

Adult First Day School 4/14/24

## Deep Listening

“Listen carefully, my daughter, my son, to my instructions and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from one who loves you; welcome it and faithfully put it into practice.”

~ Prologue from *The Rule of St. Benedict*. (In some translations of *The Rule*, practitioners are to actually physically *incline* themselves toward it. Listening becomes an act of will.)

Kay Lindahl, an author and founder of The Listening Center, writes of the inherently sacred nature of listening:

“Perhaps one of the most precious and powerful gifts we can give another person is to really listen to them, to listen with quiet, fascinated attention, with our whole being, fully present. This sounds simple, but if we are honest with ourselves, we do not often listen to each other so completely.

“Listening is a creative force. Something quite wonderful occurs when we are listened to fully. We expand, ideas come to life and grow, we remember who we are. Some speak of this force as a creative fountain within us that springs forth; others call it the inner spirit, intelligence, true self. Whatever this force is called, it shrivels up when we are not listened to and it thrives when we are.

“The way we listen can actually allow the other person to bring forth what is true and alive to them. Sometimes we have to do a lot of listening before the fountain is replenished. . . patience is required to listen to such a person long enough for them to get to their center point of tranquility and peace. The results of such listening can be extraordinary.

“Listening well takes time, skill, and a readiness to slow down, to let go of expectations, judgments, boredom, self-assertiveness, defensiveness. I’ve noticed that when people experience the depth of being listened to like this, they also begin to listen to others in a deeper way. “

### For reflection:

**Have you ever experienced being listened to like this?**

**How well do you feel you truly ‘listen to’ others?**

**Most of us, when listening to others, are forming our response *as we listen*. How might our own life change if we listened this deeply? If we listened each other into revelation?**