

Personal Reflection – July 11, 2023

Talk, Talk, Talk

In an early chapter of *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach*, I tell a story of a Leadership Course I taught on the side of a mountain in Nepal. We had discovered a large abandoned stable we could use for this “clinical training course” with Nepali field workers, Save the Children staff. They were experienced agriculturalists, water engineers, midwives, medical doctors, nurses, managers. They hoped to learn a new way of teaching, appropriate to the rural Nepali community.

We sat on the hay on the floor of this old stable, working on learning tasks in small groups to grasp and to demonstrate the new theories and practices.

A path along the mountain side passed the large glassless windows of our stable classroom. Nepali women, with huge bundles of firewood on their heads, passed by, chatting about the strange group in the stable. A young man from Save The Children Nepal overheard the women’s conversation. He started laughing. I asked him: “What did those women say that made you laugh?” Still chuckling, he replied: *“They said: Talk, talk, talk! All they do is talk. And we, we learn nothing.”*

--by Jane Vella