be excruciating. In fact, her cautious leadership style has inspired a new German verb, "merkeln", which describes a situation in which people do nothing, do not make decisions or make no statements (Connolly, 2015) – but listen carefully.

4. A South African listener: Nelson Mandela

Exploring listening in African perspectives, Nelson Mandela is an extraordinary example of listening skills. During the times of Apartheid, Mandela fought violently against the Apartheid regime and spent 27 years in prison, before becoming the first Black president in the free, Post-Apartheid South Africa in 1994.

In focusing on Nelson Mandela, due emphasis has been given to his resoluteness and constancy of his challenges. However, another facet of his leadership is of importance: his willingness to listen and learn (Denning, 2013).

Nelson Mandela when asked, told people he learned to be a good listener by watching his father lead tribal meetings. The tribal elders would sit in a circle facing each other as much as possible. As the conversation evolved his father would inquire, listen intently and never offer his comments until everyone else had spoken.

Most of the credit for the transitions in social, cultural, and political thought in addition to peace in South Africa must be attributed to Nelson Mandela for being willing to listen and learn that his violent actions and previous mistakes did not contribute to a peaceful society. He was willing to reconsider and change his beliefs and build a new South Africa through peaceful change where voices of reconciliation were heard and recognised.

5. An intercultural, spiritual listener: Mahatma Gandhi

As an example from India, Mahatma Gandhi was an outstanding communicator in his non-violent struggle for freedom (Prasad, 2020). He mainly used three ways of communicating: spirituality, meditation and prayer; songs and dance; and speeches. However, his listening skills always went along with his communication efforts.

Gandhi was a virtuoso listener – he would listen to the problems faced by people; he would listen to his opponents and he would identify the subtext of every word spoken. He cultivated not just listening to others, but also listening to himself, which helped him keep his moral compass and values, integrity, and being able to respond to others' messages (including subliminal) and causes with empathy. Gandhi even went to the extreme and practiced silence every Monday; in 1926 and again in 1946, he practised a year of political silence (writing notes to convey his feelings and directions). He was taught an indispensable lesson on the importance of silence, 'to listen to the inner voice' on his visit to a Trappist monastery in South Africa. In Gandhi's own words, "I understood a precious lesson. I knew the secret of silence."

Gandhi did not only see his attitude of listening and being in silence as an ability or skill, but rather as a lifestyle and highlighted: "My life is my message." (Quinn, 2013) – a message of listening and silence, even in times of conflict, violence and war.

6. Conclusions: Listening in times of intercultural conflict and war

Dealing with experiences of intercultural conflict and war often evokes deep emotions, such as fear and death anxiety – not only in the people directly affected by conflict and war, but also in individuals' witnessing it.

Both experiences, conflict and war, might stimulate complex phenomena of trauma on individual and collective levels which are anchored in the past and present of individuals and societies. Listening leaders aim at listening to the voices of people affected and traumatized by war and intercultural conflict and through their patience, silence and listening presence show their empathy while aiming to define solutions based on the different perspectives and interests involved. Through their listening abilities, listening leaders explore the socio-cultural, political and economic opportunities and boundaries, while contributing to the healing of the pain and suffering of the wounded. Their presence and listening brings comfort, hope and in the best-case in-depth reflection, the transformation of negative emotions, inner growth, and the openness to reconsidering actions.

The examples of listening leaders presented have shown that observation, silence, listening and reading between the lines, as well as the undivided presence in communication situations lead to informed leadership decisions and the ability of great leaders to connect to deep universal human values of human connection and peace, as well as constructing positive emotions.

Listening, as a multimodal process, is thereby based on attitude, skill, behavior, physical, physiological, sensory-motor, cognitive and affective functions and becomes part of the leader's identity and is therefore unquestioned authentic.

Listening leaders have come to appreciate the centrality of listening by engaging in listening-centered events. However, listening leadership requires more than just the presence of listening, it requires listening and leadership to be connected to interrupt intercultural conflict and war scenarios in a wise way and to transform the animosities towards peaceful solutions, providing safe spaces of silence and wisdom.

Listening in times of intercultural conflict and war can help, when the listener creates a safe environment, focuses on the other without distraction, aiming at understanding the substance of what the other person says and captures ideas, asks questions, restates issues to confirm that their understanding is correct and to bridge eventually occurring cultural gaps. Listeners, however, do not only listen with their ears, but also with their eyes, considering non-verbal clues such as facial expressions, perspiration, respiration rates, gestures,

posture, and numerous other subtle body language signals. Gaining ideas about the emotions involved and the impact of those on the actions and reactions in intercultural conflict and war scenarios is key to listen in a non-judgmental way, taking all ideas, emotions and moves seriously. The listener becomes a force which finally also listens with the heart, opening a space of loving kindness that is usually missing in intercultural conflict and during war. This silent and present loving kindness is part of the key to a peaceful world.

If the contemporary leaders of this world would bring their listening skills and abilities together and listen with their ears, their eyes and their hearts: what would this mean for the war and intercultural conflict raging between Russia and the Ukraine?

I would like to close this conceptual article with a quote from Rumi who used the wisdom of listening to strengthen the understanding of the complexities in situations:

There is a voice that doesn't use words. Listen.
Rumi

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to my son Lolo Mayer who always listens and discusses my research with me.

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One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.

Bryant McGill



Narrative Listening and the Quest for Peace



Annie Rapoport, Ph.D., M.Ed.
University of Maryland, USA

Abstract:

While story **telling** is receiving considerable focus in communication research, story **listening** should have greater attention. Situated in a narrative listening theoretical perspective, this article provides a case study of New Story Leadership, an organization that brings together delegates from Israel and Palestine to Washington D.C. each summer to share stories with each other, with U.S. congressional senators and representatives, and other D.C. organizations.

Central to human communication is the narrative, the stories that we share. Fisher (1987) identified the narrative paradigm as a major communication form. Rappaport (1995) observed that stories have a powerful effect on human behavior, creating meaning, emotion, memory, and identity. Anderson (2019) describes this power of the narrative:

Storytelling is the bedrock of civilization. From the moment we become aware of others, we demand to be told stories that allow us to make sense of the world, to inhabit the mind of someone else. . . . Stories invite empathy, but only if we listen . . .

While early research on the narrative focused on story **telling**, the importance of story **listening** has received more attention today.

Narrative consultants Westmark, Offenbergh and Nissen (2011) center their organizational development work on listening to the organization's stories. "... people are always storying their lives," they note, and "meaning is made and re-made, stories are created and changed all the time" (p. 34). Bavelas, Coates and Johnson (2000) explored story listening in an interactive, conversational context, identifying story listeners as co-narrators: "the narrator elicits responses from the listener and the listener's responses affect the narrator" (p. 951). Research by Pereles, Jackson, Rosenal and Nixon (2017), analyzing the stories that patients tell, describes this co-construction: "Stories are not fixed entities with one truth. They are edited and viewed through a lens of the past, the present agenda, and expectations for the future" (p. e48).

Neuroeconomist Paul Zak's research (2014) on the motivational impact of narratives demonstrates how the human brain is especially attracted to the enduring stories of human triumph over adversity. Research by Cohen and Wolvin (2011) identified how visualization is central to listening to stories. Trained and novice listeners alike reported that they "visualize what is happening" as they engage in narrative listening (p. 20).

Dahlstrom (2014) reminds us that narratives offer increased comprehension, interest, and engagement for listeners. Reviewing the empirical research on narrative processing, he observes that it is "... the default mode of human thought,



Professor Andrew D. Wolvin, Ph.D.
Honorable Director (Academic) Global Listening
Centre. Professor Emeritus at University of
Maryland, Adjunct Professor at the Georgetown
University, Law Center. USA

providing structure to reality and serving as the underlying foundation for memory."

At the center of much of human communication, then, is the narrative. Listeners engage in communication for various purposes which consciously or unconsciously guide how we process what is communicated verbally and/or nonverbally. Wolvin and Coakely (1993) have described five basic listening goals: listening for discrimination, to distinguish sensory input; listening for comprehension, to understand; listening therapeutically, to provide emotional/social support; listening critically, to analyze the message and listening appreciatively, to gain sensory pleasure. These goals serve to frame how we interpret what we receive.

Noting that storytelling is a major means of self disclosure, Savage (1996) identifies five types of stories that listeners are likely to encounter in their communication with others:

Reinvestment stories of shifting commitments and loyalties Rehearsal stories which describe past events "I know someone who" stories to project a personal condition onto someone else Anniversary stories of the joy or pain of an event Transition stories of ending and/or moving on (p. 95)

"Story listening is not just becoming aware of the language the speaker is using," Savage stresses, "it is also the process of observing, in detail, the body language, plus the tone of voice expressed in telling the story" (p. 77)

Further strategies for listening to stories are offered by Friedman (1993):

... since stories unify events into a meaning structure, listeners must consider whether the events related occurred as described, are parts of a coherent whole, are connected in cause-effect patterns, are complete (or whether anything important has been omitted or added), are aptly sequenced, and are interpreted appropriately (p. 215).

Adding in the challenges of listening to stories across cultures, Brownell (2013) reminds us that cross-cultural listening requires patience, kindness, and respect. "The effective cross-cultural listener maintains an attitude of acceptance and open mindedness, listening . . . to learn and appreciate other ways of seeing the world" (p. 353).

Arguing that narrative engagement is central to peace-building, Roig (2019) stresses that "... peacebuilders have a special calling to engage with narratives in a way that is self-reflective, curious, seeks complexity and constructs meaning with others" (p. 5). Focusing on making meaning together through narratives, she observes, "... builds a common understanding that peace is possible, and that individuals can play a part in achieving and sustaining peace" (p. 12). It

requires listening to our own and our partner's narrative assumptions and language in order to "... break down our own bubbles of meaning to co-construct new narratives for peace with others" (p. 17).

Clearly, achieving and sustaining global peace depends on global listening. Luc Reyckler (2001) identifies listening as an important element in ending violent conflict and peace-building. "Being listened to and listening creates the potential for positive change, especially when those that are doing the speaking and listening have previously encountered each other as negative stereotypes and enemies" (453).

A prominent example of global conflict, ironically, is religious extremism. Indeed, the post-September 11 world "... is seized with the dangers of religious extremism and conflict between religious communities" (Smock, 2006, p. 1). The Middle East is a place and space known by all three Abrahamic faiths (Islam, Christian and Judaic) as the "holy land" and there is an intense religious fervor throughout the area. The tensions surrounding the control of holy sites, such as the city of Jerusalem, have caused conflict after conflict by the same religious followers who all preach peace and love. The tensions continue to be palpable across these faiths whose tenets and values have more commonalities than differences. The tangled connections and intersections between historical, political and cultural conflict create a seemingly unsolvable dispute. Many attempts at peace have been attempted, but all have failed to end the fighting and hatred across faiths and ideologies.

Alongside the conflict are many people living daily lives and working towards peace. The grassroots efforts are many times rooted firmly in growing empathy and understanding through communication and education. Although the epicenter of the tensions reside in the Middle East, many people who identify with the religious and cultural communities can be found throughout the world. Their links are emotionally visceral, and their loyalties are driving the initiatives in areas geographically far removed from the region itself.

As listening has become more recognized and utilized beyond clinical settings, global peace activists have developed influential models. Buddhist activist Thich Nhat Hanh (2004) advocates "deep listening." He brings together thirty Israelis and Palestinians each year in a retreat at Plum Village in France. The goal is for the participants to "be together, to listen to each other, and begin their own internal peace process" (p. 10). Using deep listening, the participants begin with listening to themselves in order to bring peace to themselves. And then the deep listening shifts to listening to others in order to understand their pain, fear and suffering. "We try to speak of our suffering without blaming the other side. ... Once communication is possible, peace will be the outcome" (p. 16).

New Story Leadership

A summer leadership development program, New Story Leadership (Website, 2019), pairs an Israeli and a Palestinian to live together in the Washington, D.C. area and to learn from one another. The goal is to create together new narratives that lead to new efforts for peace and reconciliation in the Middle East. The conceptual framework guiding New Story Leadership is the importance and transformative power

of narrative listening. Through new stories, the participants are able to pause and rethink the future, bridging the cultural and religious ideology of the Muslim and Jewish faiths.

To begin to explore how communication and education are at the core of efforts to bring peace to the Middle East, this study will examine grassroots efforts in the cosmopolitan and international capital of the United States—Washington D.C. The focus of the study will be on how these efforts at empathy and understanding center on listening.

New Story Leadership (NSL) is an organization based in Washington, D.C. Every summer, NSL brings together 15 young Israeli and Palestinian delegates to offer their perspectives on peace building. The delegates live in Palestinian-Israeli pairs with American host families in D.C. for seven weeks each summer. They are placed in Congressional offices on Capitol Hill and in other organizations. Working together in Palestinian-Israeli teams, they share project for change proposals and collaborate on joint social impact projects.

The mission of NSL is to develop a community of leaders and influencers across Palestine and Israel. At the conclusion of the 2022 summer with two NSL delegates, Maryland Congressman Jamie Raskin thanked the delegates for their efforts, noting that NSL is "providing a lot of hope for a breakthrough in the Middle East" (Raskin, July 26, 2022 Facebook Video).

The foundation of this community building in the Middle East is the narrative:

Stories are at the heart of each NSL program. Learning to tell your personal story in the most effective way is crucial to engaging the interest and support of your audience—whether your listeners are members of Congress, an academic community, a faith community, or the general public. Crafting your story requires not only putting in the necessary practice but also listening carefully to the stories of your teammates, so that you can learn from one another. During this process, you'll create a new, shared story and become more compelling advocates for your communities.

NSL builds on a foundation of narratives that the delegates share with each other. They also spend time in Congressional offices on Capitol Hill because "their stories matter and decision makers should have access to on the ground perspectives" (NSL Website).

To illustrate the connection of New Story Leadership delegates to narrative listening, we interviewed the former NSL co-directors and some of their past participants to gain a deeper perspective on how the work of this organization centers on listening. Their observations exemplify how a concerted effort to listen can have an impact on professional and personal relationships.

Rawan Odeh, the former NSL co-director, describes how they utilize listening circles to share their stories. The delegates form a circle and only one person can speak at a time. The group uses a talking stick which is passed around in turn to each person to hold while they are telling their story. Rawan details the process:

“We have a storytelling session and we have one person sharing their story and then the second person repeats the emotions and the needs that they understood from the story. The whole point is not just to say back, ‘I heard that you went to school when you were 11.’ But, you know, ‘I felt, I understood that there was fear on your way to school.’ emotions, identifying the emotions that are related to the person's story.”

In addition to focusing on the emotions, the group also centers on the storyteller's needs: “at moment you were needing safety and security, or you are needing to be heard to be legitimized... We start with listening to the individual story of the other side's experience. . . as a story of change. . . If we start to build on those stories as a collective. . . then, ultimately, together we'll start creating new ones.”

To gain a deeper understanding of the value of stories in peace making, some former NSL participants were interviewed. Their responses provide thoughtful examples of narrative listening.

Hiba Yazbek, the Web Editor for Haartz.com, the largest Israeli English news publication, noted that narratives “. . . are a very important and under-looked tool in peace building. Narratives and stories are directly connected to human emotions. Stories have the power to reach in and persuade people with barely any effort, and have the power to draw out buried emotions and feelings. So hearing about the conflict through personal stories is far more effective than through statistics, facts and numbers, especially among people who don't agree with your opinions and stand.”

Hiba described the role of listening in peace efforts: “Listening is one of the most important factors in narratives. For a narrative to be effective it must reach an audience, and must do so effectively. The listener is the other, just as important part, of a story. And as a storyteller you must also be a good listener. In peace efforts specifically, there are two (or more) sides, and for narrative to play a positive role in peace efforts, all sides must be receptive to each other, and the best way to be receptive is to be open, and to listen. Listening also needs open mindedness and acceptance of differences. And it also should come hand in hand with empathy.”

And she offered a detailed description of how the listening circle process worked:

Sometimes, listening can be hard, especially during heated arguments and disagreements. So I found it very helpful and sometimes necessary to put in place rules for listening. Such as an exercise we called “the listening circle”, where we went around in a circle and each spoke individually for as long as we wanted and about anything we wanted, but the rules were that only the person whose turn it is now, who would be holding a talking stick, would speak. No one was allowed to interrupt for any reason at all, and no one can even react verbally. This allowed for a safe space and forced us to fully listen, without thinking of our response or reaction to what was being said. This exercise was one of the most effective aspects of NSL. We also set up core values for our group that all related to listening, and made sure to implement

them throughout the program, such as respecting each other no matter our differences, being empathetic towards one another, and not interrupting each other. Personally, I always tried to be imaginative while listening, through painting a mental image of the story being told, and living it in my head. I found that that helped me be able to sympathize more and put myself in the other's shoes. I also tried to be fully present while someone was talking, and not be distracted by other things, and not be thinking of an answer or response or comment in my head while the other person is speaking.

Eran Nissan, an Israeli delegate, described the need to listen with empathy: “. . . Listening is a very important part in practicing empathy. The ability to listen without being judgmental. The ability to listen and being vulnerable. The ability to listen and understanding that you may disagree with the person talking to you, but you need to listen. The importance of teaching people to listen other than arguing--other than being defensive and being on guard is crucial to break down the walls of denial and suppression.”

Israeli delegate Dana Amir noted that listening with empathy is challenging: “You don't want to listen to your enemy, you just want to survive. And it's hard to listen to something that is completely opposite of what you believe is true. So listening is hard, because it makes you stay quiet, to continue to hear things that don't align with what you believe as a truth, or your values or things of that sort. And that waiting period that you need to listen to until the end of the sentence of someone who says something that's really, really hard to hear. That's agonizing.”

Mohammad Saleh, a Palestinian delegate who now attends graduate studies in Canada with a focus on cooperative agriculture, sees tremendous value of finding common ground between Israelis and Palestinians related to issues not directly connected to dealing with the conflict. For example, focusing on the need to be good stewards of the environment and being progressive in agricultural methods. As he reflected on NSL, he remembers how listening as a skill can help in business situations as well as harder topics where there may not be consensus at the end. By providing spaces and opportunities to listen to peers' full stories, moments of deep insight can occur. What Mohammad refers to as reaching the ‘aha moment’, “Listening is very important in mitigating the conflict, because when you listen to my story and my narrative and understand it...you have the moment of ‘aha’ ...now I understand, now I get it, now I see why all of this is happening...” Mohammad valued these aha moments of discovery and insight as productive starting points towards productive dialogues.

Gilad Sevitt, an Israeli delegate, stressed that peace building requires compassion and empathy in order to understand the other viewpoint. “Listening is like the bridge to seeing the other narrative.”

As an example of this bridge, Ahmad Saleh, a Palestinian delegate, shared his NSL project. Yalla Yoga (“let's go yoga”) brings together Palestinians and Israelis in an

approachable geographic area to do two hours of yoga and then relax and converse over food. The process requires Arabic, Hebrew and English interpreters. As the participants listen to each other, the tension they feel when they first come together breaks down. Ahmad concludes that “. . . listening is really important.”

In addition to Capitol Hill experiences, NSL takes their stories to the wider Washington DC community. One such effort is a panel presentation at the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church in suburban Bethesda, Maryland. The church includes the Bethesda Jewish Congregation and the Maqame Ibrahim Islamic Center in addition to the large Presbyterian congregation. The NSL delegates have the opportunity to share their stories and to interact with members of the three congregations in an interesting, engaging Sunday afternoon listening session. Through listening, the NSL relationship with the three congregations serves to bring people of different heritages to increase understanding and respect—something very much needed in the world today.

The powerful examples of NSL show that in the midst of a violent conflict, listening is anything but passive. Listening to the stories of those you have been taught to dismiss is a powerful means of connection and diplomacy. Story listening is a powerful strategy in our quest for global peace and worthy of constant consideration and practice. Like many facets of our fast-paced and cacophonous world, much emphasis is placed on “telling” and doing so in ways that make your voice and story stand out from among infinite options. In efforts to stifle others’ stories, misunderstanding and resentment grow. Conflict of all kinds, including violent conflict, thrives in spaces where attempts to listen and

understand have stopped. Reopening dialogue that centers around open and engaged listening is critical for pausing violent conflict. It is also the foundation upon which seeds of care and compassion are enabled to grow. Listening to the stories of those from different backgrounds is essential for progress towards a peace that means more than the absence of violence—a peace that allows a pluralistic world to embrace diverse and harmonious future.

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Global Listening Centre Welcomes New Executive Chair Professor David T. McMahan, Ph.D.

We are honored to announce the appointment of internationally renowned scholar David McMahan, Professor of Communication Studies at Missouri Western State University to succeed Melissa Beall as Executive Chair of the Global Listening Board. Professor McMahan is a specialist in the art of relational communication and the author of 10 books on various aspects of communication. Dr. McMahan is a true believer in the GLC as can be seen in his vision of the organization:

"The Global Listening Centre is dedicated to transforming lives through the impactful and healing power of listening. Initiatives promoting the importance of listening and supporting listening proficiencies – especially in pervasive non listening environments – will lead to better understanding, deeper relational connections, increased critical awareness, greater well-being, and a much healthier world. Listening is fundamental and indispensable."



Outstanding Listeners Interview



Andrew D. Wolvin, Ph.D.
Honorable Director (Academic)
Global Listening Centre.
Professor Emeritus at University of
Maryland, Adjunct Professor at the
Georgetown University, Law Center.
USA



INTERVIEWER:

Alan R. Ehrlich
Chair and Director
(Listening Disorders)
Global Listening Centre.

Alan: You were a major author in the listening field. What change have you seen over your career? And what do you think this has meant for the field?

Andrew: The study of listening as a sub-field of the communication discipline evolved slowly. Some of the first serious research came about in the early 1970s when Larry Barker published *Listening Behavior* and Carl Weaver published *Human Listening*, detailed scholarly looks at the complexities of the process. In 1979, Carolyn Coakley and I published *Listening Instruction*, a National Communication Association publication which provided a theory/research basis for effective teaching and development of listening skills. In 1980, a group of listening scholars and educators came together to form the International Listening Association, providing an organization for people who were researching and teaching listening in schools and colleges. These efforts certainly formed the basis for building the research, teaching and practice in which we engage today.

Alan: Are there any new developments in the field that you think show promise?

Andrew: The current focus on listening is very much centered on listening in second language education and practice and on listening leadership in organizations. This provides us with a broader application of the principles and practices of listening.

Alan: More specifically, how do you feel about listening in politics in the US? Do you have any insight about how we could help people to listen better politically?

Andrew: Today's U.S. political scene is a serious case study of what those of us who teach and research listening stress—be willing to listen to other points of view. It is alarming to observe how much we seem to have lost this perspective.

Alan: How do you find listening/communication relevant in our everyday life that includes communication technology such as social media?

Andrew: A major challenge we face today is the pervasiveness of social media. We're tied to our iPhones and, consequently, miss a great deal in life—engaging conversations with others, experiences in

nature, enjoying different artistic forms, etc.

Alan: Any thoughts about global listening, or listening in general, you want to share?

Andrew: My colleague Annie Rappeport (who just completed her Ph.D. in Peace Studies at the University of Maryland) and I are looking at various dimensions of global listening in our research studies. Listening to each other is certainly central to resolving global conflicts and achieving world peace. Indeed, I've been working on a book on the role of listening in foreign policy—how much diplomacy, defense, and development efforts to accomplishing world order.

Alan: There have always been barriers to effective listening but it seems that in today's world the barriers are becoming more difficult to breach. Is there a method that you teach to help your students overcome their personal barriers and cognitive biases and empower them to be better listeners?

Andrew: I've always stressed in my academic courses and in my extensive training and development professional seminars that the barriers to effective listening requires three dimensions: motivation to be a willing listener; cognitive understanding of what the complex process of listening involves, and applying listening skills to be an effective listener,

Alan: The University has always been a melting pot of languages and cultures. Effective listening can be a challenge, especially to those with any level of hearing loss, when the listener encounters a strong 'foreign' accent. Is there a technique that you recommend to help students who have a professor with a strong accent?

Andrew: One of the challenges listeners have in today's global village is to understand another person's cultural perspective and his/her verbal and nonverbal language. This has been complicated by the covid crisis masking requirement. Listening has so traditionally been interchanged with hearing. However, we listen with all of our senses,

Alan: Can effective listening help a listener separate facts from misinformation or disinformation

Andrew: Indeed, one of the principles that Ralph

Nichols, an influential pioneer in listening behavior, stressed the importance of separating facts and principles. As we've noted, listeners must be willing to listen to and understand another person's point of view in order to make a decision to accept or reject it.

Alan: Are we getting any closer to a Unified Definition of Listening?

Andrew: I'm not sure we will ever come to agreement as to what really constitutes "listening." I've always stressed to students to not use the expression "just listen" or "simply listen." Listening is one of the most complex of all human behaviors, and we need to start with that understanding. (ready to prove)

Alan: Advances in technology have moved personal communication from one-to-one (a two-way conversation), to one-to-many collocated (large groups, rallies, speeches), to one-to-many globally dispersed (radio, television, internet, social media). How has this changed the quality of our listening (memory, biases, comprehension, need for prior subject knowledge)?

Andrew: Technology today has enabled us to connect across that world, making it possible for organizations to bring people together for meetings, training, entertainment, etc. This direct connection, however, requires that we engage fully. And that focus is difficult in that the human attention span is shrinking considerably.

Speakers today in one-on-one, group, or audience settings need to adapt to that reality.

Alan: You have been a leader in listening education and research for many years. How has the study of and teaching of listening changed over these years? What are the greatest needs in listening education and listening research for the future? What are your thoughts on a global program for listening education that begins in pre-school and early education venues?

Andrew: I've been fortunate to have had wonderful graduate students who have been my colleagues in my work on listening behavior. As those of us who have taught courses and units in listening at all levels of education have retired, I think the focus on listening in the academic world has shifted significantly to second language listening. While this connects us globally, I am concerned as to where we are left in the communication field. Communication departments are focused on messages and messengers in rhetorical, public relations, and communication science studies. Today, it's more important than ever to turn out students who are listeners.

Meanwhile, it's encouraging that organizations are embracing the need to establish a listening culture to be responsive to the needs of customers and employees through listening leadership. And it's wonderful that the Global Listening Centre is providing a significant foundation for that leadership throughout the world.

Thank You!



Associate Professor Sun Jicheng, Ph.D.
Editor (Chinese Version) The Global Listener
Associate Professor at the Shandong University of Technology, China.

The Global Listening Centre is certainly a global organisation with highly respected academics from all over the world working together to make listening transforms lives around the world.

We thank Associate Professor Sun Jicheng and his team for taking the responsibility of extending our *The Global Listener* newsletter to those in China. Their translation and dedication to the study of listening are a treasure. Thank you, Dr. Sun Jicheng.

Congratulations!

Professor Douglas Cumming J.D., Ph.D., CFA

DeSantis Distinguished Professor of Finance and Entrepreneurship at College of Business at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, USA. Visiting Professor of Finance at Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham.
United Kingdom Fellow of the British Academy of Management

Our old member Distinguished Professor Douglas Cumming is ranked among the world's top 2 percent most cited researchers in the field of finance according to a new study from Stanford University. Professor Douglas Cumming believes listening is one of the key skills for my success.
Recently Professor Douglas met Prime Minister of Turkey.



Celebrate why listening transforms lives by participating in the Global Listening Centre's "Thank You for Listening" campaign early in 2023



Global Campaign

Professor Lynette Louw

Raymond Ackerman Chair in Management, Department of Management

Acting Dean: Faculty of Commerce

Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Is a "thank you for listening" in order?

Does the pace of our busy lives allow us to ponder what is happening around us? Do we hear our colleagues, partners or friends telling us that they have assisted us with a task? Do we observe the wonder in nature during our walks in the park? We have many reasons to be grateful listeners and say "thank you." However, it is impossible to thank others without listening to what others are saying and noticing what they are doing. This holds for all of us in our daily lives. Gratitude is a positive moral emotion experienced when someone shows appreciation and recognition for something you have done or said. In turn, the positive emotion is reciprocal as you value what the other person did or for who they are. Gratitude is a positive emotion that enhances mental and physical wellbeing.

Saying "thank you for listening" is extremely powerful. Research shows that gratitude increases the self-efficacy and social worth of a person. According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability and power to prompt a behaviour change to achieve the desired outcome. Gratitude increases a person's confidence in their ability to control their motivation, behaviour and social environment. Being appreciated and feeling valued enhances performance due to an individual's boosted perceptions of their capabilities to learn and effect positive changes in behaviour. Gratitude thus extends beyond positive reciprocal one-on-one relationships based on a moral emotion to encompass group social emotions where many people feel more connected to each other. In such groups, witnessing an act of

gratitude inspires people to help each other and to connect.

On the other hand, social values (such as respect, justice and freedom) resonate in the relative importance that people place on the life changes they experience and, using the insights they have gained, improve their ability to make sound decisions. In the workplace, for example, decisions should focus on what is valuable to people. If leaders are aware of what is valuable and essential to other people, it will enhance success in their personal and professional lives. In terms of positive psychology, an attitude of grateful listening and saying "thank you for listening" would thus increase positive behaviour and improve decision-making and, ultimately, the overall value of our work.

In essence, practising grateful listening and saying "thank you for listening" daily will positively affect those around you and will promote other positive emotions, intentions and behaviours – especially when an individual's self-efficacy and social worth increases. The positive reciprocal effect is beneficial as it re-inforces positive behaviour. Martin Seligman, the renowned author in the field of Positive Psychology, reminds us that *"when we take time to notice the things that go right – it means we're getting a lot of little rewards throughout the day."* The Dalai Lama counsels that *"when you practice gratefulness, there is a sense of respect toward others."*

According to Clean Space, research by Prof. Robert Emmons reminds us that those who practice grateful listening, even amid adversity, experience its benefits, further enhancing self-efficacy and social worth.

Gratitude is:

- strongly associated with personal wellbeing and happiness.
- boosts positive emotions such as joy and enthusiasm.
- make us more optimistic and resilient despite adversity.
- increases social connection that improves one-on-one relationships and promotes group cohesiveness by building trust and strengthening bonds amongst people.
- promotes forgiveness.
- enhances sleep. On a lighter note, it can be contended that blessings instead of sleep should be counted during the Rapid Eye Movement dreaming sleep cycle.

The positive reciprocal benefit of saying "thank you for listening" is true for all of us daily especially in leadership in the workplace. As Abraham Lincoln stated in 1856, *"actions speak louder than words."* By

implication, if the leader is listening to what others are saying, they will be able to transform what they hear into action and give credit where it is due by gratefully acknowledging the contributions of others. Likewise as leaders solve problems and collaborate with team members, it is also appropriate for team members to listen and show gratitude to the leaders. Instead of relying solely on financial rewards and recognition for team members, research has shown that verbal praise and a grateful attitude are highly motivating, especially in the post-COVID-19 era. This viewpoint is supported by Professor R. Emmons, author of *The Little Book of Gratitude: Creating a Life of Happiness and Wellbeing*, in which he confirms that “*gratitude is the ultimate performance-enhancing substance at work.*”

After considering the importance and benefits of “saying thank you for listening”, you might wonder how to do so. You could simply express your gratefulness by saying, for instance: I could not do this without your assistance; what you have done is such a blessing; your support is much appreciated.

In the inherently volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) era of the 4th Industrial Revolution, saying “thank you for listening” and showing gratitude have probably been neglected. To encourage us to do so more frequently and to allow us to acknowledge that being a grateful listener transformed our lives and those of others in our society, workplace and families, the **Global Listening Centre** invites us to participate in their “Thank You For Listening” campaign which will take place in next two months. This is an opportunity for you to recognise and express appreciation to people for listening – people who may otherwise receive little recognition for their work and actions. This could be a manager at your workplace, someone in society, a friend or a family member. Carin Isabel Knoop, Chairperson Global Listening Centre, will provide a letter of recognition that you can use to personally thank the person concerned by presenting them with the letter and a blue ribbon that can be attached to their attire. Please spread the word about the “Thank You For Listening” campaign in your circle of friends and colleagues and take the time to express your gratitude during the campaign. At the Global Listening Centre, we believe that expressing your appreciation will make a difference to someone, and the benefits might be more than you

realise. Together we can make a difference in another person’s life by being a grateful listener.

In his celebrated address titled “The Last Lecture” at Carnegie Mellon University, Randy Pausch said that “*showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.*”

Advice from the famous Roman orator, Cicero, is that: “*Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues but the parent of all others.*”

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Listening is one of the loudest forms of kindness.

Anonymous



Honoring Our Members



Kay Lindahl, CLP

Chair Spiritual Listening Division, Global Listening Centre

Author, Founding Director of The Listening Center in Long Beach, CA. USA

For the past 25 years Kay Lindahl has focused on listening as a sacred art and a spiritual practice. She is the founder of The Listening Center, author of the award-winning book, *The Sacred Art of Listening*, and a Certified Listening Professional. Kay is a skilled presenter who demonstrates listening as a way of being profoundly present with each other and our own inner wisdom. She teaches that spiritual listening is at the heart of all relationships - it's the antidote to that missing piece, that longing for connection, belonging, communion which seems to be so common in our culture today. 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. Kay has designed practices that support becoming a listening presence. She has presented her work in diverse settings – local, regional, national and international. Kay has created programs, board retreats, workshops and in-service training for non-profit organizations, businesses and on university campuses and faith communities. She is a dedicated spokesperson for the interfaith movement and has served on the board of directors for Women of Spirit and Faith, The Interfaith Observer, The Rumi Educational Center, North American Interfaith Network, United Religions Initiative and was a former ambassador for The Parliament of the World's Religions. *"The cultural and religious diversity of our communities calls for a way of listening that transcends words and belief systems. Learning to truly listen to one another is the beginning of new understanding and compassion, which deepens and broadens our sense of community."* – Kay Lindahl

Members News

Listen, learn and engage...

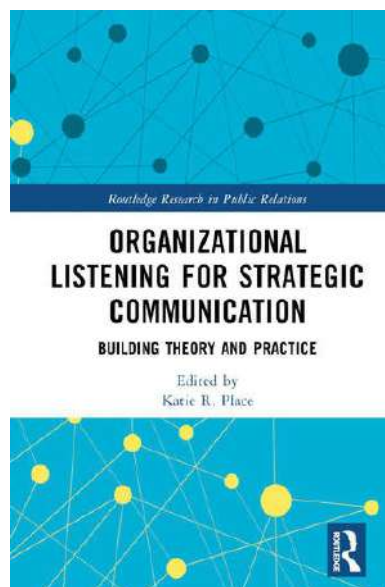
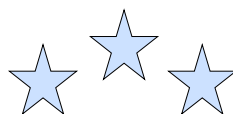
Our Vice Chair Dr. Jo-Ann Rolle delivered the Keynote address at The United Nations Development Programme on 26th and 27th September 2022. She spoke on the Diaspora for Development: Leveraging Africa's Sixth Region to Realize the Continent's Promise.

Excerpts from Keynote:

Look for the change by becoming engaged, active and doing something. None of us can do it alone. We all have our personal gifts, we all can do something and we must work together if we want to change the world. As scholars and practitioners, we must be bold, we must be courageous, and we must be vigilant in our quest for truth and socio-economic justice such as the world has never seen. Continue to engage and collaborate forward into an unseen future that we co-create for the betterment of humanity. We can all listen, learn and engage more for a new and better normal in a future we make.



Best wishes for the book release!



Dr. Katie R. Place is member of Global Listening Centre and presently Professor of Strategic Communication in the School of Communication at Quinnipiac University, USA. Her research examines power, ethics, and listening in public relations.

The book is projected for a spring (June) 2023 release!

Congratulations Professor Jagadish!



Anna (left), Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (middle) and Jagadish (right).

Our respected past Chairman and Listening Legend Professor Chennupati Jagadish AC, met Prime Minister of Australia Honorable Anthony Albanese MP at the Parliament House along with Academy of Science Chief Executive Anna Maria Arabia.

Congrats Professor Jagadish! We are so proud for your contribution in the field of education to the global society. Presently Professor Jagadish is the 20th President of the Australian Academy of Science.



On the 10th of January 2023 Professor Jagadish received Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award from the Honorable President of India for his contribution in the field of science, technology and education.

A Request Message



The Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners In The World 2022 Global Listening Centre

Dear GLC Members,

Last year, the GLC presented its first annual “The Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World 2021” (25OWL2021) awards. It was an incredibly successful program that highlighted the importance of listening and the Global Listening Centre to a truly global audience. As people deeply involved in the academics and practices of listening, we know just how important a skill it is. It is therefore our job to highlight listening's importance in the lives of every individual and every community across the globe. Poor listening has real costs - poorer relationships, lower academic achievement, lower earning potential, in addition to the social impacts of polarization, and the inability to have productive conversations around approaches to climate change.

“The Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World-2021” was just the first as we embark on making this extraordinary program even better in 2023 as we honor the women of 2022. But we can't do it without you! Who would you nominate for this high honor? Please, over the next few weeks, think of someone that you consider an Outstanding Woman Listener in the year 2022.

We will be sending out nomination forms for 25OWL2022 and program details over the next few weeks. Please watch your email and be prepared with the nominations of your choice.

We are looking forward to a very successful “The Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World-2022” program in 2023.

Yours Respectfully,



Carin-Isabel Knoop
Chairperson, GLC.

Executive Director Harvard
Business School Case Research and
Writing Group, Harvard University.
USA



Jo-Ann Rolle, Ph.D.
Vice Chair, GLC .

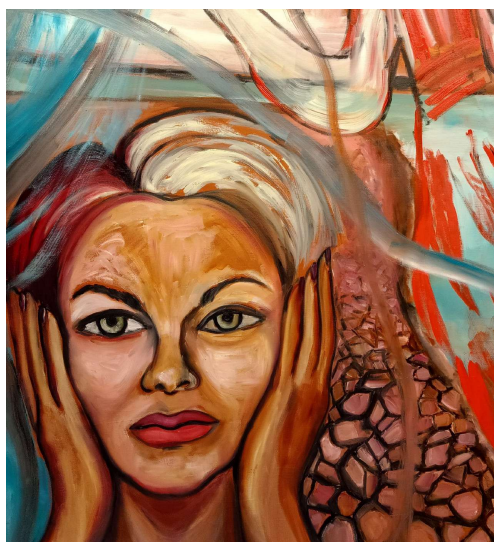
President of the National HBCU
Business Deans Roundtable,
Dean at School of Business
Medgar Evers College, City
University of New York, USA.



Stacey Connaughton, Ph.D.
President (Academia) GLC.

Professor at The Brian Lamb School
of Communication, Purdue
University. Director of The Purdue
Policy Research Institute, Discovery
Park District. Director of The Purdue
Peace Project. USA

Listen to Mother Earth Screaming Paintings by Shahin de Heart



Oil on canvas paintings done by internationally famous German painter Shahin de Heart exclusively for Global Listening Centre.

Mother Earth is in a state of constant worry about the world and few, if any, seem to be listening. The air is dirty, the forests are burning, the earth is warming enough to melt the eternal ice, rivers and the fertile soil are drying up and with it, and so are our sources of substance. Yet few, if any, seem to be listening to save for the red angel high above. It is this angel that embodies hope and confidence, while providing the impetus for each of us, individually and collectively, to carefully listen to Mother Earth and commit to change the course of our world's future for humanity.

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For more on listening visit : www.globallisteningcentre.org

Contact : info@globallisteningcentre.org