



Finishing Well Yoga

Yoga at home and in the workplace

Dear Beth,

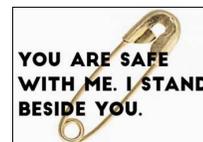
Here we are, in the wake of a presidential election and approaching a day of thankfulness. I have many feelings about the former and look forward to the latter, but how do we make sense of these?

I believe that true communication with each other, expressing our honest feelings that hopefully leads to joint involvement, is the answer. We communicate in so many ways! Our body language and apparel tells others a lot about who we are and what we're thinking, how we listen affects our responses and connection with the speaker, and what we say and how we say it often has levels of meaning far beyond what we're aware of. True communication, however, cuts to the core and offers a connection with others that is unbiased, honest, nonjudgmental, and unifying.

Here are some thoughts and suggestions:

Body language/Apparel

- Crossing your arms when listening/speaking can make you appear resistant. Stand with arms relaxed and your heart open.
- Wearing a safety pin on your lapel shows your openness to connect with all diversity. This simple act can help unify the country. For more information about wearing a safety pin to show your support, click the picture.



Listening

- Truly listening is an amazing skill that benefits both the speaker and the listener. Excerpts from my book, *Listening for Treasures in the Wind*, are offered in the article below. If you're interested in reading more, the book is available online by clicking [here](#).

Speaking

- There's a difference between talking WITH a person and talking AT a person. Communication is a give and take experience.
- Taking a breath to gather your thoughts before speaking offers you an opportunity to express yourself more honestly. If you're thinking about your response while they're talking, you won't 'hear' them.

With true communication, we are all allowed to be who we are and believe what we believe. We live in a country that allows us to do that! Let's move towards this unification and truly be thankful on Thanksgiving.

"Be the change," as Ghandi said, and start with you. Wearing my safety pin with pride!

Namaste,

Ron Collins

My 2016 Classes

Yoga for Students

Wednesday - Friday

Saugatuck High School

December - February 2017
and
March - May 2017



Private Sessions

Call 616-340-7338 for private sessions.

Click [here](#) to visit my website for more information.

Yoga for Teachers

3:30pm - 4:30pm

Saugatuck High School

Definitions Corner



Turiya
Conscious Communication

Self-Care Article

Listening Skills: Paraphrasing

When we are truly listening, we come closer to those around us. We have more understanding, empathy, knowledge, and emotional attachment with others, and we are less likely to have negative interactions (fighting or arguing) with those very same people. Most positions have a logical basis of understanding and when we listen, we often find information that can help us understand the other person's point of view. We do not have to agree with them. Indeed, we can strongly disagree, and yet listen to them and support their right to have their own particular viewpoint.

There are many techniques to improve our listening skills and I'd like to offer one of my favorites. I call it "Paraphrasing." Paraphrasing is simply saying back to the speaker, in our own words, what we thought they said. It helps us:

- Remain focused so we can concentrate on the subject
- Stay alert and involved in the process
- Keep tight thought association
- Test to see if we are listening
- Review with the speaker what we heard to find out if we understood them correctly
- Offer positive reinforcement that encourages the speaker to continue

It's not as difficult or unusual as it might sound because we do it already. For instance, someone says, "I plan to be at Charlie's tomorrow going over some house plans and would be glad to give you a ride to the restaurant. Can you be there at 10am?" You paraphrase back, "I'll see you at Charlie's at 10 tomorrow. Thank you!" It's that simple, and yet it's a conversation of understanding and therefore empowering.

In a longer conversation, knowing that soon we will have to tell another person what they

just said, it forces us to pay attention and learn more, cutting through our personal mind chatter and distracting thoughts. It also allows us the space to develop our own thoughts and feelings around the subject as we gain an understanding of theirs.

True listening is the great connector and a skill that enhances each one of us. It develops a deeper appreciation for our fellow human beings while allowing each of us our uniqueness.

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*PO Box 663
Saugatuck, MI 49453*

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