

The Effort to Listen

We all suffer, at times, from the effort to study something instead of living it. Or from the effort to fix or advise rather than to listen and to hold. So the first duty of love is to listen.

When I think of the times I have truly listened in my life – to the sea's endless lapping, to the sighs of my loved ones when they thought no one was near – it is receiving these simple truths that has made me a better person.

So often when we refuse to listen, we become obsessed with remaking the world in our own image, rather than opening the spirit within us to the spirit of what is.

At the deepest level, ours is not to make ourselves heard but to be still enough to hear. To truly listen is to risk being changed forever.

– Mark Nepo, Book of Awakening