



PERSONAL VILLAGE



NEWSLETTER

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Listening Is Applied Curiosity

The heart of community is found in the unfolding story of each member. And behind every story is someone who listens. Listening creates that cherished sense of belonging. Listening is the basis for true intimacy. Listening is at the core of healthy community life.

We give the gift of listening when we set aside our own need to be heard and become totally curious about our friend's story.

My colleague and fellow writer, Ceci Miller, once confessed:

As a teenager, I had the goal of becoming a good listener. I considered it one of life's greatest skills and knew that it required practice to develop. I noticed when listening to others that I usually got involved in some intriguing line of thinking, at which point I could no longer hear what was said. Worse, sometimes I interrupted the other person to announce what great thoughts I was having! This pretended listening as I waited to voice my ideas went on for years.

In time Ceci began to recognize that her pretended listening drove her friends crazy. Have you ever noticed yourself standing by with pretended listening waiting for a turn to tell your story? I have.

The art of listening is a dance of curiosity and eagerness to know another's story without interrupting it. Curiosity is the key to being a good listener. Can you be so interested in the person who is speaking that you can hear the story that dances in their heart as if it were your own dance? Try applying curiosity to your conversations. You may be quite astounded by what you learn, and your friends will feel valued by your listening.

Communities are built on the foundation of everyone's story. In September I will talk more about listening to stories, your own and others. Stay tuned.

True listening is hearing the song that sings in the heart of another as if it were your own song.

Sidebar Note:

In **Personal Village** - *How To Have People In Your Life by Choice, Not Chance*, review very carefully:

Chapter 3 — on Intimacy for more clues about the link between listening, curiosity and intimacy.

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