



Dear All,

Today, I would like to move on to a new topic, communication skills set, which helps to diminish our ego. It is actually about learning skills, which is a critical tool to open our hearts and our minds and also enhance the competency of learning.

The 4 communication skills are: (1) active listening, (2) appreciation, (3) expression and (4) establish collective consciousness.

Let's discuss the first item on communication skill set- ACTIVE LISTENING.

How often do we actually practice active listening? What is active listening?

Active listening means we really listen:

- **Without criticizing** (right/wrong, good/bad) - when one is talking, we already judge the speaker.
- **Without trying to fit information into an existing silo** – everyone has his or her own habitual way or pattern of learning information; that is the silo. If the new information is not familiar with the pattern or fit into existing silo, it will be rejected. Therefore learning stops. If a person wants to learn Buddhism only; his ego will refuse to listen to talks about any other religions.
- **Without interruptions** – If one keeps interrupting the speaker, one does not really listen. Interruptions will also stop the learning process because complete information or message cannot be delivered.
- **With accepting other's opinion** (we can agree to disagree) - just listen to the information.

What makes us choose what to listen to and what not to listen to? It is our big EGO. Practicing active listening will diminish the ego.

The next time we listen to a speaker (friend/opponent/child/spouse/parent); try to apply this active listening skill. You will be amazed with the outcome!

So for the next time, we will discuss appreciation.

Namaste

