



## Mother Teresa: An Apostle of Love Listening for Peace

# A Benediction for Listening Inspired by Saint Teresa of Calcutta

The word Benediction is Latin for “A good word.” In a fractured world where we daily see people suffer as we watch the news, we often need good words to help us respond to the strife and stress we witness. At the tomb of Nobel Laureate Saint Teresa of Calcutta, we find these “good words” from her that also echo the mission and goals of the Global Listening Centre. Saint Teresa offered these wise words: “Take the trouble to listen.” Valuing others by simply listening to them, as well as feeding them, was an inherent part of her ministry to the poor. U.S. newsman Dan Rather once interviewed Mother Teresa inquiring about her prayer life. He asked, “Mother Teresa, what do you do when you pray?” Mother Teresa paused, then thoughtfully responded, “I listen.” Newsman Rather, thinking he might have a scoop by reporting what God says to her, then asked, “Well, what does he say?” With another calm response she paused, then said, “He listens.”

The Global Listening Centre offers good, encouraging words reminding us of the power of listening in promoting peace and offering support to others. Another message that can be found near Saint Teresa of Calcutta’s modest tomb presents additional listening wisdom: “Before you speak, it is necessary for you to listen, for God speaks in the silence of the heart.” May our benediction be more than offering good words. May we model the compassion of Mother Teresa by listening for the silence of the heart. Instead of focusing only on speaking “good words,” may our listening heart bring peace to the lives of all we meet.

**Steven A. Beebe, Ph.D., Regents’ and University Distinguished Professor of Communication Studies Emeritus, Texas State University**

**A truly proud moment!  
The Thank You for Listening Campaign was kicked off by Professor Jagadish!**



**Listening Legend Professor Chennupati Jagadish,** AC, PresAA, FRS, FREng, FYSE, Ph.D., FAA, MNAE (US), FTSE, FTWAS, FNAI, FEurASci, FNA, FNAE, FASc, FAPAS, FIEEE, FAPS, FMRS, FOSA, FInstP, FAIP, FIoN, FSPIE, FECS, FIET, FAAAS, FAVS, FEMA, FAPAM  
Past Chairperson, Global Listening Board, Global Listening Centre.  
President of the Australian Academy of Science, World Leader in Semiconductor Optoelectronics,  
Distinguished Professor, Australian National University.

The world today seems troubled by division and conflict, leaving many people feeling disconnected from one another. Misunderstanding grows and trust erodes. In the midst of this uncertainty and pain, listening offers a powerful source of hope, slowing things down and creating opportunities for understanding, empathy, and healing. The Global Listening Centre's *Thank You for Listening* campaign 2026 highlights the transformative power of listening. It shines a light on this quiet strength, reminding us that meaningful change often begins not with speaking louder, but with listening more deeply. A heartfelt thank you is offered to all our listeners and contributors for your incredible support of our campaign. Your engagement and commitment truly mean a great deal. You play an essential role in our mission to promote and support the noble cause of listening and to help build a more harmonious world.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Message from the Editor-in-Chief	3	Listening Roles and Their	
Thanks to our Advisors	4-5	Consequences in Communication	17-18
Listening Legends 2025	6	Writers and Corn Are All Ears	19-20
Outstanding Listener Interview	7-9		
Articles:		Global Listening Centre Award	
The Rise of the AI Agents and Algorithmic Listening	10-11	Announcements:	
The Space Between Words: On the Quiet Power of Listening	12-13	Award Committee Team 2024-2025	20
Reducing Suicide Risk through Active Listening	14-15	Award Recipients 2024-2025	21
Listening Backward: How Archaeoacoustic Meditation		Honoring Our Member	22
Turns Ancient Sound into New Experiential Art	16	Members News	23-27

## A Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Listeners,

In a world that seems to be growing more complex and fractured, listening stands as a quiet yet transformative force. This issue of *The Global Listener* reminds us that listening is not merely a communication skill; rather, it is a human responsibility and a pathway to connection, empathy, and peace. As highlighted throughout this edition, from the inspiring words rooted in the legacy of Mother Teresa to the powerful insights shared by global leaders and scholars, listening has the power to heal relationships, bridge cultural divides, and foster understanding in times of uncertainty.

Our 2026 “Thank You for Listening” campaign reflects this belief at its core. It celebrates not only the act of listening but also the individuals and communities who practice it with purpose and compassion for others. With a presence in more than 140 countries, the Global Listening Centre aspires to see every region represented in this campaign as we recognize and honor listeners around the world. We encourage all members to nominate someone who exemplifies the power of listening. Individuals who are not members may also nominate someone by sending the relevant details to [info@globallisteningcentre.org](mailto:info@globallisteningcentre.org).

This issue also demonstrates that listening is central to every human endeavor. It features a collection of thought-provoking articles that explore listening across disciplines and areas of life. We are also inspired by our Outstanding Listener Interview with Dr. David Callejo Pérez and gain insights into activities and accomplishments of our many members.

We are especially proud to spotlight our Listening Legends 2025, honoring exceptional individuals whose work exemplifies the highest ideals of listening. This year, we celebrate Professor George Perry and Professor Douglas Cumming, whose contributions in science and global finance reflect how attentive listening can drive innovation, ethical leadership, and human-centered progress. Alongside this distinction, the Global Listening Centre continues to recognize excellence through a range of honors, including the Global Listening Centre Awards 2024–2025, which celebrate contributions across our international community.

Above all, this issue reflects the remarkable influence of our members, contributors, advisors, and partners who continue to elevate listening as a force for good. Your shared commitment connects us across cultures and disciplines. You are shaping conversations, influencing leadership, advancing research, and making an impact far beyond what can be seen or measured.

Listening Transforms Lives!



**David T. McMahan, Ph.D.**  
**Editor-in-Chief, *The Global Listener***  
Executive Chair, Global Listening Centre  
Professor of Communication, Missouri Western State University  
Past President, National Communication Association



**David T. McMahan, Ph.D.**

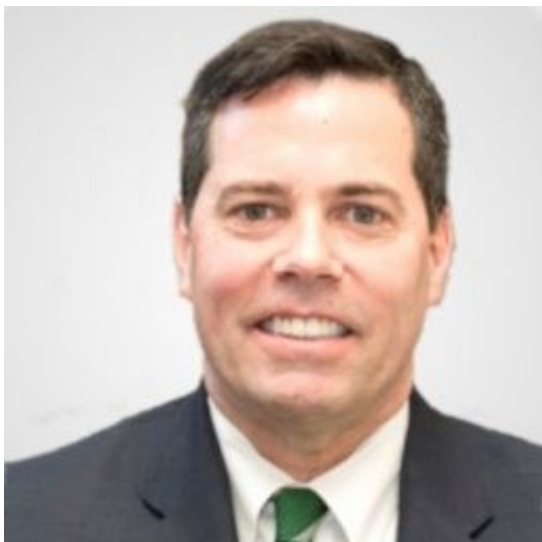
*It is the disease of  
not listening.....  
that I am troubled with.*

**William Shakespeare**

# Thanks to our Advisors

As we launch our Thank You for Listening global campaign, I am honored, on behalf of the members of GLC, to extend our deepest gratitude to our distinguished Board of Advisors. As preeminent global leaders in their respective fields, their contributions have been instrumental to our progress. By providing strategic guidance at the forefront of our most critical moments, their wisdom and active involvement have helped transform our noble mission into a global reality. We are proud to inaugurate this campaign by first expressing our sincere thanks to them.

Respectfully,  
Sardool Singh, Secretary, Global Listening Centre.



Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D., President, Caldwell University.



Listening Legend Marshall Goldsmith, Ph.D., has written or edited more than 60 books that have been sold worldwide. He is widely recognized as one of the top leadership and management consultants in the world.



Reji Kumar Pillai, President, India Smart Grid Forum (ISGF), Chairman, Global Smart Energy Federation (GSEF).



Listening Legend Steven A. Beebe, Ph.D., Regents' and University Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Texas State University, Past President, National Communication Association. He has authored numerous books totaling over 80 editions.

### *Global Listening Centre Workshops*

The Global Listening Centre offers world-class workshops and programs on effective listening skills. All GLC programs are conducted by our elite and distinguished professors and global leaders in the broad area of listening. Each program is designed to provide the participants with the skills necessary to listen more effectively and increase organizational productivity. We offer workshops for:



For more information, contact: [info@globallisteningcentre.org](mailto:info@globallisteningcentre.org)

# Listening Legends 2025



**George Perry, Ph.D.**, FRSB, Cbiol, Csci, CsciTech, FSX, FLS, FRSC, CChem, FABAP, FSB, FRCPath, FRMS, FWAS, FAAAS, FTAS, FRSA, FMSA

Director (Listening in Science),  
Global Listening Centre.  
Professor, Semmes Foundation Distinguished University  
Chair in Neurobiology and former Dean of Sciences,  
The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA; TX, US).

Professor George Perry stands as a beacon of scientific excellence and human-centered innovation. Renowned for his transformative contributions to neurobiology and his global leadership in Alzheimer’s disease research, Dr. George Perry exemplifies scientific excellence grounded in human-centered innovation and deep listening to the needs of patients and the scientific community. One of the most highly cited scientists in his field, with more than 135,000 citations,

Dr. Perry’s pioneering research on oxidative stress and neurodegeneration has fundamentally reshaped our understanding of the human brain. Through decades of meticulous inquiry and attentive exploration, Dr. Perry exemplifies the spirit of the Listening Legend Award.

## **Douglas Cumming, J.D., Ph.D., CFA**

Director, Global Listening Centre.  
Professor of Finance and Steven Shulman ’62 Endowed  
Chair of Digital Innovation, Stevens Institute of Technology,  
School of Business.



Professor Douglas Cumming is a leading authority in venture capital, ethical finance, and digital innovation. His prolific research—cited more than 35,000 times—has set international benchmarks for transparency and governance in alternative investments, bridging academic theory and real-world practice on issues ranging from financial regulation to crowd-funding success. Dr. Cumming has published over 260 articles in leading journals, including more than 50 in Financial Times Top 50 journals, and 23 books with publishers such as Oxford and Wiley. He serves as Managing Editor-in-Chief of the Review of Corporate Finance and the Journal of Alternative Investments, and his work has been featured in major media outlets including The Economist, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The New Yorker. By listening to the voices of entrepreneurs and investors alike, Dr. Cumming continues to shape a more ethical, inclusive, and efficient global financial ecosystem.

## Outstanding Listener Interview Listening in Leadership and Education



**David Callejo Pérez, Ph.D.**  
**Chancellor, Penn State Harrisburg, US.**

This is an interview with Dr. David Callejo Pérez, Chancellor of Penn State Harrisburg, who discusses the pivotal role of listening in his leadership, writing, and overall educational experience. He emphasises the importance of active listening in various contexts, from understanding cultural differences among students to navigating university bureaucracy and collaborating with colleagues during crises.



Interviewer:  
**Lynette Louw, Ph.D.**  
Director (Academic),  
Global Listening Centre.  
Deputy Dean: Commerce and  
Professor, Raymond Ackerman  
Chair, Department of  
Management, Rhodes University,  
South Africa.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you very much, Dr. Pérez, for making yourself available for this

interview. The Global Listening Centre greatly appreciates your contributions to leadership in education, particularly in the area of listening and its importance. Dr. Pérez, in your experience, has the practice of listening played a role in your leadership and writing in the education field?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** As you advance in your career, the importance of listening becomes clear. My first real lesson in this came during graduate school, when I worked with my advisor on a project funded by the Anti-Defamation League. We studied cultural differences among students at Jewish day schools in Miami, a city renowned for its diversity. These schools included immigrants from Argentina, South Africa, the post-Soviet Union, and other Latin American countries. Listening to their experiences provided profound insights. As a note-taker, I learned the value of documentation. Even now, I carry a notebook to ensure I listen actively and reflect on conversations, whether with a locksmith or a university president.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you for your diverse examples, which cover multiple perspectives in this particular case, and for how you listened. Can you describe a listening experience that significantly contributed to your success in terms of education, administration, or leadership?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** Over the course of three to four years with my doctoral adviser, I learned valuable lessons on equity and administration. He was a wise individual who valued people and processes deeply, emphasizing the importance of understanding organizational rules. His approach taught me to listen more and value others' insights. Recently, a campus parking discussion highlighted the benefit of involving others in decision-making. Asking for input and truly listening fosters an equitable environment and better outcomes.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you so much for that extremely comprehensive response. From your leadership experience, what do you consider to be the most important aspects of listening? I think you've already alluded to several important aspects. Would you like to add anything else?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** No, I believe this will be the shortest answer you'll receive from me. Active engagement in the conversation you're a part of is crucial. Often, when someone speaks to you and you're listening, you're attentive but silent, merely offering responses like "Is everything okay?" However, active listening involves more than just nodding along; it requires asking questions to gain a deeper understanding.

It's also crucial to remember both the words and context. I have a strong memory for these details. Paying attention to how someone describes their feelings is important, since individuals choose specific words for a reason. Words are powerful, and the context in which they are used adds another layer of meaning. Hence, how someone articulates an experience is significant.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you. Thank you so much for that. Another very rich contribution. How do you view the role or importance of listening in your collaboration as a leader with your colleagues at work?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** In times of crisis, active listening and collaboration become crucial. We often overlook important aspects until they're missing,

like missing flowers in spring. Tragedies, such as a student's death, evoke varied emotions and necessitate honest dialogue and reflection on our actions. Following a tragic campus event, we communicated with the community, acknowledging criticisms and reflecting on our decisions, including the timing of an employee celebration. Engaging in open conversations, whether oral or written, is vital for understanding. Reflecting on reconciliation processes worldwide, after government changes such as Spain, Perú, Chile, Argentina, or South Africa, highlights the importance of addressing and learning from past mistakes while moving forward and forgiving, without forgetting. This understanding helps guide our actions and responses to crises.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Your perspective on how different nations and cultures have varying perspectives is very interesting. So, thank you for that. It's very insightful. Moving on to a slightly different topic. What social communication skills do you believe are or should be integral to a modern international education curriculum?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** Digital fluency and digital communication are crucial in the modern world. With the rise of instant communication, traditional skills like cursive writing and non-verbal cues, while still important, are being lost. Meetings are now more efficient, with preferences for shorter, focused interactions. The integration of technology in communication, such as texting or using tools like Microsoft Teams, requires concise and thoughtful responses. Additionally, digital fluency should encompass multimodal communication, including verbal, written, and visual cues, as well as emojis. Nonverbal communication, such as hand gestures and facial expressions, remains important but is often overlooked in digital interactions.

The art of storytelling is also at risk. Quick, digital exchanges often miss the depth and flavor of traditional storytelling. This rapid communication style requires adaptation, with people consuming content on small screens, leading to changes in how information is shared. In an increasingly globalized world, the distinction between cultures is fading, impacting cultural identity and knowledge sharing. The ease of travel and technology blurs cultural boundaries, emphasizing the need for digital fluency, non-verbal communication awareness, and storytelling skills in diverse settings. These elements are essential for effective communication

across various professions and situations.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you. You have suggested strategies to support global societies. Would you like to comment further on improving listening and communication in the current geopolitical context?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** Humanity shares common basic needs and values sustainability for future generations. Higher education can be a space where diverse individuals come together, much like airports, but with more meaningful interactions. Historically, higher education has evolved, expanding access through various societal changes. Today, there's global investment in higher education, with a focus on enhancing the student experience and competing and collaborating internationally. The emergence of AI has prompted educators to rethink teaching methods, emphasizing engagement and ethical considerations. Higher education has the unique opportunity to broaden perspectives and prepare individuals for a complex world, fostering collaboration and innovation. Ethics, cultural understanding, and historical knowledge are crucial across disciplines to equip students for future challenges.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** On that happy note, thank you. You've really given me some food for thought here, I must admit, about the first-year class. Thank you for reminding us to walk into a first-year class and take a look around on the first day, because after that, student attendance tends to dwindle. Take the time on that first day to look at all those faces, and you wonder where they come from, who they are. How did they get here? What are they going to be in a number of years' time? I think we are coming to the end of our interview. Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share

about listening in general or global listening?

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** We all share cultural commonalities, such as foods made of dough filled with meat, although they vary in name and are influenced by migration. A wise person once noted the unity in learning to tie shoes as technology advances, revealing shared experiences across generations. Such experiences create a collective conscience, essential for understanding and sometimes challenging our connections. At social gatherings, conversations can lead to realisations that seemingly small matters, like a bite of food, connect us to broader human experiences and values, such as liberation and poetry. These shared aspects remind us that even in a digital age, finding common ground is crucial. Thank you.

**Professor Lynette Louw:** Thank you so much. Yes. I think this is the last question. You have already explained a role model, unless you would like to highlight somebody else in your life.

**Dr. David Callejo Pérez:** Steve, my doctoral supervisor, often said he was "too early or too late" for key cultural moments. Born in 1942, he missed the hippie movement and was too late for the Wall Street boom of the '80s. Despite this, he was proud of his life and his inbetweenness, which honed his listening skills and taught him to take notes, emphasizing that writing aids memory. He encouraged me to engage broadly with literature, beyond just our technical field, to gain a wider worldview. Once, while watching TV wrestling, he intriguingly linked it to the "core of humanity" and geopolitics, illustrating how popular culture reflects deeper societal shifts. These insights shaped my understanding, reminding me that seemingly small lessons can have a profound impact.

*Peace and war begin at home.  
We truly want peace in the world,  
let us begin loving one another in our own families.*

*Mother Teresa*

## The Rise of the AI Agents and Algorithmic Listening



**Alexander V. Laskin, Ph.D.**

Professor, Department of Advertising and Public Relations, Quinnipiac University, Connecticut, US.

Laskin's (2025) analysis highlights the diminishing necessity of human labor and intellectual exertion. He proposes that this directs human identity toward consumption as the ultimate form of self-actualization—the transition from *cogito ergo sum* to *I consume, therefore I am*. This is the foundational context for the ascent of the AI agent. As life's complexities—from managing personal finance and healthcare appointments to curating one's vast media diet and anticipating shopping needs—outpace human capacity for optimal management, autonomous AI entities will step in to orchestrate a substantial portion of our daily existence. These agents will function as intelligent digital intermediaries, tasked with maximizing the comfort, convenience, and consumption satisfaction of their human principals.

In the context of marketing communications, it shifts marketing from consumers listening to corporate communications to AI agents listening to corporate messages. Algorithmic listening, then, is the imperative methodology for strategic communicators to successfully navigate this new terrain. It is the process of designing, disseminating, and continuously optimizing marketing, advertising, and public relations messaging not for human receptivity—which is often sporadic, emotional, and contextually inconsistent—but for the consistent, data-driven discernment of an autonomous AI agent. These agents, having access to real-time, comprehensive data on their users' location, health, mood, and all historical consumption patterns, become the critical gatekeepers to the consumer's attention and wallet. The marketing message is no longer heard by the person, but by the algorithm that is managing the person's purchasing and content consumption decisions, a radical shift from human-to-human to algorithm-to-algorithm communication. The effectiveness of a communication campaign will be judged by its ability to persuade the agent of its alignment with the user's articulated or inferred self-identity and 'superfan' devotion.

The wholesale shift to algorithmic listening and agent-mediated consumption presents both extraordinary opportunities for hyper-efficiency and disturbing prospects for social stratification.

The primary positive outcome is the realization of true, hyper-personalized communication at an unprecedented scale. With AI's ability to create a potential “one million commercials personally customized for each of one million consumers” and to analyze vast data sets instantaneously, generic messaging will become a relic of the past. The AI agent, operating with a complete view of its user's “superfan” identity—be they a 'Swiftie' or a devotee of a specific fictional universe or consumer brand—allows the communication to be perfectly integrated into the consumption experience. This eliminates the intrusive, interruption-based model of traditional advertising; the marketing *becomes* the entertainment, or more accurately, the content is seamlessly integrated with the product itself. For instance, an agent will not simply allow a pop-up ad for a drink; it will integrate a virtual rendering of the user's favorite character drinking that exact product in their personalized stream of AR/VR content. For the strategic communicator, this allows for the nearly immediate attainment of their core goal: creating and maintaining relationships with “superfans” through a non-stop stream of relevant content. Moreover, the agent's constant assessment of its user's well-being via wearables provides an ethical dilemma that is often overridden by the promise of convenience and consumer satisfaction.

The most profound negative consequence of this reliance on AI agents is the exacerbation of existing socioeconomic divides, manifesting as the algorithmic wealth gap. The effectiveness of an AI agent is inextricably linked to its computational power, its access to proprietary, premium data streams, and the sophistication of its underlying models. The wealthy will be able to afford complex, costly premium agents—perhaps bespoke, continuously evolving entities—that execute their principals' consumption and life management with optimal, highly effective outcomes. These premium agents will be better listeners, discerning more subtle shifts in mood, more efficiently filtering for socially and environmentally compliant brands (ESG/DEI alignment), and securing the most advantageous purchasing and content curation decisions. Conversely, the majority of the population will be relegated to non-premium, mass-market agents or even 'free' agents that are subtly monetized by their corporate creators. These agents, while seemingly beneficial, will operate on less sophisticated models and with less complete or even biased data sets, resulting in sub-optimal outcomes for their users.

They may be slower to adapt, less able to negotiate the most favorable terms for consumption, and more susceptible to the overt or subtle steering of marketing campaigns due to limitations in their 'listening' capabilities. Thus, the stratification of wealth—who can afford the best AI to mediate their consumption—will directly translate into a new form of digital and economic inequality. The premium AI agent becomes a competitive advantage, securing a more perfectly curated, satisfying, and economically prudent life for the affluent, while the basic agent may perpetuate a cycle of less efficient consumption for the less privileged. The very ability to receive effective communication will be commodified.

As Laskin (2025) writes in his chapter, by 2050, the communications industry will have fully adapted to this environment, recognizing that the human emotional core is now best accessed via its algorithmic proxy. The job of marketing, advertising, and public relations is no longer to interrupt the consumer, but to become an indistinguishable, integrated part of their digitally mediated life, steering their consumption to align with their self-defined identity.

The new mandate for the strategic communicator will involve an almost theological focus on Corporate Social Advocacy (CSA), as the AI agents of superfans will be rigorously programmed to listen for the brand's signals indicating alignment with their user's evolving political, ethical, and philosophical beliefs. This is because consumption is no longer merely a want, but a core component of the user's self-identity, a public declaration of who they are and what they stand for. An agent's listening criteria will prioritize a brand's stance on global and micro-local issues above the functional quality of the product itself. Therefore, the creation and maintenance of a coherent, continuously communicated, and ethical CSA position becomes paramount to the success of algorithmic listening, determining whether a brand gains access to the privileged domain of the consumer's agent or is permanently filtered out. The future of communication hinges not on speaking to the soul, but on crafting a message perfectly legible to the intelligent machine that guards it.

Yet, the fundamental ethical concern resides in the commodification of listening. In the agentic era, consumer agency—the capacity to make fully informed, self-directed choices that align with one's genuine interests—is no longer an inherent right

but a feature contingent upon a financial investment in a superior AI agent. The premium agent, accessible to the wealthy, operates as a sophisticated, ever-learning fiduciary, capable of:

- **Perfect Filtering:** It can meticulously scrutinize corporate social advocacy (CSA) communications to ensure a perfect alignment with its user's complex ethical and political stances on ESG and DEI issues, effectively curating a consumption portfolio that fully validates the user's self-identity as a "superfan."
- **Optimal Negotiation and Timing:** Utilizing vast computational resources and proprietary data streams, it secures the most economically advantageous purchases and ensures communication delivery at the exact moment of peak susceptibility or need, maximizing convenience and minimizing wasteful consumption relative to the user's goals.

In stark contrast, the standard or free agent, used by the less affluent, is likely to be a constrained and compromised listener. These agents may be:

- **Data-Poor:** Operating with restricted data access or reliance on less-sophisticated, potentially biased models, they fail to achieve the level of true hyper-personalization.
- **Subtly Directable:** The free nature of the agent may mask a contractual obligation for it to be more receptive to the marketing steering of its corporate creators, subtly guiding the user toward less efficient or more readily available products, even if they do not perfectly align with the user's articulated identity.

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- For more information, read: Laskin, A.V. & Freberg, K. (Eds.), *Public Relations and Strategic Communication in 2050: Trends Shaping the Future of the Profession*. Routledge.

*The best weapon is  
to sit down and talk.*

*Nelson Mandela*

## The Space Between Words: On the Quiet Power of Listening



### Federica Santini, Ph.D.

Director (Academic Division),  
Global Listening Centre.  
Professor and Chair of the Department of  
World Languages and Cultures (WLC),  
Kennesaw State University, US.

As an administrative faculty member at a large public university in the United States, each year I review hundreds of student evaluations that contribute to the assessment of faculty in the department I oversee. These evaluations are simple documents, written hurriedly by undergraduate students as they wrap up each semester: some are generous with praise, often sweet or funny; others express frustration about unmet expectations or moments of misalignment in the classroom. Over time, however, a consistent pattern has emerged, especially for our strongest instructors within our large group of 70+, primarily international world languages and cultures faculty members. Again and again, students emphasize not just disciplinary expertise, knowledge of the materials, or organizational skills, but something far more fundamental: the professor's ability to truly listen. Students describe the relief and motivation that come from being heard, from feeling seen as individuals rather than as names on a roster. Listening, it turns out, is not an accessory, it is central to the learning experience. What strikes me most is that students rarely use technical language to describe this. They do not speak of pedagogical strategies or instructional design, and very rarely do they address lecturing style. Rather, they identify meaningful moments: a professor who paused, who followed up, who remembered something the student had shared weeks earlier. These gestures, small on the surface, signal care and communicate that the student's presence in the group matters.

This observation extends well beyond academic settings. In everyday life, how many conversations do we participate in where listening is only used as a tool for expressing our own viewpoint? How often are we merely waiting for our turn to speak, mentally rehearsing our response while the other person is still talking? In such moments, words are exchanged, but connection is thin, brittle. What if, instead, we shifted our attention to what is actually being said, beneath the surface, beneath our assumptions of the speaker and implicit biases? There is a truer form of communication available to us, a deeper way of being together, and it begins with listening.

In her book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* (Crown Publishers, 2012), Susan Cain challenges the cultural assumption that the most vocal individuals are also the most insightful. One of her most cited observations speaks directly to the value of listening: "There's zero correlation between being the best talker and having the best ideas." Cain reframes silence not as absence, but as space, a significant space where thought develops and understanding grows. While her focus is on temperament and personality, the implications for communication are profound. Insight and empathy often emerge not from constant assertion, but from careful attention to the life that surrounds us: raindrops on a quiet morning, the patter of children's feet, the pauses and tones of our interlocutor's discourse. Everything that goes beyond words and makes up a world that is fuller of meaning, if only we can stop long enough to take it in.

There is a space between words where anything can happen. Giuseppe Ungaretti, one of the central figures of twentieth-century Italian poetry, built an entire expressive language around brevity, silence, and the significance of the white space on the written page. Reflecting on the essence of poetry in his 1916 poem "Commiato" (*Farewell*), dedicated to his friend Ettore Serra and later collected in *L'allegria*, he wrote: "Quando trovo in questo mio silenzio una parola, scavata è nella mia vita come un abisso" (*When I find a word in this silence of mine, it is carved into my life like an abyss*). Ungaretti's words remind us that meaning does not reside only in what is spoken, but in the silence that precedes and surrounds it. In poetry, the pause between lines is where resonance gathers, and that space challenges the reader to fully understand and, often-times, to participate in the creation of meaning—a known technique of experimental and "research" poets, who dare the reader to build significance out of their willed void. Listening works in much the same way. The space between words, when held with attention, becomes charged with possibility. It allows emotion, memory, and understanding to surface. Without that space, language flattens.

Silence creates possibility, interconnection, and understanding, but only through active listening can we learn how to perceive the value of that space and give it meaning. In this vein, Simone Weil wrote that "attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity" (this famous quote appears in a letter written by Weil to French poet Joë Bousquet dated April

13, 1942, which was later collected in the 1976 volume, *Simone Weil: A Life*). Listening, then, becomes an ethical act, a way of offering ourselves to another without interruption, to make ourselves truly available. This is where listening reveals its deepest power. Often, listening is treated as a passive act, something that happens automatically when we are not speaking. In reality, active, meaningful listening requires effort and intention. It asks us to slow down, to remain present, and to resist the urge to redirect the conversation toward ourselves.

Deep listening goes beyond hearing words and includes attending to tone, emotion, and what may be left unsaid. It requires curiosity rather than judgment, openness rather than immediacy. Yet, deep listening has become increasingly difficult in the interconnected world we inhabit. Technology provides endless opportunities to communicate, collaborate, and remain informed. Messages arrive constantly, notifications fragment our attention, tasks overlap without pause. While this connectivity offers undeniable benefits, it also encourages speed. Conversations are valued based on their perceived efficiency as we move quickly from one obligation to the next, often without processing what we have heard, or whether we truly listened at all. Ironically, the tools designed to connect us can create distance: when we listen while glancing at a screen, when we multitask during a conversation, we communicate, often unintentionally, that the moment does not deserve our full presence. Over time, this erodes trust. True listening requires something increasingly rare: quiet and slowness.

As I write this, I find myself reflecting on slowness and the deeper connections it makes possible. As a

Tuscan woman, I grew up in a cultural rhythm that valued unhurried conversation. Meals stretched across hours, stories were told without interruption, retold for generations, with people from long ago coming to life again and again, long after their departure. Silence was never something dangerous, something to be filled with our own words. In those moments, around a table or during a walk at sundown, orange light slanting on tiled roofs, listening became a true shared experience. That ancient rhythm stands in contrast to the pace many of us now experience. And yet, it offers us a reminder that when we slow down, conversations deepen, and our understanding of others increases. When we allow pauses and hold judgement, people may share what matters most. Listening then becomes an invitation rather than a transaction, and when we resist transactional interactions, we make room for a presence that does not seek efficiency, but rather understanding.

As the year turns, this lesson feels especially relevant. Periods of transition often bring noise: deadlines, expectations, uncertainty. The instinct is to move faster, to do more. But human connection does not come from fastness, it comes from pacing ourselves, from aligning our attention with what is deep rather than merely urgent, from reading others' pauses and grasping what remains untold. And when we do slow down and listen, deeply and without an agenda, we begin to see others more fully, encountering perspectives that were previously invisible to us. We may not agree with everything we hear, but understanding does not require agreement. It requires openness. There is no winning in conversation, only connecting. Listening, at its best, allows us to move closer, closer to our students, our colleagues, and one another.



## Congratulations

### Professor Lynette Louw, Ph.D.

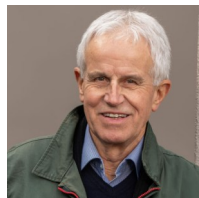
Deputy Dean: Commerce and Professor, Raymond Ackerman Chair, Department of Management, Rhodes University, South Africa.

Congratulations on New Appointment as a Registrar!

Dr. Lynette Louw has been selected for appointment as the Interim Registrar of Rhodes University. Founded in 1904, Rhodes University is renowned for its academic excellence. Having held numerous leadership roles within the GLC, Professor Louw brings a wealth of experience to this position. Congratulations and best wishes for this new chapter.

## Reducing Suicide Risk through active Listening

### How I learned to Listen to Patients



**Konrad Michel, MD**

Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry,  
University of Bern, Switzerland.

In my training as an M.D., I learnt that doctors ask questions about signs and symptoms, make a diagnosis and a prognostic assessment. When faced with patients referred after a suicide attempt, I realized that this approach did not help me to understand the personal meaning of their life-threatening actions. A psychologist colleague acted as an eye-opener by introducing me to the theory of goal-directed actions [1]: “Konrad, suicide is not an illness but an action! And we all explain and understand other people’s actions with stories”. I didn’t know at that time that this sentence would be the beginning of my metamorphosis, taking me away from my traditional role of the all-knowing doctor to a psychiatrist who was first of all a good listener. In first interviews with patients I learnt to stop myself from asking questions, and to trust the patients’ capacities to give me a coherent story of how they came to the point that they wanted to end their lives. I learnt that in order to understand a person’s suicidal development, only the patients could be the experts of their stories, while I was in the not-knowing position—a new experience for me! I learnt how incredibly important active listening – what in our clinical work we call narrative interviewing – is in order to create a therapeutic alliance right from the beginning in a patient-therapist relationship. It means that with the listening approach, patients become active participants in therapy, which is rewarding for the patients as well as for the therapists.

To my surprise most patients, when telling me their stories, spontaneously put their suicidal crisis into a biographical context. For example: “*You know, I think it goes back to my childhood, when my parents separated, and I thought it was because of me*”. That is, they were not merely talking about the actual emotional crisis, but they took me back to the early years of their childhood, telling me their stories of painful experiences, rejection, problems with self-esteem, self-blame, guilt, and many other unmet needs.

Once I had learned the basics of the listening approach, I soon discovered the enormous value of

this kind of interviewing – in consultation with patients who came to see me because of health issues other than suicidality. Every first patient contact became a fascinating experience. Narratives clearly are the means for the therapist and the patient to find a joint understanding and allow change.

Here are the key issues for the listening approach to first patient contacts:

- Invite the patient to tell the history related to the health problem that got them to seek medical consultation, with a standard sentence such as: “*I would like you to tell me the story behind the problem that got you to come to see me, ... to contact the crisis center, ...to consider suicide as a solution, etc.*”
- Do not interrupt with unnecessary questions, trust the patient’s narrative competence.
- Never ask “why.” The reason is that this would presume that there is a simple cause to a problem of mental health, which would exclude the personal story related to it.
- If necessary, help the patient to continue the narrative by using open ended questions, that is, questions that can’t be answered with yes or no. For instance: “*Can you tell me more?*”, “*I am trying to understand*” - *can you help me understand?*”

Psychotherapy research in the 80’s and 90’s [2-4] concluded that the quality of the therapeutic relationship is a significant factor for therapy outcome, and, in particular, that the initial phase of therapy predicts therapy outcome. A health professional who is a nonjudgmental and attentive listener creates trust and becomes an ally of the patient, supporting the patient in coping with adverse experiences and suffering. This is why it is important to start a new patient contact with a narrative interview – not only with suicidal patients. I have adopted the listening approach to all my patients.

From our work with suicidal patients, we developed the Attempted Suicide Short Intervention Program (ASSIP), a brief, three-session therapy, in which the first session is completely dedicated to the narrative interview [5]. It is not surprising that ASSIP in an RCT has been shown to reduce the risk of suicide attempts by an amazing 80% over a two-year

follow-up [6]. For me it is quite clear that the narrative approach and the quality of the therapeutic relationship make ASSIP an outstanding therapy program [7].

The training experiences, however, have revealed that even for experienced therapists it is not easy to become good listeners. Therapists with a medical training usually are the ones that find it most challenging to believe in the patients' narrative competence, to listen without starting to ask questions. My principle in training therapists is: "If you ask questions you only get answers". This insight goes back to my own training years. I learnt to use the Present State Examination, an extensive research questionnaire with 140 questions, developed to provide in-depth information on a patient's signs and symptoms. In the group training, one of my colleagues interviewed a seventy-one-year-old female patient. He had gone through all 140 questions with her, without finding much pathology. The last question was: "Has there been something else recently that we have missed?" The patient answered: "Yes. I think you should know that I am pregnant and that I shall give birth to Jesus Christ."

To end on a positive note, I am pleased to see that in the recent years an increasing number of clinical studies have reported an association between a narrative interviewing style and a reduction of suicidal behavior [8, 9].

If you are interested to learn more about how I learnt to listen to suicidal patients and what it means for treatment, read my book: Konrad Michel "The Suicidal Person – a new Look at a Human Phenomenon", Columbia University Press 2023

<https://cup.columbia.edu/book/thBlog/3e-suicidal-person/9780231205306>.

Konrad Michel, M.D., is professor emeritus of psychiatry at the University of Bern, Switzerland. Together with Ladislav Valach, Ph.D., Konrad Michel developed a model of understanding suicidal behavior based on the theory of goal-directed action and narrative interviewing. Konrad Michel is training, supervising, and supporting teams in Europe and overseas. <https://konradmichel.com/>

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## Announcement soon!



The Top 25  
Outstanding Women Listeners  
In The World 2026  
Global Listening Centre

## Listening Backward: How Archaeoacoustic Meditation Turns Ancient Sound into New Experiential Art



**Linda Eneix**  
President and CEO, OTS Foundation  
for Neolithic Studies.

In an age of infinite playlists and algorithmic calm, the modern soundscape is overflowing with noise, and it does not allow us any sense of peace. "Meditation music" has become a commodity—synthetic, looped, and stripped of context. It may relax the nervous system, but it rarely nourishes the imagination. The sound of a flute sampled a thousand times is not the same as the breath that first played it, nor the environment in which it might resonate with magical consciousness.

Long before apps and speakers, sound itself was sacred. For our ancestors, it was a way of knowing the world. Caves, stone chambers, and temple passages were not merely shelters; they were instruments. The hum of a human voice inside stone was a form of communication with the unseen. These were spaces designed for resonance—for communion, not consumption and certainly not for commercialization.

My research has been devoted to *archaeoacoustics*: the archaeology of sound. And over the past several years, I've been developing what I call "archaeoacoustic meditation"—a fusion of the human experience of special sound in ancient ritual and ceremonial spaces, guided reflection, and experiential art. It invites participants to listen not merely *to* sound, but *through* it: into the memory it carries. Each meditation is built from authentic field recordings made within prehistoric temples and chambers that are the oldest man-made sites on earth—places like Göbekli Tepe (in ancient Upper Mesopotamia, today part of Turkey), Karahan Tepe (also in Turkey), the Hypogeum of Hal Saflieni (in Malta), and Newgrange (in Ireland)—where stone and air still hold the acoustic fingerprints of rituals performed thousands of years ago.

These pieces that I have developed are not intended as relaxation tracks. Rather, they are dialogues between ancient space and the living listener. A quick visual suggestion, the voice, the script, and the soundscape become a bridge to the Neolithic consciousness that once moved in rhythm with wind, water, and heartbeat. Within those resonant frequencies, the body feels what the intellect cannot: that we are continuous with all who came before us. The ear becomes a portal to ancestry. (For many of us of

European extraction, this ancestry is literal and genetic.)

In the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, for instance, a single human tone can bloom into overtones that seem to swirl around the listener's body. This is not digital trickery—it is architecture, vibration, and presence. It is physics. Humming at 110 hertz can set the entire chamber vibrating, enveloping anyone inside in a field of resonance. Scientists and acoustic engineers have measured it, but to experience it is something else entirely. That vibration bypasses the intellect and moves straight to the nervous system—the same way an unborn child feels its mother's heartbeat through amniotic fluid. It is not metaphor; it is memory.

To record within such spaces is to collaborate with the past itself. When those sounds are paired with a spoken narrative rooted in archaeological fact, history becomes sensory. Listeners don't merely imagine the ancient world—they can inhabit its acoustic dimension.

In the modern world, we are living through an era of profound disconnection—from nature, from ritual, and from the simple act of listening. Archaeoacoustic meditation offers a way back, not through nostalgia, but through embodied experience. It reminds us that technology can serve reverence as easily as distraction, if guided by intention and respect for origins.

This approach also bridges disciplines that have too often been kept apart: art, archaeology, anthropology, and contemplative practice. And when a guided meditation unfolds over the authentic pulse of a temple chamber, participants are not escaping into fantasy; they are returning to continuity—with the Earth, with the body, with the deep lineage of sound itself.

Today, we are surrounded by audio that has generally been engineered to pacify us. But *true listening*—the kind our ancestors practiced—is not about escape, nor is it about being pacified. Rather, it is about presence; it is about magically resonating with neolithic origin. The sound of a human voice in a sacred space reminds us that history is not silent; it vibrates. Every echo carries a story that is still unfolding in us.

Archaeoacoustic meditation is an act of remembering how to listen again—with the same openness we had before birth, when hearing first taught us what belonging felt like.

## Listening Roles and Their Consequences in Communication



### Michael Purdy, Ph.D.

Listening Legend,  
Distinguished Listening Scholar,  
Past Vice Chair, Global Listening Centre.  
Professor Emeritus, Governors State  
University, US.

There is one aspect of listening that needs to be explored. This aspect of listening recognizes that there is nuance to the listening roles we enact and we must be aware of how we listen as we perform these roles. One role that will not be developed fully here, but needs to be explored is the difference in the conscious processing of listeners. For example, take aphantasia, an awareness where the listener has no visual imagination. Such a listener must be processing what they hear in a unique fashion. Listening roles and our conscious awareness depend a great deal on imagination; so what happens when at least one aspect of that listening is without imagination? The point here is to be open to the richly diverse roles we might enact, roles we don't always choose, but which are important as we interact and listen.

Another role arises from the theory of psychological types<sup>1</sup> developed by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl G. Jung (1875-1961) who wrote that what appears to be random behavior is actually the result of differences in the way people prefer to use their mental capacities. He observed that people generally engage in one of two mental functions:

- taking in information, which he called perceiving, or
- organizing information and coming to conclusions, which he called judging.

Within each of these, Jung saw people preferring to perform that function in one of two ways. These are called *preferences*. He also noted that, although everyone takes in information and makes decisions, some people prefer to do more taking in information (perceiving and listening) and others prefer to do more decision making (judging, based on the listening process). Finally, Jung observed, "Each person seems to be energized more by either the external world (extraversion) or the internal world (introversion)." What Jung called a person's psychological type (playing a specific role) consists of his or her preference in each category.

There is one article that describes roles in terms of the listening attitudes, or tendencies of each of the 16 Myers-Briggs personality types<sup>2</sup>--that is, how good each type is at listening. The 16 different styles, or roles, are very general and don't give any details of listening per se, but rather give a brief description of how they perceive the process of listening rather than judging. Jung's work seems a better place to work from as it is simpler and more useful, and not judgmental of the different personalities. There seems to be some literature, that would indicate that there are different ways of processing/sensing/perceptual types/roles, and that at least in a broad way there may be different modes of listening consciousness. If that is generally true then we might need to give some general guidelines for recognizing the different modes of listening as different roles and learning how to adapt in different communication situations.

These are generally the communication roles and the contexts in which the conscious listener works artfully. We know that response is partly about the perception of the questions we ask in our listening role, but the questioning role is so very critical for the aware communicator that it must be considered critically. The structure of response in communication is integrally tied to listening effectively. Without thorough listening how can we know how to respond<sup>3</sup>?

But all roles are activist listening roles; meaning to work with and for the speaker (and others in the conversation), and intervening to help the other as best one can. When one actively "stands back" and listens, taking the time required to let things "sink in" we are open to realize the potential of the situation. And it is important to let the whole event sink in; listening is an art and a challenge, and sometimes it is an obligation. If we are artful, our obligations to listen become a pleasant experience, even a role and experience we relish and look forward to. We listen to what is happening in the social or personal field and with that original awareness we realize the importance of treating every listening situation as a new quest, a fresh experience to relish and appreciate. Our presence tells us to what is needed in the situation.

A contemporary example of a listening role and context of relevance is that of how companies handled getting employees who were working at home back

to work: giving commands and attempting control did not work, according to Gleb Tsipursky, a behavioral scientist and consultant: “The key is not to have a command and control structure—that’s what so many bosses get wrong.” His research indicated most employees could be influenced to go back to work, but bosses needed to listen to what would be important to them if they were to return to the office instead of working from home.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper listening roles are not fully elaborated, the object is more to focus on how each role requires different practices, especially with regards the questions used or questing response, and acknowledging a certain responsibility of response. Without listening we cannot know how to respond; hence, we cannot be responsible. (There are other ways of describing the relation between listener and speaker(s). One is the Mandel Listening Practice<sup>5</sup>—that organizes the conversational relationship in terms of a role that focuses on self, others, information, or the overall picture of ideas, concepts and possibilities. That is good but rather limited with regards the richness and depth of the communication process.

Following are six roles as typical of the many situations we inhabit as listeners.

- 1) How about parenting as a critical role in the child’s developmental process.
- 2) Or, the “Command and Control” position including the roles of leader, manager, commander

Then there are the broad roles of problem solver including consultants,

Related is the salesperson or roles such as advertising/marketing, etc. The outcome sought here is one that benefits both the seller/marketer and the client. The ethic is one of finding the way to a common benefit that is transactional while also considerate of all parties, and that honors the people involved.

- 3) Teaching/Learning—with the goal of learning to become more critical thinkers, and attaining information

Including teachers, trainers, students, tutors, mentors, etc. The goal or outcome is to learn how to learn and hopefully act in different situations. The teacher/trainer should be open and listening and learning along with the student/trainee. The ethic is one of helping others to learn and grow while also respecting and listening to them and not judging.

- 4) Supportive/therapeutic, including counselors, advisers, therapists,
- 5) Creative/midwifery, including those who would help critical/creative thinking, problem solving, Socratic thought, drawing out, the poetic. Here the goal/outcome would seem to be the physical and mental health of the patient, but as Wilberg argues, the relationship of supporter/supportee is one of growing together. To listen is ultimately to be fully open to any situation and to be receptive and changeable.
- 6) And maybe there is a role that is not specific, the role of a listener without a specific objective?

For role five, midwifery, there is an overview and processes that operates in any situation, as well as an ethical framework and practice that makes sense. So overall, there are broad, general roles we assume as we listen. Just to be aware of these roles can be very helpful in understanding how we listen and respond in any communication situation. Being aware of these roles and their implications is an integral process of being a great listener.

#### References:

- <sup>1</sup>Jung, C.G. (1971). ‘General Description of the Types’, in Psychological Types, Collected Works vol. 6, Ch. X, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- <sup>2</sup>Moodie, K. (Jul 13, 2017). How Good Each Personality Type is at Listening. <https://personalitygrowth.com/how-good-each-personality-type-is-at-listening/>
- <sup>3</sup>For years in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century some argued that response was not part of the definition of listening.
- <sup>4</sup>Goldberg, E. (April 16 2023). “Meet the Office Whisperers” *NY Times Magazine*, p. 27-31.
- <sup>5</sup><https://www.mandel.com/listening-skills-training-workshops>

*"The first casualty when war comes is truth",  
suggesting that honest listening becomes impossible once conflict begins.*

**Hiram Johnson**

## Writers and Corn Are All Ears



**Steven G. Kellman, Ph.D.**  
Director (Academia), Global Listening Centre.  
Professor, University of Texas, San Antonio,  
US.

**E**rnest Hemingway's celebrated short story "Hills Like White Elephants" consists almost entirely of dialogue. A man and a woman waiting for a train in Spain reveal truths about themselves and their relationship through a bare minimum of verbiage. Although the word *abortion* appears not once in the story, an attentive reader surmises that the man is trying to convince the woman to undergo the procedure:

*"I'll go with you and I'll stay with you all the time. They just let the air in and then it's all perfectly natural."*

*"Then what will we do afterward?"*

*"We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."*

*"What makes you think so?"*

*"That's the only thing that bothers us. It's the only thing that's made us unhappy."*

It is unlikely that the couple will be fine afterward, nor is it likely that that pregnancy was the only bar to their happiness before. Published in 1927, "Hills Like White Elephants" is almost 100 years old, but the dialogue remains as pointed as a newly sharpened scalpel. It is not exactly the speech that—flecked with "um" and "hmm" – a tape recorder would have picked up if positioned in that train station somewhere between Barcelona and Madrid. But it is ordinary conversation pared and polished to its crystalline essence. The only way Hemingway could have produced this gem was to have mined it from the mass of human babble. He knew how to listen.

In 1934, when his fellow writer F. Scott Fitzgerald was suffering an artistic slump, Hemingway offered him this advice: "When people talk listen completely. Don't be thinking what you're going to say. Most people never listen. Nor do they observe. You should be able to go into a room and when you come out know everything that you saw there and not only that. If that room gave you any feeling you should know exactly what it was that gave you that feeling. Try that for practice. When you're in town stand outside the theatre and see how the people differ in the way they get out of taxis or motor cars. There are a thousand ways to practice. And always

think truly. And writing is only what you truly think."

By exhorting Fitzgerald to listen, Hemingway is offering a recipe for attentiveness. He observes that, in a conversation, many of us are too intent on what we are going to say next to heed what our interlocutor is really saying. Journalists know that the way to bungle an interview is to prepare a set of questions that will be posed no matter what replies they elicit. Attentive listening is living generously and ethically. You cannot observe the Golden Rule without being attuned to the words and deeds of others. Good writers are responsive to the universe.

In an 1884 essay, 50 years before Hemingway sent his letter to Fitzgerald, Henry James offered this advice to aspiring writers: "Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!" Artistic achievement demands heightened awareness; obliviousness is an aesthetic handicap as well as a moral flaw. Nevertheless, regardless of intention, something is in-evitably always lost, even by a mind as capacious as James's. Although we might listen for everything, we only hear something, a fraction of the vast audible clutter. The human ear cannot detect infrasound (less than 20 Hz), ultrasound (more than 20 kHz), or any other sound that is too faint, too loud, or masked by other sounds. All listening, even by auditors as perceptive as Hemingway and James, is selective listening. We cannot hear all.

If poets are, according to Percy Bysshe Shelley, "the unacknowledged legislators of the world," they are obliged to listen to their constituents. However, after canvassing as wide a range of the citizenry as possible, it is up to them to then narrow the range of options and make decisions. Listen generously, but also provide a focus. Public hearings are cacophonous assemblies without an agenda.

The economy of attention requires choices. On the vast playlist of human activity, what will we choose to listen to? Early in Paul Simon's song "The Boxer," the narrator declares:

*"I have squandered my resistance for a pocketful of mumbles*

*Such are promises*

*All lies and jest*

Continued next page

*Still a man hears what he wants to hear  
And disregards the rest, hmm."*

By limiting his audition to what he prefers, The Boxer remains a man of narrow compass. The rest that he disregards might have enriched his meagre existence. By contrast, John Cage revolutionized music by opening up the sonic palette to encompass what is usually dismissed as noise. However, in performance, Cage could not help but be selective. His most famous composition, *4'33"*, does not accommodate what is heard in the 34<sup>th</sup> second of the fourth

minute. When throwing in the kitchen sink, there is not always room for dirty dishes.

If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, asks the philosopher, does it make a sound? We must strive to be alive to the sound of tumbling trees. "The woods," wrote Robert Frost, "are lovely, dark, and deep." But, failing to listen to both the forest and the trees, the macrocosm and the microcosm, we lose everything.



## Award Committee Team 2024-2025



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Head of Operations,  
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## Award Recipients 2024 - 2025

### Leadership in Listening Award



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Executive Chair, Global Listening Centre.  
Professor of Communication, Missouri Western State University.  
Past President, National Communication Association, US.



**Lynette Louw, Ph.D.**

Past Chair (Academic Division), Global Listening Centre.  
Deputy Dean: Commerce and Professor,  
Raymond Ackerman Chair Department of  
Management, Rhodes University, South Africa.

### Outstanding Article Award



**Alexander V. Laskin, Ph.D.**

Professor, Department of Advertising and Public Relations,  
Quinnipiac University, Connecticut, US.



**Raphael Cohen-Almagor, D.Phil.**

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University of Hull, UK. President of The Association for Israel  
Studies (AIS). Visiting Professor, Johns Hopkins University, US.

### Outstanding Research Award



**Lance Strate, Ph.D.**

President (Academia), Global Listening Centre.  
Professor, Communication and Media Studies,  
Fordham University, New York City, US.

*There is always hope when  
people are forced  
to listen to both sides.*

*John Stuart Mill*

## Honoring Our Member



### Jicheng Sun, Ph.D.

Director (Writing), Global Listening Centre.  
Associate Professor of English, Department of Translation Studies, Shandong University of Technology, China.

Dr. Jicheng Sun is a distinguished scholar and Associate Professor of English in the Department of Translation Studies at Shandong University of Technology. He also serves as an MTI supervisor in the English Department at Qingdao University, Shandong, China.

He studied English writing and translation at Shandong Normal University (1988-1992), Shandong University (1995-1999), and Peking University (2001-2010). His publications include translations such as *The Verse of Shao Xunmei* (with Hal Swindall, Homa & Sekey, 2016) and

*Engines of Fortune* (1plusbooks, 2025). He has also translated the contemporary Chinese writers Xie Hong (again with Hal Swindall), Ye Xin, Zhu Lin and Wang Bin. He is now translating some great listening papers from the GLC series.

As a committed leader at the Global Listening Centre, Dr. Sun actively champions its mission to address societal challenges through the art of effective listening. He is a steadfast contributor to the GLC's international initiatives, including global campaigns, festivals, and major events like the Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World. Furthermore, he maintains a deep professional and personal respect for the humanitarian work of his colleague and friend, Sardool Singh, Director of the GLC. Beyond his advocacy, Associate Professor Sun serves on the editorial team for the organization's flagship publication, *The Global Listener*. The GLC is honored to have Associate Professor Jicheng Sun as a member and is deeply grateful for his invaluable contributions.

## New Chair Awards Committee 2026

**George Perry, Ph.D.**, FRSB, Cbiol, Csci, CsciTech, FSX, FLS, FRSC, CChem, FABAP, FSB, FRCPATH, FRMS, FWAS, FAAAS, FTAS, FRSA, FMSA

Director (Listening in Science), Global Listening Centre.  
Professor, Semmes Foundation Distinguished University Chair in Neurobiology and former Dean of Sciences at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA; TX, US).

It is an honour to formally nominate Professor George Perry for the position of Awards Committee Chair 2026. Dr. Perry, we are privileged to have a leader of your exceptional integrity and capability; your visionary leadership is exactly what is required to guide our internationally recognized and prestigious awards program.



## Members News

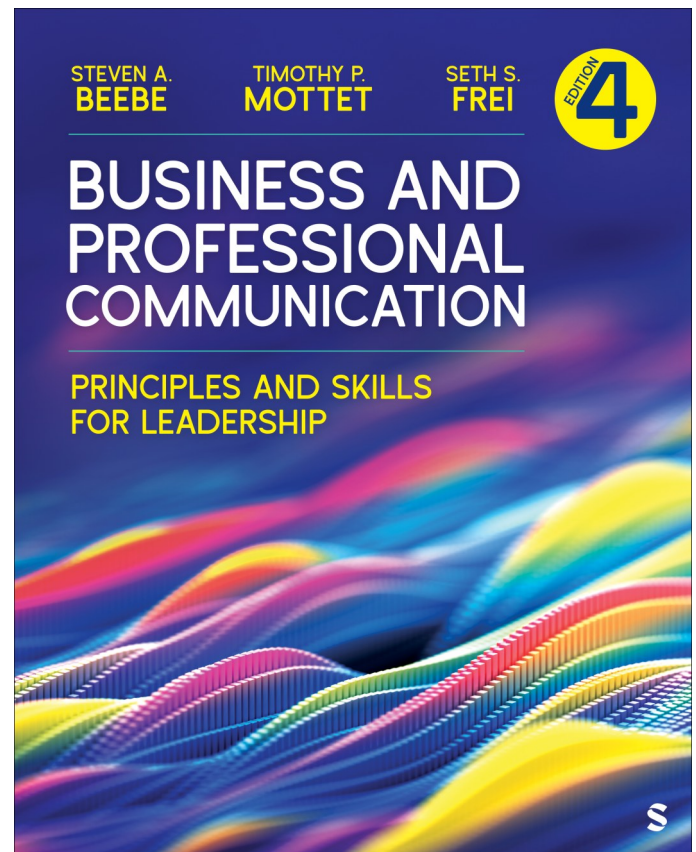
### New Book Featuring Listening:

*Business and Professional Communication: Principles and Skills for Leadership* by Steven A. Beebe, Timothy P. Mottet, and Seth S. Frei



Listening and listening research plays a featured role in the new book, *Business and Professional Communication: Principles and Skills for Leadership*, fourth edition, by Steven A. Beebe, Timothy P. Mottet and Seth S. Frei. It's not surprising that listening is a featured skill given that the senior author, Steven A. Beebe, (left

in photo) is the recipient of the Global Listening Centre's 2022 highest prestigious Listening Legends Award. Steven A. Beebe, Ph.D., is a distinguished Professor Emeritus of communication studies at Texas State University. A globally recognized leader in communication education, he has authored/co-authored 15 books (with editions totally more than 80 books), widely used for public speaking and interpersonal communication. Dr. Beebe is a listening educator who has taught listening and given keynote addresses about the importance of listening throughout the world for the past 50 years. The book features five fundamental communication principles as the key to skilled leadership and professional success. Listening and thoughtfully responding to others is highlighted as one of the five principles introduced in Chapter 1, the sole focus of Chapter 4, "Listening and Responding," as well as integrated throughout the book. With more than 100 citations to classic and contemporary listening research, the book chronicles the centrality of listening as essential to becoming a leader with distinction. Published by Sage, it is available for courses in Business and Professional Communication at <https://collegepublishing.sagepub.com/products/business-and-professional-communication-1-291948> as well as available from Amazon and other booksellers.



### Listening is a Pillar of the Judiciary

Listening is a cornerstone of the judiciary. It safeguards due process, clarifies complex disputes, and strengthens the legitimacy of the legal system. Through effective listening, judges ensure that every party is heard with dignity, enabling them to deliver balanced, evidence-based decisions that inspire public confidence.

A truly courageous judge is one who listens deeply and attentively. This lesson was reinforced for Sardool Singh when he met the distinguished jurist Krishna S. Dixit, currently serving on the Karnataka High Court and formerly a judge of the Orissa High Court, as well as a past Assistant Solicitor General of India. Sardool met Justice Dixit in his chamber at the Karnataka High Court in 2014, where the judge warmly received him and commended his important work.

During their conversation, Justice Dixit emphasized that the world must cultivate the ability to listen more—an essential step toward achieving peace, understanding, and stability in society. Reflecting on the meeting, Sardool remarked: "It is a true honor to meet Honorable Mr. Justice Krishna S. Dixit, an exceptional listener and jurist whose profound wisdom and impeccable integrity set a gold standard for the Indian judiciary."





*Thanks Amy!*

**Amy Damron-Kyle, Ph.D.**  
**Director (Listening in Music and Arts Division), Global Listening Centre.**  
**Musician, Musicologist,**  
**Université Catholique de l'Ouest, France.**

*Thank you for listening (Global Listening Centre)*  
[click here](#)

Song:

Come on in, our doors are open wide  
 It's time to heal the pain, from the silence where we  
 hide  
 Each heart is welcome and love is near  
 We're building bridges and connections without  
 fear

Chorus  
 Thank you for listening  
 For staying true  
 Thank you for listening

Cause the change it starts with you  
 We watch the spaces, in between the sounds  
 Keep our hearts open, Everyone wants to be found  
 And in the quiet, We hold on to what is true  
 We build a future, and it all begins with you

Bridge  
 There is wealth untold in listening  
 Such great hope that lies unseen  
 Listening to those who call on us  
 That is when we're truly free

*Believed that war would cease when things like music and courtesy—  
 forms of cultural listening and harmony—were better understood.*

*Confucius*

## Championing Every Voice: A Tribute to Our Chairperson



**Carin-Isabel Knoop**, Chairperson, Global Listening Board, Global Listening Centre.  
Executive Director, Case Research & Writing Group, Harvard Business School.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our Chairperson, Carin-Isabel Knoop, for her vital contributions and unwavering support of the GLC mission. Her leadership in championing diverse perspectives and promoting the power of listening has been invaluable. We are deeply appreciative of her continued dedication to elevating voices across our global community.

### Listening/Receptivity as an Active Choice

**Marco Zigon**, Member of the Listening in Music and Arts Division at the Global Listening Centre, is a Dubai-based sound therapist who emphasizes the holistic potential of sound therapy. He frames listening as an intentional act of slowing down. This deliberate action allows the vibrational energy of instruments such as gongs and singing bowls to move through the body without resistance reaching even the cellular level and supporting therapeutic healing. He has built a strong reputation through his professional practice, with many individuals reporting meaningful benefits from his approach.



*Peace cannot be kept by force;  
it can only be achieved by understanding.*

**Albert Einstein**

## A Masterclass in Relational Listening



**Annie Gowing, Ph.D, FHEA**, Director (Academic Division) at the Global Listening Centre and Senior Lecturer at the University of Melbourne, recently worked with wellbeing teams from 12 New South Wales schools in what became a powerful exercise in listening. By deeply engaging with educators’ “stories of success and struggle,” she transformed a standard workshop into a space for shared reflection and collaborative vision-building. Her approach reminds us that nurturing student wellbeing requires listening and genuine presence by knowledge-holders within a school community (principals, teachers, support and administrative staff) as well as parents, families, and community members. Listening facilitates understanding, which in turn facilitates wisdom in responding. We are grateful for Annie’s ongoing support in advancing the Global Listening Centre’s mission.

## Insights from the Global Listening Centre at Missionaries of Charity

Sardool Singh, Secretary, Global Listening Centre, and internationally renowned attorney, mediator, and arbitrator, Dr. W. Patrick McPhilamy, III, J.D., Director (Listening in Law) at the Global Listening Centre, visited the Missionaries of Charity (Mother House) in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta). In a time of war and global turmoil, the visit was a profound

reminder of the power of quiet presence, humility, and listening in action. Echoing the enduring wisdom of Mother Teresa, their experience was grounded in the spirit of love and unity:

*“Religion is meant to be a work of love. Therefore, it should not divide us or destroy peace and unity. Let us use religion to help us become one heart, full of love, in the heart of God. By loving one another, we fulfill the reason for our creation—to love and be loved.”*  
Mother Teresa

*“God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer.”*  
Mother Teresa

This visit serves as a powerful reflection on the essence of listening, not only a skill but also a sacred practice that connects us more deeply to one another and to what truly matters.



# Congratulations

## Top 2% World Rated Scientist



Claude-Hélène Mayer (Dr. habil., Ph.D., Ph.D.)  
Chair (Academic Division), Global Listening Board,  
Global Listening Centre.

Professor, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to **Professor Claude-Hélène Mayer, Academic Divisional Chair, Global Listening Centre**, on being recognized among the top 2% of most-cited scientists worldwide. This remarkable achievement reflects her prolific contributions to Industrial and Organizational Psychology, including over 60 books and 200 scholarly articles. Her pioneering research—spanning salutogenesis, transcultural mental health, psychobiography, positive psychology, women in leadership, listening, intercultural conflict management, and the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution—continues to shape academic discourse and professional practice globally. Professor Mayer is widely admired as an exceptional listener whose presence and scholarship have made a profound impact in the field. Claude-Hélène Mayer, Professor, Psychologist, Systemic Family and Trauma Therapist, Intercultural Consultant and Mediator, was a keynote speaker at the 2026 ACSG Conference held in March! We are deeply grateful for her meaningful contributions to GLC and for embodying its core belief that *Listening Transforms Lives*.



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For more on listening visit : [www.globallisteningcentre.org](http://www.globallisteningcentre.org)

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