



When you provide an environment where people are truly honored and respected for who they are--when they are listened to--they blossom."

That, in a nutshell, is what coach/trainer/author Carol McCall is all about.

"For whatever reason, listening happens to be a gift of mine," she explains simply. "I can listen to people, even people I've never met before, and hear their innermost precious desires. I can hear what's truly going on for them. As far back as I can remember, that has been so for me. When I was little, I thought everybody could do that; it was a shock when I discovered they couldn't."

Carol began to articulate the importance of listening when, as part of her early training as a therapist, she spent some time working with the criminally insane in San Quentin.

"When someone would ask them, 'How could you commit such a heinous act?' they would consistently answer: 'Nobody listened.' I heard that a lot from my high school students, too: 'Nobody listens to me; you're the only one who listens.'"

At one point, recalls Carol, she worked on a suicide hotline: "I could actually hear whether people really were going to jump off the deep end or were reaching out to avoid doing that. I could hear their pain or that they were deceiving themselves--or that they were just aching to tell their story."

Carol began to see dramatic confirmation of her own observations when she worked with bestselling therapist-author Virginia Soutire.

"I watched her listen to whole groups of people so powerfully that I could see them actually shift before my eyes. I saw that when people are heard, they tangibly change."

At first, says Carol, when people denied what she was hearing, she would confront them.

"I would call them liars. Eventually, I learned that people are not always ready to hear their own truth. Sometimes the best way I could witness them was to allow them to come to their own truth in their own time. I hear lots of things I don't say anything about until they're ready. And I can hear when they're ready."

With a small group of others, Carol eventually formed a company called College for Life Planning, which featured a program called the "Design Your Life" workshop. Carol later changed the organization's name to World Institute for Life Planning, and eventually, to the World Institute Group of Companies. Throughout, listening has remained the focal point of all her work.

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After watching this phenomenon throughout over 40 years of practice, Carol is now working on documenting it as demonstrable scientific theory: the role of listening in health and healing is the basis of her currently in-progress Ph.D. dissertation. It has also formed the basis of a series of workshops Carol has offered, which have been extraordinarily popular with network marketers.

Remembering
How
to
Listen



Why,
one is
tempted
to
ask, do
people
need a
workshop
to
be
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something as elementary as how to listen?

"Actually," says Carol, "it's that people need to recover their ability to listen. To put it even more accurately, to recover their own trust in that ability. Long before we're born, we're listening--at first, it's virtually the only thing we do. Listening is what lulls us to sleep, it's what wakes us up."

But at some point, says Carol, your listening is denied--usually fairly early on. The result? You begin to doubt your ability to accept what you really did hear.

"You say, 'Mommy, I want cookies,' and she says, 'Not now!' You hear fatigue, or perhaps anxiousness, maybe anger or frustration; you say, 'Mommy, are you okay? Mommy, what's wrong?' 'Nothing!' Now, you clearly heard that something was wrong--but it has been denied. After a while, you stop honoring what you're listening to--you don't trust it any more. My goal is to have you recover your trust in your ability to really listen."

Making It Up

In Carol's worldview, the impact of those formative childhood moments echoes down through the years, often drowning out entire dimensions of our actual experience later in life. Part of Carol's work centers around what she calls "Life Decision" (a concept that grew out of Carol's study of Erik Erikson and Piaget) and its impact in later life.

From birth through about five years of age, says McCall, in order to make sense out of our world, we "make stuff up." We have to because we don't have a lot of information.

"By the age of five," she explains, "we've made up how the world is. That becomes our myth. Then, from the ages of six to twelve, we gather evidence to solidify the myth, to validate what we have decided the world is. That becomes the filter--the listening--through which we see and hear the world."

Whether or not we are aware of them, says Carol, those myths dominate our lives; we use them to navigate through the world. We choose our partners, our jobs, where we live--we assemble our very personalities based in large part on those myths.

"Normally we aren't even aware that there is any other way to go through life. The good news is our myths can get us pretty far. There are a lot of driven and highly successful people. But there is a better way."

Life Purpose

That "better way," for Carol, revolves around discovering one's life purpose.

"In the first few years of the Institute, I discovered my calling: I am here to assist people discover their own life purpose.

In my work, I help people understand the distinction between their myth--which drives them--and their life purpose--which compels them.

"When you're driven, you eventually come to a moment where you say, 'Is this all there is?' There is this moment when people admit that they're not where they want to be. That's when they come to me.

"When you are compelled by your life purpose, you are in the peace of satisfaction; it's a

higher calling. You begin to restructure your life based on your life purpose: more serenity and joy comes into play. You begin to have fewer driven moments and more satisfied, compelled, service-fulfilled moments.

"The goal of all my work is to provide people with the freedom to be who they are. That is the foundation of both our 'The Empowerment of Listening' and our 'Possibility of Woman' workshops--and the principles apply equally to men.

"There are common myths for men and common myths for women. Men function in a certain way--and that's not a 'problem,' that's good news. It's good news to understand that women function a certain way. Accept and honor the gender difference, understand and respect it, and--voila!--we have listening."



Network marketers are a unique group: they have an entrepreneurial, adventurous spirit and their spunkiness, the adventure, the willingness to try things, the exciting humanity that network marketers are. They're go-getters--they're up to something in life, they're looking for something bigger."

Networker Marketers: Are You Listening?

Why have network marketers gravitated so strongly to Carol and her listening work, we wondered?

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According to Carol, the skill of listening is crucial for network marketers. Indeed, network marketers who don't master the skill of listening will soon spin their wheels and burn out.

"As a network marketer, when you really listen, you can prospect so much more effectively. You live less in hope and more in reality. You begin to identify the consumers, the leaders, the business partners--because you hear the person."

So, the \$64,000 question: are network marketers better listeners? Yes, says McCall--sometimes. But networkers are human, and as prone to "lazy listening" as anyone else. And sometimes they fall victim to the resting-on-laurels syndrome. When you listen, says Carol, your message is always fresh--because all the people you're listening to are different, and they bring you new ways of speaking--if you're listening. If you're listening, your message never stagnates. And alas, that's not always the case.

"People who have built large organizations generally do have the ability to listen, but sometimes they turn it into a technique--and therein lies the danger because then they become stale. They start sounding repetitive, giving out the same message over and over. They've stopped listening."

The truth is, admits McCall, some of the biggest names in network marketing ("not all," she stresses, "but some!") have gone stale.

Even so, McCall has had something of a love affair with the people of network marketing.

"The very fact that these people would put themselves in the position of being a network marketer opens the door for growth--because network marketing compels you to grow. Sometimes people in network marketing want a script--but you can't script listening. In listening, you have to be present. When you're present, you are also open to being vulnerable--and that's huge for people.

"The good news is that you don't have to do anything. You don't have to solve, fix, or explain. You simply have to listen."

Indeed, McCall has seen some of her most fulfilling work unfold over the landscape of the network marketing groups for which she has conducted "The Empowerment of Listening" workshops.

"When you add the skill of listening, your growth increases and speeds up. Most people don't want to be responsible for the consequences of their own growth; network marketers seem to search it out. Growth is a challenging experience--that's true for every human being I've met thus far. But growth also provides new opportunities. It always puts you in a place called, 'I Don't Know.' Human beings have a very difficult time with this; they will do anything to act like they do know. But if you're willing to face the fact that you don't know, that is where the greatest growth takes place.

"How exciting it is, to not know! What an adventure!"

For Information on Carol McCalls Consulting availability and workshop schedule
Call 1-888-728-9975 or visit her Web Site at www.listeningprofitsu.com.

