

キリスト教学校における「傾聴」教育の重要性

The Importance of Education for Active Listening in Christian Schools

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Unborn babies first use the sense of listening to become acquainted with the world outside the womb when they hear the sound of their mother's voice. Listening is also the last way one connects with the world in the final days before dying. In between birth and death, listening is vital to all human relationships—spouse and spouse, parent and child, employer and employee, pastor and congregation, teacher and student, friend and friend.

I decided on this theme of importance of education for active listening in Christian school as I began to realize how ineffective we are at listening to each other. We need to learn to listen and the responsibility of school education to make it happen. I wonder if it is possible truly to educate students in an unconnected society if schools have not tried in some way to sharpen skills in listening. I wonder if a Christian school is offering genuine Christian education if it does not provide training in listening skills and offer listening classes for the students.

We live in a world full of talking, yet most of the time it is just talk, because it feels as if no one is really listening. Even though one can speak at a rate of one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words per minute, the listening process goes much faster—five hundred words a minute. This is one reason why it hard to be attentive to a longer conversation, because most persons can listen so much faster than they speak.¹ For many listening is taken for granted, because it is seen as such as basic skill.² Yet, listening is crucial, because it is one means of meeting the human need to be “recognized and acknowledged by others.”³ Our spirits long to be heard—“everyone needs to be heard and nearly everyone can listen.”⁴ Michael Nichols, in *Lost Art of Listening*, says that the loss of listening leaves us with “...an every widening hole in our lives. It might begin as a vague sense of discontent, sadness, or deprivation. We miss the irreplaceable sustenance of lending an attentive ear and of receiving the same in return, but we do don't know what's wrong or how to fix it. Over time this lack of listening invades our most prized relationships. Within couples and families we unnecessarily hurt each other by failing to acknowledge what the other says. Whatever the arena, our hearts experience the failure to be heard as an absence of concern.”⁵

Choosing to listen is an affirmation of the speaker.⁶ Such a feeling of disappointment is present

¹ Barbara Brown Taylor, *When God is Silent* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1998), 14.

² Michael P. Nichols, *The Lost Art of Listening* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995), 11.

³ Adler, Rosenfeld, and Towne, *Interplay—The Process of Interpersonal Communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1896, 135.

⁴ Robert Brizee, *The Gift of Listening* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1993), 1.

⁵ Nichols, 2.

⁶ Adler, Rosenfeld, and Towne, 135.

when one rushes home to tell someone about what happened at work, and no one will look up from the paper, television, or computer long enough to listen, or even worse, the house is dark and quiet because no one is at home. Our hearts sink when desperately calling a friend because of a problem we are experiencing, and the voice on the answering machine indicates no one is available—a message is left, and the call is never returned.⁷ When we do not receive the gift of listening, we feel alone. For some, that is a “piercing pain.”⁸ For others, this pain can leave them so wounded and bitter and cause them to back away from all relationships.⁹ On any day of the week, usually more “expert” talkers are engaging in conversation than listeners.¹⁰ The silence of not being does communicate to us that we are not accepted.¹¹

One psychoanalyst has said that, “solitude, psychological solitude, is the mother of anxiety.”¹² The lack of listening can affect a person both emotionally and physically. With the world becoming smaller by the day, that person learns to listen and listen well gains even more importance. The Japanese culture was once much more homogeneous—most people in Japan spoke the same language, and shared common values. In today’s world, people in Japan are more likely to work in international setting. The possibilities for misunderstanding have been multiplied because of the pluralistic society. This society presents wonderful possibilities, but also brings great responsibility for to become better listeners. Human must remember that no matter how diverse the culture becomes, people everywhere still desire to be accepted and understood. Listening remains a primary way to offer this kind of empathy to another.

When given the gift of being understood, through listening, we are enabled to form deeper relationships and live happier, more effective lives. The deeper relationships give “outlets for our anger and frustration, richer ways to experience love and joy, and in short, find new dimension of our humanness.”¹³

A failure has existed on the part of many to teach the importance of listening, as well as, how to listen. This failure can be attributed to home, school, business, and local community to remember that listening is a behavior, and as such, can be “taught, learned, changed, corrected, and re-learned” is important.¹⁴

Stephen Covey, in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, says, “Next to physical survival, the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival—to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, to be appreciated. He goes on to say that when one listens with empathy to another, the speaker is given psychological air.”¹⁵ Just as life is depending on the air breathed, healthy living does not happen without psychological air which brings affirmation and understanding.

⁷ Nichols, 11.

⁸ Earl Koile, *Listening as a way of Becoming* (Waco, TX: Calibre, 1987), 29.

⁹ Nichols, 13.

¹⁰ Thomas G. Banville, *How To Listen — How To Be Heard* (Chicago: Nelson- Hall, 1978), 5.

¹¹ Thomas Gordon, *Parent Effectiveness Training* (New York: Peter H. Wyden, 1970), 37.

¹² Quoted in Nichols, 29.

¹³ Earl Koile, *Listening as a Way of Becoming* (Waco, TX: Calibre, 1978) Lambert, Dan. *Teaching that Makes a Difference* (Grand Rapid: Zondervan, 2004), 24.

¹⁴ Carl H. Weaver, *Human Listening Processes and Behavior* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1972), vi–vii.

¹⁵ Stephen Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 241.

Active listening is one way people can receive this psychological air.¹⁶ This kind of listening is powerful and can be a means for helping the speaker make changes. A freedom exists in this kind of transforming care.¹⁷ The listener empathizes in such a way as to become a “fellow traveler” with another.¹⁸ Active listening is sacrificial listening, because the listener must give up the desire to take back to the conversation; it means putting another first.¹⁹

Martin Buber writes about the “I-Thou” relationship which comes about when one enters into a mutual relationship of care and concern with another—to do less is depersonalizing and dehumanizing.²⁰ Miller and Jackson describe it this way: “You are so important to me that I want to understand exactly what you mean, and I’ll keep my own material out of it for now so that it doesn’t get in the way.” Most people will like and respect you for caring enough to give them this gift. Good listening is caring.²¹

When offering the gift of listening, one possible outcome is a relationship of care and concern, but many people have less than five or ten minutes of intentional listening given to them each week.²² When listening with understanding, “real communication” can occur, because we attempt to see things from the “other’s” point of view, rather than remaining stuck in what is perceived to be the truth.²³ Listening can be a creative process as one helps the other struggle with any and all of the issues life brings to us.²⁴ Leonald and Natalie Zunin claim, “If every time we met someone we gave him [her] our full and complete attention for four minutes, come hell or high water, it could change lives.”²⁵

Since listening is a way of caring for each other, that it should and can happen within a community makes sense. Though it is not easy, listening is also a way of building community.²⁶ Tilden H. Edwards says that “.....community is ‘what everyone wants but almost no one is able to sustain well for long.’” This kind of caring is common in communities like support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, where participants discover they are not alone and where they find the “fellow travelers” who will listen.²⁷

Listening can help build a sense of community, in which being respectful and patient is easy.²⁸ “Being listened to means that we are taken seriously, that our ideas and feelings are known and, ultimately, that what we have to say matters.”²⁹ Because listening is tied so directly to caring for one another, we need to be taught to listen more effectively if our society is to become a connected society, not a unconnected society (*muenshakai*), which is a serious problem of modern Japanese society. Nichols

¹⁶ Rebecca Z. Shafir, *The Zen of Listening: Mindful Communication: A Language of Compassion* (Del Mar, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 1999), 12.

¹⁷ Nichols, 226.

¹⁸ Thomas Gordon, *Parent Effectiveness Training* (New York: Peter H. Wyden), 58.

¹⁹ William R. Miller and Kathleen A. Jackson, *Practical Psychological for Pastors* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 53.

²⁰ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965), xiv.

²¹ Miller and Jackson, *Practical Psychology for Pastors. 2d ed* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 53.

²² Kenda Creasy Dean, *Practicing Passion* (Grand Rapids: Abingdon Press, 1990), 53.

²³ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), 331–32.

²⁴ Brizee, 40.

²⁵ Quoted in Banville, 17–18.

²⁶ Shafir, 69.

²⁷ Gerrit Scott Dawson, Adele Gonzalez, E. Glenn Hinson, Rueben P. Job, Marjorie J. Thompson, and Wendy Wright, *Companions in Christ—participant Book* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2001), 56.

²⁸ Shafir, 239.

²⁹ Susan K. Hedahl, *Listening Ministry* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 69.

says that “the power of emphatic listening is the power to transform relationships.”³⁰

Throughout the Old Testament, God speaks “word.” The job of the Children of Israel was to listen.³¹ Key words throughout the Hebrew Scripture are: “said,” “listen,” “hear,” “called,” and “word.” The ear is primary to each of these. In Genesis, God “said” (spoke) creation into being.³² Barbara Brown Taylor says, “the central Jewish declaration of faith is not ‘I believe,’ but ‘Hear, O Israel.’”³³ “The focus is on the ears, not the lips—on listening, not speaking.”³⁴ God’s speech was powerful and for the Hebrew to understand “the necessity of listening and receiving in order to live” was imperative.³⁵ Listening or failing became a matter of life or death.³⁶ Susan Hedahl says a theology of listening must begin with, “we listen God first listened to us.”³⁷ The gospel of John reports that “in the beginning was the Word,” paralling Genesis 1, “Then God said.”³⁸ The Word of God is of utmost importance, for when we cry to God, the cry is merely a response to the God who has already spoken.³⁹ What an overwhelming feeling to realize that the God of the universe has chosen to listen to humankind—so little to ask that we listen to God and to each other, Abraham Heschel writes that “the fundamental thought in the Bible is not creation, but God’s care for God’s creation.”⁴⁰

The Old Testament prophets called the people to listen and warned that the act of “not listening” could lead to death and destruction. The Word of God came to the prophet, and the prophet felt compelled to speak God’s Word to those who would listen. “For twenty-three years....the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. You have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear, although the Lord persistently sent to you all his servants the prophets, saying, Turn now, every one of you, from his evil way and wrong doings....Yet you have not listened to Me, says the Lord” (Jeremiah 15: 16).

Often the prophets’ words fell on deaf ears, but they kept trying, and this says something very important about God. God’s great compassion and love for God’s children was the driving force behind the work of the prophets. This is the God who is involved and concerned.⁴¹ This is the God who goes to great lengths to save the “one” who is lost. In Isaiah, God’s divine comfort is expressed by suggesting that God is like a shepherd and a mother—the shepherd who cares for the flock and the mother who comforts her child.⁴² This is the God who goes to great lengths to save the “one” who is lost.

Some think that the Old Testament is a witness to God’s wrath, but the prophets point to the God who never gives up on God’s children. They are given chance after chance to listen because of God’s great love for them. To truly listen to “another” requires that we try to care in the same way that God cares for children.

³⁰ Nichols, 10.

³¹ Taylor, *When God is Silent*, 48.

³² Genesis 1: 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29; in each verse “God Said.”

³³ Deuteronomy 6: 4. The Shema, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.”

³⁴ Barbara Brown Taylor, *When God is Silent* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications 1988), 49–59.

³⁵ Hedahl, 20.

³⁶ Ibid., 19.

³⁷ Ibid., 95.

³⁸ Andrew Purves, *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 2004), 200.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962), 484.

⁴¹ Ibid., 485.

⁴² Purves, 196.

Crucial to a theology of listening is knowledge that human were made for fellowship with God and with each other. They were created for community.⁴³ In the creation story, in Genesis 1: 27, God created humankind in God's own image, "male and female" God created them. "Though all persons reflect the image of God, they cannot be fully human as isolated beings.....only as relational beings do we find our true identity as God's image."⁴⁴ No listening exists without community, without relationship. The Old Testament story is built on the relationship of God with God's people with each other. "The African word *ubuntu* (oo-boon-too) means 'I am because we are.'"⁴⁵ This is truly living in community means.

When we move to the New Testament, listening becomes ".....listening to God's word in the person of Jesus Christ."⁴⁶ Jesus arrives on the scene, and God announces his arrival with "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (Luke 9: 35). From the first time that Jesus appears in the New Testament, he is tied to the act of listening.⁴⁷ God chose to become one with humankind through the person of Jesus, God's son. In the Incarnation, God wanted to restore God's relationship with creation.⁴⁸

Jesus modeled what living in relationship with others means by picking twelve friends with whom he would intimately share life. They would live together, take meals together, encourage and care for one another, and listen to each other. When Jesus comes and calls persons to live in community with others in the church, "he brings his friends with him. They may not be ones we would choose for ourselves!"⁴⁹ The church is a community made up of all who love God and would follow Jesus. The church gets "messy" at times, because Christians are called to live in community with all kinds of people—the saints and the sinners. Even though each person may be different, they are not strangers, because they have their love for God in common.⁵⁰ The disciples were a motley crew, but through God's love for them, shown in the face of Jesus, they became a caring community. Because of God's call on our lives, we as Christians are connected one to the other; to be truly human means being called to live in community one with the other.⁵¹

When Jesus started picking the disciples, or any of the people with whom he would associate, he did not let the rules of the culture or religion keep him from accepting each person as a child of God.⁵² Jesus did not pick friends because of "who" they were or "what" they did; he found friends among members of society who had lost hope and had little of the world's treasures, and he found friends among those who had all that they world had to offer.⁵³ Jesus never discriminates between persons when offering God's love by listening and caring.

⁴³ Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, *Pray Without Ceasing—Revitalizing Pastoral Care* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 5.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Marjorie Thompson, J., and Stephen D. Bryant, *Companion in Christ—Exploring the Way, Leader's Guide* (Nashville: Upper Room, 2005), 73.

⁴⁶ Hedahl, 24.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁸ Mike Ratliff, *Sacred Bridges—Making Lasting Connection Between Older Youth and the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 37.

⁴⁹ Marjorie Thompson, J., and Stephen D. Bryant, *Companions in Christ --Exploring the Way, Leader's Guide*

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 74.

⁵² Mike Ratliff, *Sacred Briges: Making Lasting Connecting Between Older Youth and the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 17.

⁵³ Ibid.

When Jesus encountered the woman at the well, he took time to listen to her and to help her understand his message of love and grace (John 4: 4–18, 27–30). When Martha became exasperated with Mary for not helping with the household duties, Jesus told her that it was important to sit and listen. There would be plenty of time for housework later, and people are more important than things (Luke 10: 38–42). When the five thousands gathered to hear Jesus preach, they become hungry. Jesus heard their distress and fed them (Matthew 14: 13–21). As Jesus was leaving Jerico, he encouraged Bartimaeus, a blind beggar. Even when told to be quiet, Bartimaeus still called out to Jesus. Jesus heard the pain and exasperation in his voice and healed him (Mark 10: 46–52). When the hated tax collector, Zacchaeus, went to see Jesus, he expected to watch from a distance. Instead, Jesus took time to go to his home and spend listening to him (Luke 19: 1–10). The woman who had been bleeding for twelve long years only wanted to touch the fringe of Jesus' clothes. His love and concern for all of God's children meant that he immediately knew she was near. She had been an outcast for so long, and now she was looking into the face of love and grace (Luke 8: 43–48). Jesus listened and cared for the disenfranchised, the lonely, and those without power. He always rejoiced over any part of God's creation which was redeemed and could find a way home to God's love.⁵⁴

When trouble comes, we ask the question, “Is God big enough?” Can God really walk with us through the flood?”⁵⁵ God not only sent God's son into the world, but Jesus suffered and died. Because of love, God made God's self vulnerable on the cross.⁵⁶ Jesus' death on the cross makes him the best companion for those who suffer.⁵⁷

Jesus' care for those who are hurting and his own pain on the cross calls us to a ministry with those who suffer. Christians are to speak for those who suffer, they are to cry with those who are in pain, through the Spirit they can be the healing presence of God.⁵⁸ When we identify with Christ, we are “one with Christ, one with one another, and one with all of creation.”⁵⁹ Paul writes in II Corinthians:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for our consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same suffering that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation (II Corintian1: 3–7).

Paul's belief that comfort in times of trouble is God's grace for the community of faith.⁶⁰ Because

⁵⁴ Robert C. Shippey, *Listening in a Loud World* (Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 2005), 11.

⁵⁵ Kenda Creasy. Dean, *Practicing Passion* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.), 115.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *When God is Silent*, 78.

⁵⁸ Purves, 201.

⁵⁹ Dean, 227.

⁶⁰ Purves, 198–99.

God has called us to live in community, no one suffers alone.⁶¹

Jesus, on more than one occasion, is adamant about the need to listen and the seeming paradox he finds in so many people—you have ears but you do not hear. In Jesus, God makes God's self known as a caring, compassionate friend who listens intently to those in need. To live like Jesus means offering the gift of listening to all those with whom we come in contact. When people listen and listen well, they become the presence of Christ to another, and they see the face of Christ in the other. Listening reflects a personal communal relationship with a listening God.⁶²

Jesus offered comfort to the wounded and broken by offering them the gift of listening-taking time to show acceptance and listening to their cries of pain. Each person is called to offer this same gift to all of God's children. Each person both listens and desperately wants to be heard.⁶³ Hedahl sheds lights on the critical ministry of listening: "The New Testament emphasis on hearing/listening is an attempt to encourage the listener to hear the good news, to listen to preaching and instruction for understanding and for life. It expands the Hebrew meaning of hearing/listening to indicate commitment to the one being listened to. In other words, true human listening is true salvation in Jesus Christ. Listening is more than obedient cognition: it is obedience to a relationship and to a person."⁶⁴ When persons are able to see the face of Christ in the face of every person, they become compelled to listen with love and compassion.⁶⁵ Robert Brizee offers this invitation: "Come, join me in offering the gift of listening to others. Yes, it sounds strange. Yes, it feels funny. Yes, it may be embarrassing. Yet, the possibilities are wondrous. The fields are ripe for harvest. So many hunger and yearn to be heard, especially those whom we love most. We can make such a difference with relatively little effort."⁶⁶ When we listen to others as Christ listens to them, we offer acceptance and love and approaches listening as a caring ministry to which God has called us. Listening is "Holy" work. Active listening is an "act of love—divine and human. Learning to listen is preparation for the astonishment of grace and love."⁶⁷ This kind of listening becomes a prayer as we begin to hear the Spirit of God which is within each person.⁶⁸

To offer the gift of listening, our minds and bodies must work together. What is required is the ability to see, hear and feel with our whole being.⁶⁹ When we receive sounds into our ears, and the sounds are transmitted into electrochemical impulses and transmitted to the brain, then a decision is made to either pay attention to the sounds or ignore them. Listening is a crucial for each person. Our well-being is influenced by a myriad of factors-physical health, spiritual health, and emotional health. These factors are intertwined with one affecting the other. If the need to be heard is not met, all aspects of one's health could be compromised. The mind and body must work together if active listening is to happen. To be an effective listener, we must have five basic needs met, we cannot give to another what we do not possess. Abraham Maslow hypothesized that five categories of basic needs exist: physical, safety, belongingness/love, esteem/self-respect, and self-actualization/understanding/

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Hedahl, 14, 14.

⁶³ Robert Brizee, *The Gift of Listening* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1933), 101.

⁶⁴ Hedahl, 21.

⁶⁵ Miller and Jackson, 55.

⁶⁶ Brizee, 42.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 101.

⁶⁸ Kelsey, 84.

⁶⁹ Shafir., 34.

aesthetic pleasure.⁷⁰ He said that the self-actualized person, one who has lower level needs met, is one who can then realize his or her potential and offer the gift of listening to another.⁷¹ This means that many people may not be able to offer intentional listening to others, because they are so focused on meeting their own needs.⁷²

Therapist Carl Rogers opened the door to listening.⁷³ Before the 1950s, professionals would offer listen only long enough to form a diagnosis so they could decide what treatment was needed. Rogers found that it was important for the listener to enter the speaker's world with understanding and "unconditional positive regard." When therapist offered acceptance and understanding, the client could then feel free to talk about problems and feelings.⁷⁴

To really listen is to offer the gift of acceptance. Acceptance and understanding are affirming and enables people to make changes in their lives. In a conversation between Buber and Rogers, held at the University of Michigan in 1957, they discussed this kind of acceptance.⁷⁵ In a therapeutic relationship, an acceptance of persons as they are and at the same time recognizing the potential within them must be present.⁷⁶ Rogers suggests that the help one receives or the changes one makes from such an understanding, accepting relationship is a by-product of the caring, rather than the goal.⁷⁷ Gordon says that the "language of acceptance" is what a professional counselor does to help a counselee open up and share freely. He believes that for anyone to offer this same kind of acceptance by learning active listening is possible.⁷⁸

This kind of acceptance can help others feel loved. Accepting one "as is" is a profound way to show love.⁷⁹ Great power exists in love. "It can promote the growth of mind and body, and is probably the most effective therapeutic force we know for repairing both psychological and physical damage."⁸⁰ Covey writes, "Next to physical survival, the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival-to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, to be appreciated."⁸¹

Active listening not only connect one to another, but strengthens the sense of self. The gift of listening helps persons to clarify thoughts and feelings and listen more closely to themselves.⁸² The ability to share pain and resentment and make ourselves vulnerable to another can have a healing effect.⁸³ As we share what has been kept inside, it is possible to begin to process what has happened, and then is when healing can take place. People often eat compulsively, drink too much, or work continuously so that they can remain unaware of painful feelings, but deal with them directly is much

⁷⁰ Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2d ed (New York: Harper, 1970), as cited in Rodney J. Hunter, ed., *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 691.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Banville, 53.

⁷³ Brizee, 14.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁵ Rob Anderson and Kenneth N. Cissna, *The Martin Buber-Carl Rogers Dialogue* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1977), 90-95.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 94.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 61.

⁷⁸ Gordon, 30.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Covey, 241.

⁸² Nichols, 10.

⁸³ Ibid., 22.

healthier.⁸⁴ This can be done in a caring relationship through intentional listening. When two people communicate or listen intently to each other, listening becomes therapeutic⁸⁵ and can be energizing.⁸⁶ When listeners were asked how they felt after being listened to, following are some of the responses:⁸⁷

1. A feeling of relief
2. That my opinion counts
3. Like someone cares about me and my point of view
4. Appreciative and a little guilty for feeling so good afterward
5. It makes me feel important.

This kind of listening is not easy and requires time and effort. This listening takes courage to try willingly to understand another person in this way. Often people are frightened about entering into this kind of listening relationship, because they fear that, not only will the speakers make changes in their lives, but that they, as the listener, will be changed by the experience of listening to another with acceptance and understanding.⁸⁸ Active listening is a risky business, but the benefits for the listener and the speaker outweigh possible problem. Within Christian schools, teachers need the gift of listening, and they are called to meet needs of students.

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⁸⁴ Hunsinger, 89.

⁸⁵ Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*, 330.

⁸⁶ Nichols, 215.

⁸⁷ Shafir, 91.

⁸⁸ Rogers, 333.

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