

Listening Quotes Across the Ages

“Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood”

Steven Covey – 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Habit 5)

*“Grant that I may not so much seek...
to be understood, as to understand...”*

From the “Prayer of St. Francis” of Assisi (b. 1182; d. 1226)

“I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.”

Robert McCloskey

“Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.”

Karl Menninger

“The first duty of love is to listen.”

Paul Tillich (German born American Theologian and Philosopher)

“A wise old owl sat on an oak; The more he saw the less he spoke; The less he spoke the more he heard; Why aren't we like that wise old bird?”

“I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen.”

Ernest Hemingway (American novelist and short-story writer, Won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954, 1899-1961) (Alt: *“When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen.”*)

“No man would listen to you talk if he did not know that it was his turn next.”

Edgar Watson Howe

“The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.”

Rachel Naomi Remen

“To listen is to continually give up all expectation and to give our attention, completely and freshly, to what is before us, not really knowing what we will hear or what that will mean. In the practice of our days, to listen is to lean in, softly, with a willingness to be changed by what we hear.”

Mark Nepo, Cancer survivor, spiritualist,

“We have two ears and one tongue so that we would listen more and talk less.”

Diogenes

Also attributed to Zeno of Citium, born 335 BC, died 264 BC (in the Listening chapter)

And, Epictitus (also Greek), born 55 CE, died 135 CE

So, Zeno of Citium was 12 or 13 when Diogenes died at age 89, and Epictitus was 319 years

from Diogenes birth to come. Diogenes gets the nod, based his antiquity and the observation of

Andre Gide (French Novelist, born 1869, died 1951), *“Everything has been said before, but since nobody listens we have to keep going back and beginning all over again.”*