The Generous Listener

Just like learning to express yourself well when you speak, listening is a social skill, or even an art that can be learned.

There is "hearing" and there is "listening."

Engaging the sense of "hearing" generally means you are quiet.

But when you listen to someone or something, it takes more than being quiet on your part.

You must be there.

Hmm...

Caitleen does have a point...

Besides, she's cute.

Your presence is required.

You focus on what you hear.
Stop and check yourself.
What are the sounds you are hearing at this moment?

Now, when was the last time you feel you listened to someone or something?

How did you react to it?
What was your body language?

Is there a lot of sound or noise going on right now?

You may not even have noticed, and you probably haven’t focused on any of it—You haven’t listened.

How eager were you to fully hear what you were listening to?

Being “all there and present” when listening to something that grabs your attention is easy. However...

I need to learn this song.

Er, Cedric, we need to discuss this report...
As a generous listener in school, for example, you do your best with the time you have in school, you are present with mind and heart.

SIR?

You refuse to let the hum-drums enter.

And you presume that there must be something you can gain from that lesson.

You expect that your curiosity will be rewarded, and that afterwards you will go away knowing more than before.

THAT WAS SO INTERESTING.

AMAZING! WHERE DID YOU LEARN THAT?

...the tricky thing is when you have to listen, especially when the reason for listening may not be to your liking.

...EMBARRASSING YOUNG CAITHLEEN WITH INAPPROPRIATE REMARKS...

THAT'S WHERE THE SOCIAL SKILL COMES IN.
What You can Do:

Determine to be a generous listener.

Remember...

Listen more, speak less.

Don’t interrupt the person speaking, assuming you already know what they are trying to say.
Avoid the...

YA, YA, YA, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...

BUT CEDRIC, IT WAS NOT LIKE THAT AT ALL. IT WAS...

GOSH! I HAD NO IDEA.

You may be in for a surprise.

Quote:

A GOOD LISTENER IS POPULAR EVERYWHERE.

NOT ONLY THAT, BUT AFTER A WHILE HE KNOWS SOMETHING TOO!

-Bernhard Bargen (inventor and economics professor)

What the Bible Says:

1 Samuel 3:10 ESV: And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”

James 1:19 KJV: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

S&S link: Character Building: Social Skills: Communication and Interaction-1b

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