

# Tell Me More: What Listening Reveals About How We See Others



Chris, one of our facilitators and a licensed clinical therapist, shared a moment that quietly—and powerfully—altered the way he showed up as a father.

His 15-year-old daughter walked in the door after school one day and handed him a four-page article. It was called [Tell Me More: On the Fine Art of Listening](#). No commentary. No instructions. Just a small, poignant offering.

Chris read the article—and it nearly broke his heart. His daughter was trying to tell him something: *You don't really listen to me.*

Not long after, Chris reflected on what that moment taught him. He said, “I find now that listening is the only way for me to really see someone. Otherwise, I just go on what I already know and what I think I know. And that troubles people. They want to be seen and heard from where they are—not from where I assume they are.”

This insight isn't just about parenting. It's about leadership. Relationships. Teams. Culture. It's about how we

move through the world.

Because *how we listen reveals how we see*.

Journalist Brenda Ueland, in the same article Chris's daughter gave him, wrote this about listening:

"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward, and we want to sit in their radius as though it did us good, like ultraviolet rays."

"When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life."

This is what Chris's daughter was aching for. And it's what many of us are aching for—especially in environments where performance and pressure can crowd out presence.

When we stop truly listening, we don't just lose connection—we lose information, initiative, insight. People stop bringing ideas, stop signaling red flags, stop engaging. Not because they don't care. But because they don't believe they're being seen.

We often think listening is passive. But it's not. Listening is active. Intentional. And often, incredibly difficult. It requires us to quiet our assumptions. To be curious. To hear someone out not just for what they're saying—but for what they're trying to express.

It's a form of respect. A discipline. A choice to stop centering ourselves and start considering others.

Ueland goes on to describe how listening transformed her own way of relating to people:

"Before, when I went to a party I would think anxiously, 'Now try hard. Be lively. Say bright things. Talk. Don't let down.'

And when tired, I would have to drink a lot of coffee to keep this up.”

“Now before going to a party I just tell myself to listen with affection to anyone who talks to me. To be in their shoes when they talk, to try to know them without my mind pressing against theirs, or arguing, or changing the subject. Now my attitude is, ‘Tell me more.’”

That last phrase—*tell me more*—has become a kind of shorthand for genuine interest. Esther Perel, the world-renowned psychotherapist and relationship thinker, often teaches people to use it as a way to keep conversations open, curious, and connective.

But we don’t need to be therapists—or even leaders—to make use of it. We just need to be willing to pause our performance and make room for presence.

Imagine if more of our conversations—at work, at home, in moments of tension or transition—were grounded in the stance of *tell me more*.

What might unfold? What might come to life?

Chris’s story is a reminder that the people closest to us are often the ones we most easily overlook. Not out of disregard, but out of assumption. We think we know them. And so we stop listening.

But the people in our lives—our colleagues, our employees, our partners, our children—are constantly unfolding. The only way to see them is to listen. Not to the version of them that lives in our heads, but to the version of them that is speaking to us right now.

The practice is simple, but never easy:

- Pause your internal commentary.

- Stay present.
- Be curious.
- Let go of needing to fix, validate, or prove.

Just sit with someone. Be in their radius.

And when the moment calls for a response, maybe all that's needed is this:

*Tell me more.*