



The (Lost) Art of Listening

David Trout Pomeroy

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A spirited essay dissecting multiple dimensions of listening -- the good, the not so good and the godawful. Drawing on a career in journalism, public relations, commercial writing and motivational training with cherries on top -- erected around a deeper background as hitchhiker supreme -- the reformed vagabond-turned-ink wretch spills a wealth of knowledge and insight into this glistening one-hour read. In doing so, he reveals exceptional passion for his subject, knowing great listening derives from something that has become all too rare in our culture, curious-mindedness; that having an innate interest in others leads to a rich quality of life, for all involved. At the very heart of this lengthy treatise, its author pays specific homage to one, Dr. Mortimer Adler, a widely recognized expert on all matters related to communications - notably its most commonly overlooked aspect, listening. Adler's observations are pristine, highly instructive borderline life-changing to behold. His handle on this subject is refined to exact perfection, something the writer of this unabashed gesture toward over-borrowing fails to ignore. Hundreds of contributing observations emerge from additional sources, but it is Adler's enlightened takes on the subject that give this iteration of thought real potential value. This book of sorts emerged from one year of concentration, research and hundreds of re-writes along the way. Over more than one thousand tall glasses of cold malt brew, the writer concocted a model, called aptly, A.L.E. The letters stand for, Ask, Listen, Empathize. The acronym intends to easily remind all of us that three elements contribute to climbing into the reality of another person, enabling them to spill their guts AND become at ease with you while you in turn can compassionately glean rich insight from simply learning of THEIR experience here on the same planet you inhabit. Good listening is exploitative, self serving, vicarious and laps up on the shores of cultural thievery. Fortunately,, it is there that good listening stops, without violating the water rights of friends, neighbors, people you meet on your life walk. One year of immersion in the subject led this Libra dude with typing skills to conclude there are but two ways to go in this world: We are either talking or listening. Close observation of most people suggests the great majority of whacked-out hominids in our midst are talking. Yakkity yak, yakkity yak.. Pure listeners are about as rare as vegetarians at a steak house. Talk about societal breakdown. With everyone talking and no one listening, is it any wonder the world has gone 99-percent nuts, that poisonous sugar drinks can be marketed as "happiness," that politicians lacking discernible brain wave activity can ascend to national recognition, that junior high school dropouts can profess to having greater intelligence than actual scientists? Give us a break and forgive us our daily bread, amen I think. Becoming a better listener may be the biggest favor you can give yourself this week. If you don't think you need help in this regard, all I can say is, it's time to go feed the dog. You're probably the world's best "hear'er" already, here-here. Beyond that, listen-up every doggie: Chow Time!

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