CIVILITY CORNER

Be Silent to Listen

LISTEN is the second tool of civility. Most of us believe that we are good listeners. Probably we are good hearers. Listen really goes beyond hearing what is said, but truly understanding all that is said. Pay Attention, tool one, prepared us to listen, but we are not in a vacuum. We have many distractions that interfere.

In my past research one quote provides us with the help we need to ignore these distractions. The word listen and silent contain the same letters. For us to understand what we are hearing we need to silent any distraction that we face while we use the tool of listening.

Let’s face some of these distractions and silence them. One is all the other sounds, voices, and noise around us. We need to tune these others out. Sometimes we may be able to move to a quieter space. Otherwise we need to focus ourselves on the speaker. Maintain frequent eye contact, make gestures that tell you that you truly with the person, and avoid making eye contact with the rest of your environment. Secondly you may not be real interested in the topic, but you can remind yourself that this is important to the speaker who wants you to understand this interest.

Third is our self talk or what are all the thoughts we having going on. When this happens, stop that talk immediately and direct attention back to speaker. Fourthly you find yourself working on your response to what is what is being said. Now you are not listening at all to the speaker, but to yourself. Again you have to stop your thinking, remind yourself that you need the full understanding of their thoughts before you have a chance to speak, and you will have your turn. The speaker has asks you to listen and then will listen to you in a civil conversation

Finally remind yourself regularly that for now I will be silent.

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