

Continuum for effective discourse:

1 It is audible

I can hear what you say, but that doesn't mean I'm listening.

There is no connection between my ears and my mind or my heart.

2 It is interesting

I hear you and I'm listening, I'm not tuning out.

There is some connection between my ears and my mind

3 It is engaging

I'm listening and what you say makes me think. I'm curious to find out what you will say next and what you mean. My intellect is engaged.

There is a connection between my ears and my mind.

4 It is encouraging

I'm listening and what you say speaks to my emotions. My emotional needs are being addressed.

There is a connection between my ears and my heart.

5 It is enabling

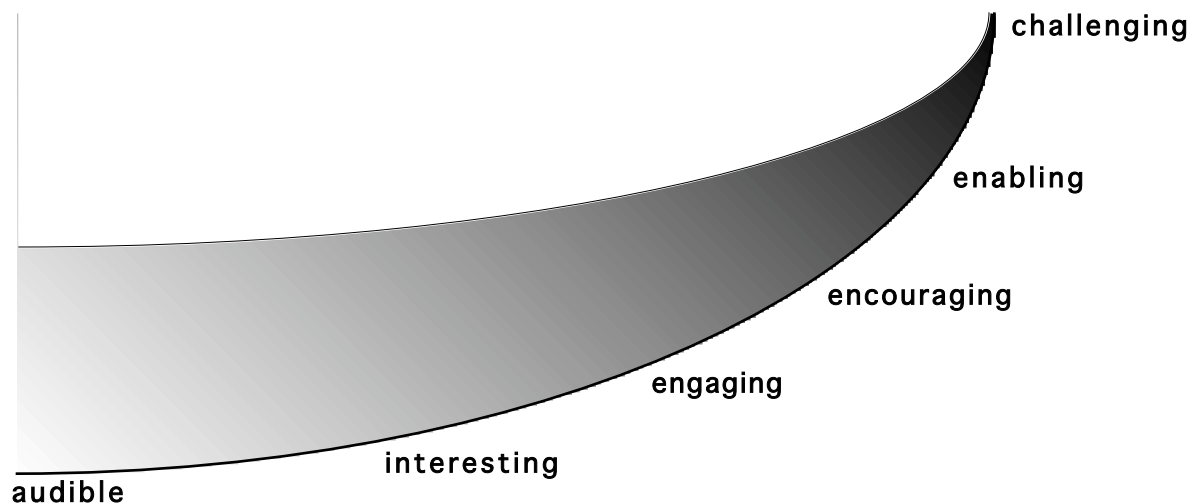
I'm listening to you and I'm thinking about it. You are encouraging me and I'm feeling better. You are showing me ways by which I can also do better.

There is some connection between my ears and my mind and heart.

6 It is challenging

I'm listening and thinking. I'm encouraged and enabled. You are showing me what I am called to do in order to do better. You are laying it in my path and I will have to act upon it. You are bringing it so close to me that I cannot walk away from it without having my conscience accuse me.

There is a connection between my ears and my mind, my heart and my will.



Continuum

If we consider teaching, for a moment, in the limited sense of the transfer of ideas through verbal discourse only, then a number of conditions exist that can make that teaching progressively more meaningful. Teaching that will reach the mind, the heart and the will of the child is audible, interesting, engaging, encouraging, enabling, and challenging.

That it needs to be audible is logical, but that in itself could be without effect. I can physically hear what a teacher says, but that doesn't mean I'm listening. Hearing does not resuppose a connection between my ears and my mind or my heart. If the teacher makes it interesting he'll at least keep my attention. Listening assumes a some connection between my ears and my mind. To make me not only listen but also think the teacher's discourse needs to be engaging. That will make me curious to find out what he will say next and what he means. When my intellect is engaged there is a definite connection between my ears and my mind.

Discourse does not only connect with the mind but also with the emotions. It is more than engaging, it is encouraging. It relates to my hopes, fears, uncertainties, joys, etc. There is a connection between my ears and my heart. If it connects with the mind as well it becomes enabling. Enabling discourse shows me ways by which I can also do better.

The most meaningful kind of discourse does one thing more: it challenges. It makes me listen and think. It encourages and enables me. It shows me what I am called to do in order to do better. It lays this in my path in such a way that I will have to act upon it. It brings the need for certain action so close to me that I cannot walk away from it without having my conscious accuse me. Challenging discourse lays the connection between my ears and my mind, my heart and my will.