

LISTENING

Years ago I was laying next to our youngest daughter while we did our bedtime routine. In between stories and lullabies, my mind was spinning. Irrational fears were spiraling and before I knew it, I had gone down a rabbit trail in my mind where our family had become homeless. This was an illogical, unwarranted fear but my insecurities and doubts had taken over. Us being homeless is where I landed.

The next thing I knew my daughter was asking, "Mommy, will we be homeless?"

My eyes snapped open. Was she reading my mind? Um. Yes.

This is the same child who was born in a hurricane. That wasn't the birth plan. But it is one of the most tangible examples I have experienced of the power of listening. One day I sensed we should have a home birth. Four other babies were born with midwives in hospitals but this one wanted to be at home. So we made arrangements and waited for her to come. We could not have known that labor would begin when Hurricane Ike landed 50 miles from our home. As it was, I got front row seats to the hurricane, a nite of silence and solitude and the grace and strength to have all of our family at home and present to receive this baby.

Listening unveiled the plan. Listening asks how a seven year old reads minds. Listening taps into a respect for intuitions and trusts a holy whisper. Listening suggests there is something worthy to hear. Julia Cameron says that when "we listen to our higher self, we are led both to guidance and to clarity. We accept each insight as it comes to us, trusting the often simple thoughts that appear as ideas, hunches, or intuition" (The Listening Path).

Listening can be bolstered by writing. Having a private, raw conversation with yourself with pen and paper can help find your heart. Listening can be made more clear by walking. The meditative practice of walking a labyrinth promises "solvitur ambulando" - it is solved by walking. Sometimes listening is heightened by silence. Rumi said there is eloquence in silence. Mother Teresa said silence is prayer. The Four Seasons sang silence is golden.

No doubt the practice of listening is already happening in your life! Take note of where you have seen your own brand of magic and mystery playing out. Look for the hunches that were right and ideas that manifested into something important. Then trust you have a front row seat to your highest self, your people and your world. This is a magical thing!