



## DEEP LISTENING

At one of our in-service sessions on Friday we pondered together the many, many facets of listening. In order to have a fruitful educational experience the child must develop his listening skills. But there's no point of "completion" – the development of our listening skills is a work in progress, it requires life-long learning. May we share with you an inspiring article.

### **Listening: A Sacred Act** by Nancy McMaster

Something sacred there is about listening  
when the whole of our Being is tuned  
to resonate with all that enters our field of experience.

Such listening requires an openness,  
an interest in contact, in discovery;  
a faith, however momentary, that there is a place for  
"everything under the sun."

It is NOT half-listening,  
as if we already know what is likely to happen in the next  
moment.

It IS a sense of not knowing, completely,  
What is here, now, either within or around us.

It is a willingness to be profoundly surprised.

It is NOT listening from the perspectives of either survival or  
hope,  
tuned only to intimations of threat or promise,  
all else deemed irrelevant;

nor is it listening to judge whether something is worth hearing.  
It IS a sense that all sounds and silence, all movement and  
stillness,  
are eloquent expressions of the very nature of  
every aspect of Reality,  
each equally significant in itself, as is, as a part of the Whole,  
regardless of any distress or pleasure we may feel in its  
presence –

It is an alert curiosity and ready acknowledgement towards all  
that we perceive.

It is NOT listening from a feeling of already being overwhelmed,  
too tangled in a sticky web of responsibilities,

too tugged off-balance by our responsiveness,  
to want to respond to anything more;  
nor is it listening in a state of numbness,  
so guarded against the residue of old pains  
that we dare not allow ourselves to resonate freely ever again.

It IS a sense of our inviolate core;  
a sense of the consummate importance of honoring the  
integrity of each part of every interaction, ourselves  
included;  
and a sense of our capacity to survive and be expanded by  
tremendous surges of sensation, however excruciating  
or ecstatic –

It is a still center which is open to touch.

And finally,  
it is NOT listening in resignation,  
having long ago given up a dream of being part of a mutually  
responsive world  
in which we give and receive attention, understanding, welcome  
and accommodation.

It IS an act of commitment to expressing that dream,  
to doing one's best to bring it into being,  
to embodying in the moment all that the dream requires of  
each one of us.

And therein lies its sacredness.

From Ruth (Education Coordinator)